
MedCat Days 2024

Event Report



Generalitat
de Catalunya

IEMed.

European Institute of the Mediterranean

A MEDITERRANEAN RICH IN LIFE



The fifth edition of MedCat Days, held this year, focused on how to deal with the effects of climate change and drought. We are in a hot spot of climate emergency. Hence, the need to find joint solutions that have an impact on food sovereignty, urban sustainability, migration management and opportunities for young people. All of this in a context of multiple overlapping crises, exacerbated by wars and geopolitical challenges.

It is therefore urgent to provide a comprehensive response to all these challenges. For this reason, the Government of Catalonia, together with the governments from Italy, France, Greece, Albania and Morocco, are leading the creation of the Mediterranean macro-region, with the aim of making Mediterranean policies more effective and present in European institutions and policies.

The Mediterranean macro-region must become an ambitious cooperation policy, with shared strategies that multiply the desired results. A new political framework that promotes cohesion through better

The Mediterranean is Catalonia's priority framework for action, as is Europe, because the future of the EU and the Mediterranean go together. The Government of Catalonia is working hard to create spaces for advocacy and to forge mutually beneficial relationships. IEMed, the nerve centre of the Mediterranean ecosystem, and MedCat Days, the great space for dialogue for all the actors in the Mediterranean, contribute to developing these alliances.

multilevel governance, from local to global.

MedCat Days have become a favourable meeting point to concretise this Euro-Mediterranean cooperation. In this edition, they have also served as an umbrella for the first meeting of the Mediterranean Partnership for Climate Action, and the Conference on Mediterranean Urban Agendas. Another example of the Government of Catalonia's commitment to resilience and sustainability.

We want to create networks, integrate and better coordinate multilevel governance to strengthen our relationships with values

and criteria of mutual respect and benefit. Values that lead us to put people's lives at the centre of decisions. We need to adapt better to the needs of the people of the Mediterranean and this means having a European Union that is more rooted in Mediterranean policies.

The Mediterranean macro-region is essential to build this living space with more prosperity, optimism and hope. A more cohesive, green, innovative and socially just Mediterranean. In short, a Mediterranean of peace that contributes positively to coexistence in Europe and in the world.

Thank you all for making it possible!

Meritxell Serret i Aleu

Minister for Foreign Action and European Union, Government of Catalonia

ADDRESSING MEDITERRANEAN CHALLENGES THROUGH COOPERATION AND DIALOGUE



Operating in crisis mode seems to have become the normal functioning modality in Euro-Mediterranean relations. Over the last years, there has been indeed a succession of crises of different nature and of different intensity, with one crisis succeeding and overlapping the next.

This context of multiple crises contrasts with the years of optimism that followed

the Barcelona Process. Instead of a promising horizon, we are facing an increasingly complex and conflicted world, where much of this problem is manifesting in the Mediterranean region. These events have added burden to already fragile economies and have complicated international cooperation efforts to manage their impacts. Thus, the promise of prosperity and stability that once seemed near has given way to a more complex and challenging reality in the Mediterranean region. They have also challenged the efforts of those who have been tirelessly working to transform Euro-Mediterranean cooperation into an operational instrument to fight common and more structural crises such as climate change or economic and social justice in the Mediterranean. The current crisis in the Middle East will complicate the implementation of the New Agenda for the Mediterranean adopted in 2021 that has had the merit to pay renewed attention

to issues such as the green transition or social and economic inclusiveness.

The MedCat Days are configured as an essential meeting space to promote cooperation and facilitate contact between different institutions, civil society actors, and academics, to create a dialogue space to address the current challenges of the Mediterranean. This multilevel cooperation must involve all stakeholders to find joint solutions to global challenges. The active participation of governments, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, and the private sector is fundamental to ensure that the actions taken are comprehensive and sustainable. International collaboration and coordination among the various stakeholders are key to ensuring that the measures implemented are not only effective but also equitable and fair for all affected communities.

Catalonia, as a reference in the framework of Euro-Mediterranean cooperation, has been internationally recognized with the designation to host the permanent head-

quarters of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), showcasing how to continue this leadership effort in formulating positive responses to the multiple crises facing the Mediterranean today. Therefore, it is essential to promote dialogue as a basic element of mutual trust and coexistence that allows progress with the exchange of good practices among Mediterranean countries and contributes to the deployment of a truly transformative Mediterranean agenda. Moreover, the Union for the Mediterranean is a unique platform to address the challenges facing the region today and facilitate the promotion of regional dialogue and cooperation, as well as specific projects and initiatives in the fields of Energy and Climate Action to tackle climate change and advance towards more secure and sustainable energy models.

