



2020 ACTIVITES REPORT



A word from the Coordinator

For 30 years, the MedWet Initiative has brought together our community of government representatives, scientists, NGOs and all those who defend our common values and address the challenges we face to enhance wetland conservation in the Mediterranean.

MedWet's 30th anniversary comes at a time of global crisis that is changing our world, starting from a changing climate and biodiversity loss and now with the COVID-19 Pandemic. My deepest sympathies to Member States and people bearing the brunt of this pandemic which is proving to be a crisis like no other. In 2020, COVID-19 has raveled our way of life. While the efforts of all your capitals are correctly focused on preventing human suffering, as parts of the world move slowly towards recovery, the environmental agenda remains one of our most powerful insurance policies in preventing future global pandemics like COVID-19.

The MedWet community is powerful enough to drive the change, we have the knowledge and we have the vision. We can be strong only by acting together to address the threatening environmental challenges.

When I took over my position as Coordinator of MedWet, I discovered an organization that is open to a multitude of possible combinations to support restoration of wetlands, and to prevent, stop and reverse the trends of their loss. Only by working together can we make a difference. Not only are the stakes high, but our ambitions are as well.

I would like to thank our outgoing President, Mrs. Hela Guidara and all the members of MedWet/Com for their support and unfailing involvement in wetland conservation. A special thank goes to the MedWet team - it is a great pleasure for me to work with such passionate and engaged people. Your governance and this great team will allow us to accomplish the priority goals I have set for my mandate.

My first concern was to strengthen MedWet's mission as a Regional Initiative of the Ramsar Convention and to enhance the implementation of the latter across the Mediterranean region.

Then I have taken to heart the repositioning of MedWet as the privileged interlocutor with the European Union for political advocacy. This mission was confirmed by our international partners and is being supported by the MAVA Foundation for 2020-2022.

Then very quickly came the idea of reconnecting with actors on the ground to promote the transfer of knowledge and expertise. In order to do this, we launched the Network of Mediterranean Ramsar Site Managers at the end of 2019. In this approach, we have also strengthened our links with local NGOs which now number 300 interacting with us, and to whom we are dedicating privileged attention for World Wetlands Day, thanks to the support of the French Biodiversity Agency (OFB).

The report that we are presenting below is not exhaustive. It aims to highlight some key successful actions achieved during 2020.

Let's continue to fight together to conserve our wetlands and save our biodiversity for a sustainable Mediterranean region!

Dr Alessio Satta, Coordinator

MedWet Governance

The Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative (MedWet) is the Ramsar Regional Initiative (RRI) intended to provide operational means for international cooperation and support for effectively implementing of the Ramsar Convention and its Strategic Plan in the Mediterranean region, and for improving the visibility of the Ramsar Convention and wetland-related issues of common concern, by means of voluntary international cooperation at regional level and, in particular, by involving all relevant national and regional stakeholders.

MedWet brings together 27 Mediterranean and peri-Mediterranean countries that are Parties to the Convention on Wetlands, Palestine and a number of international organizations and wetland research centers.

MedWet encourages and supports governments to adopt policies and implement actions on the ground in favour of the conservation and the sustainable use of Mediterranean wetlands. To do this MedWet creates synergies with a wide range of intergovernmental and non-governmental partners.



MedWet Donors in 2020

In 2020 MedWet received support from the member countries.

The organization also received support from the French Biodiversity Agency and the MAVA Foundation.

Furthermore, MedWet is beneficiary of one INTERREG MED project named Tune Up.



Project co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund

The MedWet structure is composed of five bodies, namely:

- a) a governing and decision-making body, the Mediterranean Wetlands Committee (MedWet/Com), bringing together all members of the Ramsar Regional Initiative (RRI);
- b) an intersessional governance body, the MedWet Steering Group (MedWet/SG);
- c) a coordinating body, the MedWet Secretariat;
- d) an advisory scientific and technical body, the MedWet Scientific and Technical Network (MedWet/STN); and
- e) a scientific wetlands monitoring body, the Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory (MWO).

The MedWet Secretariat

MedWet is coordinated by the MedWet Secretariat, which carries out the operational management and the administrative functions, with the support of the Ramsar Secretariat, as appropriate.

The MedWet Secretariat facilitates and promotes collaboration among MedWet members. It acts in according to the following objectives :

- a) to promote the effective implementation of the Ramsar Strategic Plan, pertinent Ramsar Resolutions and relevant policies and initiatives in the Mediterranean region by supporting actions on the ground by governments, civil society organizations and the private sector;
- b) to reinforce capacities in areas where these are not sufficiently developed, and especially to develop and ensure adaptive and integrated management of Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites) and other wetlands;
- c) to transfer to and exchange knowledge and expertise among key conservation and sustainable use actors in order to reinforce Mediterranean wetland management; and
- d) to coordinate with other regional and international actions and programmes relevant for wetland conservation and sustainable use, thereby serving to build synergies to support the implementation of the Convention in the region.



The Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory

The Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory was established to address the knowledge gap on the status and trends of wetland ecosystems in the region, and to develop awareness about their multiple values. Its ultimate goal is to improve wetland conservation and wise use by providing information to a broad audience, especially decision-makers and the public at large.

The Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory publishes papers and reports on the status and trends of Mediterranean wetlands to inform actors and decision makers. The first [Mediterranean Wetlands Outlook report \(MWO1\)](#) issued in 2012, was the first regional indicator-based assessment of the state of wetlands and the issues they face.

The second Mediterranean Wetlands Outlook report (MWO2) was issued in 2018. The MWO2 is based on the analysis of 16 indicators related to wetland biodiversity, the ecosystem services they provide, the threats they are facing, and the actions taken by society to conserve and to sustainably manage them.

The Scientific and Technical Network

The MedWet/STN is a Mediterranean working team composed of more than 50 scientists and experts on wetland-related issues from each Mediterranean country, respecting geographical, cultural and gender balances.

The main objectives of the MedWet STN are:

1. to provide scientific and technical support to the MedWet member countries concerning their policies and actions related to wetland conservation and sustainable use;
2. to encourage the establishment of scientific and technical networks focusing on wetland-related issues in each MedWet country; and
3. to provide inputs from a Mediterranean perspective to the work of the [Scientific and Technical Review Panel \(STRP\)](#) of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

The MedWet/STN works on five key areas: 1) • Biodiversity; 2) • Inventories; 3) • Climate change; 4) • Water; 5) • Ecosystem Service



As a Ramsar's Regional Initiative, the most relevant aim of MedWet is to implement the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016-2024 in the Mediterranean area.

The activities address the Ramsar Goals in the Mediterranean context in a sound and effective manner. All the activities of MedWet are designed to contribute to the achievement of specific targets of the four goals defined by Ramsar.

The purpose of this report is to present a focus on relevant key projects in which MedWet was engaged in 2020.

First of all we are pleased to introduce to you our team at the MedWet Secretariat !



Abderrahim Smari
Communication Officer



Alessio Satta
Coordinator



Isabelle Perroud
Administrative & financial officer



Flavio Monti
STN manager



Marianne Courouble
Policy expert



Chantal Menard
Communication expert



Sana Mezoughi
Network officer



Alessandro Mancosu
Network officer



Giuseppe Dodaro
Project manager

A key to success in 2020 Consolidating the communications leadership of MedWet : the OffYour Map campaign

In 2020, MedWet consolidated its role as leader to communicate and mobilise around Mediterranean coastal wetlands-related issues, through the Off Your Map campaign. As a reminder, it was a comprehensive communications initiative to raise the awareness of the value of Mediterranean coastal wetlands.

Under the coordination of MedWet an impressive and unprecedented list of international partners (BirdLife, DiversEarth, GWP Med, IUCN Med, MedINA, MedPAN, UNEP/MAP PAP-RAC, UNEP/MAP Plan Bleu, Tour du Valat and Wetlands International) worked closely together to raise awareness about the functions that wetlands play as nature-based solutions, in particular in the context of climate change and water abstraction for agriculture and coastal development while the wetlands have been suffering from massive destruction since 1970.

2020 was the last year of this campaign. After a highly successful press trip in Sardinia which was joined by more than 20 top environmental journalists from the region, we focused on improving the campaign storytelling, telling in particular the stories connected to the M3 demonstration sites, namely in Tunisia, Montenegro, Albania and Italy (Sardinia) through the website and social media (FB and Twitter). The Off Your Map Facebook page now has more than 4400 followers and thanks to the efforts we put up on social media, the website traffic generated 7671-page views (compared to the initial average of 216 page views), with most of the visitors coming from Mediterranean countries and the EU.



2020 was also a transition year for the MAVA M3 Initiative with a new phase to prepare for more activities through to 2022. According to MAVA and partners' evaluations on the first phase of the M3, the comms capacity provided by MedWet during the Off Your Map campaign was truly appreciated by all partners. As a result, we naturally took the lead of the communications for the M3 second phase proposal development, with an increased role, as we are now the communications lead of the entire M3, and no longer a satellite campaign.

Launch of phase 2 in autumn 2020 !

MedWet is definitively identified as the communication and policy leader for Wetlands !

Through an ambitious and integrated communication and advocacy strategy, MedWet is committed to fostering concrete actions on the ground and real political commitments, at the national, regional (Med) and international levels, to reverse the trend of ongoing degradation of coastal wetlands and unsustainable water abstraction in the Mediterranean Basin, which severely compromise the capacity of healthy coastal wetlands:

- to mitigate increasing climate change effects already affecting the region and
- to secure critical benefits to Mediterranean people and natural ecosystems in the future

Main activities carried out

Organising public awareness events, at the local, regional and international levels, and developing communication tools (factsheets, social media campaigns, story-telling, etc.) so that public opinion, stakeholders, including the private sector, will fully grasp the value of coastal wetlands and the

crucial and unique benefits and services they provide as well as the threats affecting them, targeting a maximum of relevant stakeholders.

Undertaking active advocacy activities (lobbying and technical contributions to regional and international meetings and relevant policy and regulatory agenda) to strive to influence decision-making processes (Ramsar