Thus, the MedCat Days 2024 are not only a catalyst space for regional cooperation but also a model of how collaboration and dialogue can lead to sustainable and lasting solutions to the challenges facing the Mediterranean in the era of climate change.

Senén Florensa

Executive President, European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed)

INSTITUTIONAL OPENINGS



Elisa Ferreira, European Commissioner for Cohesion and Reform

Elisa Ferreira, European Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms, began her speech by referencing the unexpected crises the European Union has had to face and respond: COVID-19, Russian aggression against Ukraine and its impact on energy security, and a significant increase in geopolitical security – disruption on value chains energy costs. She underscored the importance of not overlooking the challenges which have been unfolding over time (namely climate change, the rise in extreme weather events and water scarcity), in spite of these numerous unexpected challenges. She highlighted that these are common challenges to all countries bordering the Mediterranean to which cooperation is paramount – the 9th Cohesion Report adopted last March, sets out the state of the art in terms of regional economic and social data.

The European Commissioner expressed the necessity of tackling challenges in the field of climate change

with cooperation and multilateralism, as if current trends continue, the Mediterranean ream will be among the worst hit in terms of climate change. Hence, she reinforced the support of the EU for cooperation across the Mediterranean – with a budget of over 2 billion euros of investment support through 17 different Interreg programmes. She highlighted the excellent work of the EuroMed programme, bringing together partners from 69 different regions in 14 countries, working together on innovative sustainable economy, green living areas, sustainable tourism and natural heritage. She recognised that, with so many different projects, it is essential to coordinate efforts and this is why the EU has set up the MedLab Group to bring together the 17 Interreg programmes in the Mediterranean to exchange experience and increase synergies.

Being aware of the interest of several stakeholders to create a new cooperation framework in the Mediterranean and sharing the goal of deepening cooperation, The European Commissioner stressed that when considering new framework strategies, a joint effort should be made to objectively identify the added value these will bring to existing structures and to avoid fragmentation and overlaps. She concluded that these considerations, together with the need to ensure ownership and leadership at all levels in all the concerned countries are crucial for the success of any new initiatives.



Nasser Kamel, Secretary General, Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)

Nasser Kamel, Secretary General, Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), underlined the importance of the MedCat Days for two primary reasons: thematic and juncture. From the thematic point of view, he acknowledged that the climate crisis has become a reality in which the global population live in every single day, exacerbating faster than predicted, particularly across the Mediterranean region. He emphasised that climate change is not an environmental issue, but an all-encompassing threat to health, agriculture, geopolitical stability and economy, to which nothing can deny this reality and addressing it in a cross-sectoral approach is the only solution. In terms of the current juncture, he highlighted that 2024 has been a year like no other: war exists in the heart of Europe and a war in Gaza, reflecting a crisis of humanity; simultaneously, the results of elections in Europe a reflect significant transition which could impact the collective fight against climate change as, those parties with a relative

upper hand on those elections are not necessarily the proponents of a just transition towards environmental protection. He further recognised the setbacks of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development due to the impact of COVID-19.

The Secretary General emphasised that, from the Mediterranean perspective, the mandate and the priority of Union for the Mediterranean to be able to adapt to this new changing regional and global landscape is being reviewed. He further outlined this moment as one of important global transition, where the demand for coordinated and solid responses to challenges ahead must be continued; this is a moment where the sense of direction should not be lost, ensuring more than ever that the Mediterranean is at the heart of policy and priorities. He addressed the resolution of current crises through strong, ambitious and coherent regional initiatives at every level of governance, including at the level of the Mediterranean.

He concluded that, through spaces of coordination and exchange like the MedCat Days, the Mediterranean region is capable of promoting innovative and fruitful collaboration to sail the raging sea together; waiting for calm waters is not an option, the Mediterranean region must face the power of these storms and pioneer the region towards better weathers and a better tomorrow.



Rachid El Abdi, President, Rabat-Sale-Kenitra Regional Council

Rachid El Abdi, President, Rabat-Sale-Kenitra Regional Council emphasised the various unusual events which have posed major challenges specifically to our generation: Population movements, drought, food security issues and urban displacements. He underscored that new challenges require innovation, collaborative work, and spaces for dialogue, such as the MedCat Days, which allow for the exchange of experiences.

The President of the Rabat-Sale-Kenitra Regional Council expressed the importance of considering the Mediterranean space holistically, without a divided North-South vision. He outlined the regional model that the ORU is developing for the Mediterranean. Especially after the coronavirus, he acknowledged that countries which have adopted an advanced regional model were able to manage and optimize costs on par with those that opted for centralised planning. He further informed that ORU-FOGAR is working to respond to this govern-

ance model, which can potentially optimize and yield significant results; the organisation provides all the essential arguments and tools for implementing this model. He commended some countries, like Morocco, for having made great efforts in decentralization and devolution, becoming an exceptional model on the African continent—a model that is unique to the country and has not been adopted or copied elsewhere.

Moreover, he appreciated the significant progress the Rabat region has made over the past 20 years in terms of energy efficiency and water management, both for domestic and agricultural use: Noteworthy are the seawater desalination processes that will allocate water to important sectors such as agriculture

and food security. Though, he proposed that, in this regard, access to technology must also be discussed because today, green technology is still very expensive.

Regarding the migration from certain areas, he expressed that national investments are underway for regions experiencing depopulation. Ultimately, he concluded that this cannot be done solely at the national level; we must think globally. He continued to advocate for a cohesive approach; A divide must not be created, but rather an extension in development, bringing people together to work collectively and create more spaces for collaboration and experience sharing, which will lead to better governance in the region.



Keynote Speech



Patrick Simonnet, Special Envoy for the Mediterranean, European External Action Service (EEAS)

- **The world has a serious challenge at hand**, 2023 and 2024 have been and are about to be the hottest year in global records going back to 1850. In the Mediterranean, it is estimated that millions of people may experience increased water stress, crop failures and large-scale disruptions of food systems in the coming decades. Even if there are some complains about the cost of transition, the fact is that the costs of non-action are simply too high to contemplate: freak storms, wildfires, droughts, death by heat stress, air, water and soil pollution, and conflicts over resources. We must address the root causes, and that means swiftly and globally decreasing the amount of emissions, our industry transport energy agriculture and consumption patterns produce.

- **Investing in the transition** costs money and takes efforts, but it will give big returns in health and competitiveness jobs and growth. Markets are recognising the Mediterranean competitive advantage in renewables. Investing in a green transition opens a new wave of opportunities; the trade of renewable energy and hydrogen, for example, can trigger a significant wave of new investments all along the clean tech value chain that could drive a broader transition to more sustainable and inclusive economies in the region. Climate risk reduction and adaptation measures as well as investments in water security and sustainable food systems offer possible tracks for sustainable growth and enhance resilience and improve security in the region. Above all it is about having the right policies in place: efforts are necessary at the regulatory level, reshaping key national strategies, promoting new consumer behaviours, developing capacity, raising awareness, implementing best practices and enhancing regional cooperation.

- **As far as global action is concerned**, the historical decision agreed in Dubai defines science based and ambitious goals

setting us on a path to limit global warming to 1.5°C. Our job is now to ensure that domestic and international implementation of this consensus is equally ambitious and credible. Whilst we all agreed in Dubai as a global community, the agreement must be implemented in our own countries, cities and regions, hence the importance of the MedCat Days. The EU is staying the course of its transition: decoupling emissions from economic growth is our best narrative, and it shows how the transition is possible. Since 1990, the EU decreased emissions by 32.5% whilst increasing GDP by 61%, demonstrating that the two elements can be disconnected. With most of the EU green deal legislation in place, we are on track to meet and possible overshoot our goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030.

- While the UE will be as ambitious as possible and while we need a core of public finance, we will have to **push for a reform of our international financial architecture, our multilateral development banks, as well as pull in private finance to scale up the finance to spare the transition globally**. The EU including its member states and the EIB, is the biggest contributor of public finance worldwide. In 2022, the EU and its member states mobilised 28.5 billion euros from public sources and an extra 11.9 billion from private sources in support of climate action in developing countries – you can count on the EU to be ambitious. The Global Gateway alongside the EU Agenda for the Mediterranean and its substantial 7 billion euros economic and investment plan are serving as important instruments to stimulate the economies in the region

while helping align them with ambitious environmental startups and climate objectives.

- This transition can and must also offer many **opportunities to our partners**; we are already actively engaging and accompanying countries across the Mediterranean in these endeavours. The EU-Morocco Green Partnership is a clear example of our ambitious policies and a clear commitment to lead the transition towards sustainable competitiveness can help form partnerships for shared growth and prosperity; it is an exemplary model for win-win collaboration which can have great economic, environmental and social benefits. More partnerships of that kind must be envisaged as in the **future EU Southern Neighbourhood Partnership** clean energy and decarbonisation will be part of the defining priorities of this partnership.

- Transition must also be an opportunity for our region to show leadership and vision in this global challenge. Allow me in this context to commend the relentless efforts of the Union for the Mediterranean in shaping many policies for the region but in particular climate policies, offering a unique platform for political coordination and regional action. Thanks to civil society organisations and initiatives such as the Med Alliance on Climate Change (MATTCC) for playing an important role in developing policy recommendations and sharing that with the wider public. By acting together, recognising our growing interdependence and in a spirit of partnership, we can turn common challenges into opportunities. Ultimately, we all want the same for our people: peace, liberty, prosperity, health and wellbeing.

Watch the session recording: [Welcome and Keynote speech](#)

Day 1

SESSION I

Staying on Course Against all Odds? Tackling Climate Change in Times of Multiple Crises



Moderated by

Roger Albinyana

Managing Director, European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed)

Speakers



Almotaz Abadi

Deputy Secretary General in charge of Water, Environment and Blue Economy, Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)



Lorena Stella Martini

Policy Advisor Foreign Policy, ECCO Climate



Aldo Liga

Research Fellow, Italian Institute for International Political Studies (ISPI)



Laurent Alfonso

Expert in civil protection, France

Cooperation in Realm of Green Transition: Deep integration and Spatial Interconnection

- The technical potential of solar wind in North Africa alone could meet current and the 2030 energy demand for both Europe and Africa. How Northern and Southern Mediterranean countries come together reflects the broader dynamics of how the global North and the global South can cooperate to face this common challenge.
- One priority of the new EU Commission is trying to accelerate energy transition processes and the progressive integration within the two shores. The deepening of integration requires a shared vision with a clear target: developing industry cooperation at all levels, from carbon pricing mechanisms and sharing technological

knowledge to creating a shared space for the interconnection of electricity grids from South to North.

Climate Change in Times of Crisis

- Climate stress exacerbates social disparities, amplifies existing problems negligence of infrastructure and can fuel social unrest. The multiple crisis effecting the region and fragmentation of international community negates the space to create ambitious targets, climate change is one of the first victim of that. 16% of the MENA regions GDP are acquired from coastal areas exposed to sea level rise.
- With some notable exceptions, countries of the region are not sufficiently engaged in the process of energy transition in climate change mitigation and adaptation.



Mobilising Speech into Action: Water Governance as a Priority

- We cannot implement a policy framework of action without discussing the main crises. Political engineering through bringing actors together is equally as important as tackling this issue of climate change from a technical point of view. What will make the difference is how we can mobilise speech into action. Investment and involvement of the private sector remains a key factor in resolving these crises.
- Out of the 10 crises we are facing (reported by the World Bank), 9 are water related. With an increasing number of droughts, we need a distribution system to trace where our water goes. Such initiatives require us to think outside the box; the law and governance system must change to allow an apt policy framework of action.

- They propose a multidisciplinary and integrated perspective that allows these challenges to be addressed effectively, with cooperation and financing instruments that have a transformative impact and a clear narrative. The EU has introduced various instruments such as the NDICI, the External Investment Plan, and the EFSD+, but they have yet to fully crystallize. There is a clear transformation which must continue.

Adaptive Cooperation in Tackling Civil Protection Disasters

- Deep integration creates adaptative civil protection methods and furthers their ability to protect the population from catastrophise which climate change can cause.
- The UfM exemplifies a strong regional platform for this type of partnership.

PROPOSALS

Financial Investment: Mobilising the private sector through encouraging fiscal investment and engagement could improve the effective development of technologies and accelerate the green transition.

Multilevel horizontal cooperation: Systems of integration are crucial in enabling states to prepare and anticipate climate challenges.

Watch the session recording: [Session 1: Staying on Course Against all Odds? Tackling Climate Change in Times of Multiple Crises](#)

SESSION 2

Euro-Mediterranean Cooperative Responses to address Climate Change



Moderated by

Arnau Queralt Bassa

Director of the Advisory Council for the Sustainable Development of Catalonia (CADS), Member of the MedECC Steering Committee

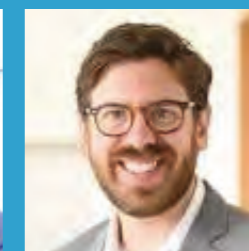
Speakers



Karolina Zubel
Environment, Energy and Climate Change Director, Center for Social and Economic Research (CASE)



Rafia El Mansouri
Vice-President of Tanger-Tétouan-Al Hoceima Regional Council, Morocco



Sam Carter
Founding Principal, Resilient Cities Catalyst, Mediterranean Climate Action Partnership (MCAP) Secretariat



Josep Canals
Secretary General, MedCities



Tailored Mechanisms

- Involving local communities is paramount, so that projects are tailor made. The effects of climate change are regionally unique. Whilst we collectively facing the problem of climate change, regions such as the Mediterranean require different response mechanisms which are specifically targeting key issues.

Financial Support

- The lack of clear financial strategy specifically directing investment challenges the effectiveness of its implementation. Additionally, addressing the issues of climate change requires significant financial support, yet the lack

of capacity to access resources further inhibits implementation strategies.

Decentralised Institutional Framework and Public Engagement

- Water scarcity is a major threat to international societies and that it is crucial to engage with a voluntary public, willing to implement such change in their lives to help combat this issue. The lack of social perception decreases the profile of issues such as drought, water stress and extreme heat which the Mediterranean region faces.
- The development of such policies requires cooperation between the local and regional level.

Efforts for Change: New Technologies and Balanced Approaches

Regional Government Cooperation

- Modern societies are organised around political boundaries which don't accurately reflect the natural systems which govern our species and biodiversity, whereas regional governments more aptly mirror localised natural systems. Therefore, the importance of fundamentally rethinking our societies and the role regional governments can play cannot be understated.

Development of New Technologies

- Positively, there are many experiments waiting to be carried out. Technologies such as fog water harvesting, alongside

nature-based solutions such as the sponge city concept, are changing the narrative, enabling local level engagement. The implementation of such strategies and technologies is the next step forward in addressing these issues.

Balanced Adaptation and Mitigation Strategies

- There exists a tension between the relative ease and individualistic nature of adaptation methods, which are often nationalised with quick results, compared with mitigation strategies which reflect a global response to climate change, where unification of policy is harder. Balanced strategies would entail local initiatives reflecting a global effort to address climate change.

PROPOSALS

Local Initiatives: Elevating awareness and improving the technical capacity at the local level could ensure apt responses to the threats climate change brings, suited to the problems of each community.

Mobilising a Voluntary Public: A voluntary public willing to engage with new climate change adaptation and mitigation technology could enhance the effectiveness of their implementation to: elevate learning (through exchanging technical knowledge), accelerate action (through partnerships, helping each other act) and elevate awareness (by raising the profile of the issues the Mediterranean region faces).

Watch the session recording: [Session 2: Euro-Mediterranean Cooperative Responses to address Climate Change](#)

SESSION 3

The Mediterranean in the new EU political cycle: challenges and perspectives



Moderated by

Davide Strangis

Deputy Secretary General, Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR)

Speakers



Héctor Sánchez Margalef
Researcher, Barcelona Centre for International Affairs (CIDOB)



Joaquim Llimona
Professor of European Law and Director of CEI International Affairs



François Alfonsi
Member of the European Parliament for the 9th parliamentary term



Firdaous Oussidhoum
Assistant Secretary General, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)



Habiba El Mouali Benomar
Head of the Delegation of the Government of Catalonia to North Africa

Macroregional and Innovative Responses

- It is of paramount importance that the local government (closest level of governance to the people) have their needs brought to the continental level of governance, thus raising the voices and needs of the people, contributing to the production of apt policy making.
- The common challenges which the EU and the Mediterranean region face require common and coordinated responses. Mediterranean region networks such as the Med Coop Alliance, reflect participation beyond state actors, illustrating that the macro-regional Mediterranean structure offers a new paradigm and system of territorial cooperation.
- Despite warnings about a possible decline in the importance of the Southern Mediterranean in the new EU agenda due to

its pivot towards Eastern Europe because of the invasion of Ukraine and expansion, we must strengthen the existing political frameworks: New Agenda for the Mediterranean, European Green Deal and its external dimension and Global Gateway

Climate Change: Differing Priorities, Shared Dialogue

- It is crucial to understand that the EU may seek a more bilateral approach with Southern Mediterranean countries, as evidenced by the signing of various bilateral agreements focused on the green transition and renewable energies. Although bilateral approaches are important, the fact that the challenges are common and the responses must also be common remains pertinent. This reflects the spirit of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)



Day 2

SESSION I

From cooperation to development: the Essentials of Effective Territorial Cooperation in the Mediterranean



Moderated by

Gemma Aubarell

Director, Culture, Gender and Civil Society Department, European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed)

Speakers



Larabi Jaïdi

Senior Fellow, Policy Center for the New South (online)



Thomas Perrin

Associate Professor in regional planning and social sciences, School of Architecture of Montpellier



Georgia Chantzi

Research and Policy Development Manager, International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS), Athens



Ivan Martin

Adjunct Professor, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, and Senior Fellow, Policy Center for the New South

and the Barcelona Declaration, which we will commemorate its 30th anniversary next year (2025).

- The EU cooperate with the Mediterranean region for their capacity to create cheap renewable energy, which can be easily exported across the EU. The main priorities for the EU in recent years have been the interior market, the fight against climate change and misinformation which is encompassed by the overarching principle of maintaining EU values. From an EU perspective, effective politics would only function with cooperation between all countries in the Mediterranean region with the EU.
- Further, there exists potentially differing visions of development – With the EU talking about degrowth, the Global South is not in a position to be assuming similar positions. The Mediterranean regions attempt to consolidate a more open and

broader space, despite the Mediterranean reflecting the southern border of the EU.

The East and the Mediterranean: A Different Focus

- Since the 2015 migration crisis, the EU have increased the securitisation of borders; as the EU perceive the Mediterranean as their external borders, relations with countries on the southern shores of the Mediterranean are securitised.
- The rise of the radical right within the EU, alongside their disjointed response to the war in Gaza, compared with a largely unified response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, reflecting the EUs priorities in the East. They further considered this impact through the lens of war economies, where states of the world may finance war over combatting climate change, depleting already scarce financial resources.

PROPOSALS

Corroborate Institutional Cooperation: Seek to align missions to combat climate change between institutions from the local, regional and international level.

Financial Prioritisation: With project financialisation presenting a key challenge, concentrating the resources available to specific projects can increase the productivity of outcomes.

Watch the session recording: [Session 3: The Mediterranean in the new EU political cycle: challenges and perspectives](#)

Enhancing Territorial Transformation Through Inclusive Local Development Strategies

- To create new dynamics for territorial transformation and development, they must be framed within the effective local development strategies. Dialogue among local actors and exchanging experience is crucial to accelerate this impact, respond to specific needs and not perceived this cooperation solely from a financial perspective.
- A multi-stakeholder approach is vital for setting priorities and ensuring the ownership of citizens and local populations. This approach extends beyond dialogue and consultation at the local level, particularly concerning youth and facing gender inequalities and territorial specificities. Those living locally drive appropriation dy-

namics through knowledge, participation, and action.

- The structural gap between higher policies and the operational level must be resolved. Stakeholders often feel excluded from the policy process, which affects ownership and appropriation. Decision-making is centralised, leaving regional stakeholders with minimal involvement.

A common and shared vision from a local scale as alternative paradigm to the crises

- It is crucial to shift the logic from solely addressing the crises in the Mediterranean to investing in a common vision of where we want to go together and with whom. In this environment, the assertion of a common will to act is particularly sig-

nificant and all challenges have an impact at the local scale. The Black Sea basin strategy exemplifies how local cooperation can thrive despite conflicts, presenting an alternative paradigm.

- Synergies are more effective when operating at a lower level, where politics are less likely to interfere. While a top-down approach may not be ideal, it can be complementary to grassroots efforts, providing a valuable link. Therefore, the strategy of focusing on regional or local levels proves effective: programme and research-level cooperation can enhance and ease collaboration, making the strategy of focusing on regional or local levels work.

Streamlining Mediterranean Cooperation Governance

- The numerous initiatives and systems of cooperation could be coordinated to facilitate synergies to achieve streamlined objectives and complete common projects to ensure that actions are conducted as close to the territory as possible. Variable geometry should apply in the regional approach, allowing for bilateral or multilateral alliances based on common interests and challenges.
- Competencies, resources and legitimacy are some of the preconditions for the EuroMed territorial cooperation. Local competencies in most southern Mediterra-

nean countries are not adequate, there is an asymmetry of resources, and the mobilisation of the civil society through regional and local governmental actors depends on the socio-political context.

- Decentralised cooperation, as seen in countries like Morocco, needs to shift from a top-down to a bottom-up perspective. This shift should not be seen as contradictory but complementary. Competencies vary widely, but regions with more initiative and capacity can become active partners in external cooperation.

A Network of Research Centres for Structured Interaction between Research and Action

- It is necessary to strengthen networks and projects among research centres, institutions, and other knowledge organisations to develop concrete macro-Mediterranean governance models and systems and disseminate them so that actors can adopt a relevant model, enabling them to act efficiently and effectively.
- A network of research centres is crucial for a structured approach to the interaction between research and action. First, it is essential to evaluate the impact of projects by studying their results. Second, knowledge capitalisation has primarily focused on program actors, but it should extend to more independent knowledge-



generating centres. Third, while there are city and regional networks, there are no networks of researchers dedicated to this topic.

- The network must adapt to the needs of practitioners from a demand-driven ap-

proach, by responding to their requirements. It is important to involve southern countries and individuals with expertise in these areas. Listening to stakeholders is crucial to generate a shared agenda on priority issues.

PROPOSALS

Shared North-South Territorial Cooperation: in the Mediterranean should have a shared north south vision and make cooperation projects functional for a development strategy and a multi-stakeholder approach that ensures the ownership of citizens and local populations.

Macro-Mediterranean Platforms: Such initiatives would facilitate communication and synergies to achieve streamlined objectives and complete common projects to ensure that actions are conducted as close to the territory as possible.

A network of Euro-Med territorial research centres is crucial for a structured approach to the interaction between research and action.

Watch the session recording: [Session 1: Territorial Cooperation perspectives in the New Euro-Mediterranean Dynamics](#)

SESSION 2

Tacking Climate Change and drought in the Mediterranean. Good practices of Water governance

SESSION 2a

The water dimension in Euro.Mediterranean initiatives



Moderated by

Xavier Bernard-Sans

Secretary General, Pyrenees Mediterranean Euroregion



Octavi Quintana
Director of PRIMA Foundation



Vincent Ernoux
Coordinator, Branch Office for the Western Mediterranean. Interreg NEXT MED Programme



Eva Garcia Balaguer
Coordinator, Pyrenees Climate Change Observatory (OPCC), Working Community of the Pyrenees (Interreg POCTEFA)

Water Governance Requires Transnational Cooperation

- The politics of adaptation: Specifically, adaptation methods such as water accounting become political through the transnational nature of the issue. The trans-border passing of water requires political cooperation and increased bilateral communication.
- We require a vision and strategy with clear objectives, governance provides a platform to maintain relations, encourage participation and carry out evaluation of projects.
- State-centric adaptation strategies make the financing of such projects difficult,

which is represented through the lack of concrete global projects for the management of water resources.

Multisectoral Approaches to Increase Efficiency of Projects

- The quantity of water used in our current agricultural patterns renders them unsustainable; tourists use 3 times more water over the same time of a normal resident. Current agricultural methods with intensive farming are unsustainable as too much water is wasted.
- These issues are too complex for uni-sector solutions. National systems work-

ing in conjunction with experts of various disciplines in a multisectoral approach is crucial.

- With a global vision in mind, it is important to localise projects so they can be detailed and better managed. In this sense, local actors are mobilised and empowered, with their interventions complementing the overall global strategy whilst uniquely targeting their local space.

of social change paired with scientific strategies is urgent; water stress and decreased access to water is not a futuristic problem but a harsh reality which many live in now.

- Technological solutions are important, though they must be paired with sociological transference towards adopting ecological transition and processes such as decarbonisation; the lack of public willingness could inhibit such transitions. The Southern Mediterranean was praised for its readiness to adapt, whilst emphasis was placed upon the Northern Mediterranean for the necessity of technological and societal transference.

Technological and Sociological Approaches in the Euro-Med Sphere

- Big questions remain over how the public are going to respond to the beyond border cooperation which problems such as water stress require. The transference

PROPOSALS

Transnational Strategy: Promoted through organisations, empowered to achieve results which were previously unavailable with national strategy.

Transference Implementation: The sociological transference of paired with technological



SESSION 2b

Good practices in Water governance and Climate Change



Moderated by

Alicia Pérez-Porro

Scientific Coordinator, Centre for Ecological Research and Forestry Applications (CREAF)

Speakers



Maria Garcies

Acting Executive Secretary, CPMR Intermediterranean Commission (ICM-CPMR)



Alessandro Miraglia

Team leader, Networking and Communication Facility, MedWaves



Xavier Amores

Director, Catalan Water Partnership (CWP)



Ramon Torra

Managing Director, Barcelona Metropolitan Area (AMB)



Mercè Boy

Coordinator of the Governance for Sustainability Group, BETA TC, University of Vic - Central University of Catalonia (UCC)

Interdisciplinary and Regional Collaboration

- Importance of Multi-Level Governance: Effective water resource management requires coordinated efforts between regional authorities, national policies, and international agreements. The Barcelona Convention serves as a model of governance, emphasising the need for integrated management of marine and coastal resources and legally binding enforcement mechanisms.
- Role of the Intermediterranean Commission of the CPMR: Promotes sustainable energy use in agriculture, specifically irrigation, by facilitating a transition to alternative energy systems and establishing new financing models.
- Cross-Sectoral Collaboration and Innovation: Encouraging the private sector to

contribute to water management through innovative business models and frameworks that promote public policies supporting transformative actions.

Sustainable Practices and Technological Innovation

- Photovoltaic Energy for Irrigation: Implementing long-term agreements for the purchase and sale of clean photovoltaic energy to reduce electricity costs and accelerate the transition to sustainable energy systems in agriculture.
- Digitalisation in Water Management: Projects focusing on digitalising underground water resources to track distribution and increase sustainability in water usage.
- Tourism Sector Engagement: Initiatives to encourage water conservation in the tourism sector, such as environmental



workshops and aid for water transition in tourist establishments.

of climate change, promoting resilience in water governance.

Prevention, Adaptation, and Mitigation Strategies

- Flood Prevention and Resilience: Collaborative efforts through projects such as EuroMed to prevent and mitigate the risks of sudden floods by improving local governance, forecasting, and nature-based solutions.
- Adaptation to Climate Risks: Emphasising the need for local populations to be more aware and prepared for climate risks, drawing lessons from agroforestry techniques in the southern Mediterranean.
- Mitigation through Nature-Based Solutions: Implementing strategies that use natural systems to mitigate the impacts

Integrated Territorial Management

- Territorial Cooperation for Water Management: Highlighting the connection between territorial management and urban services to address water management issues more effectively.
- Technological Solutions for Urban Use: Developing and implementing suitable technologies for urban water use to improve sustainability and efficiency.
- Community Engagement: Ensuring that the management of territory includes the participation of local communities, recognising the link between people and their environment in achieving sustainable water resource management.

PROPOSALS

Experiment to Increase the Responsive Capacity: Given the temporal urgency of responding to climate change, continuing to experiment and develop with new technologies is just as important as implementing existing ones now.

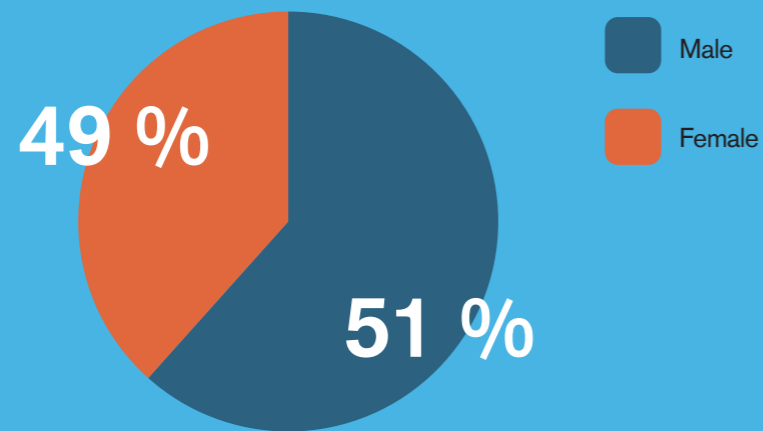
Build Upon Treaties: Multilateral treaties contribute to standard setting and provide a structural foundation to which local governments can be involved with.

Watch the session recording: [Session 2: Tackling Climate Change and drought in the Mediterranean. Good practices of Water governance](#)

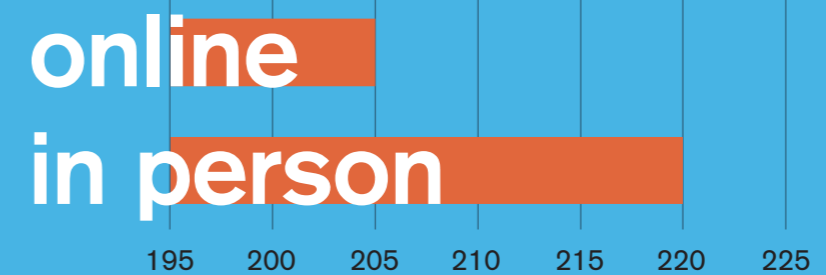


MedCat Days 2024 in numbers

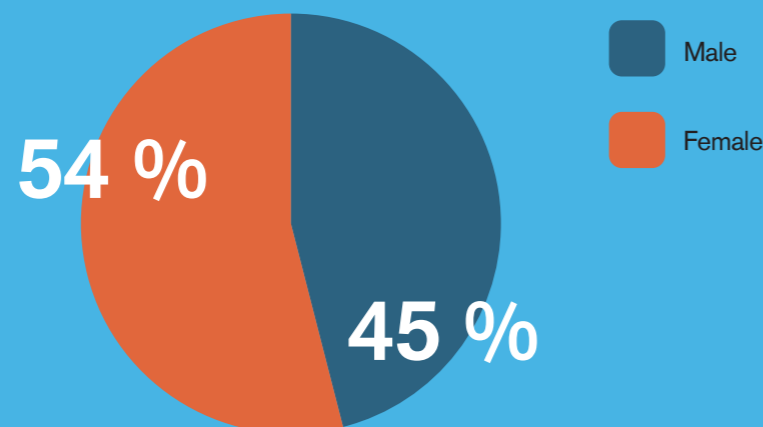
SPEAKERS



PARTICIPANTS



PARTICIPANTS (on site)



SOCIAL MEDIA

2.868
visits to the
MedCat
Days²⁰²⁴
webpage

Videos
played

144.838
times

 **5.700**
impressions

 **132**
impressions

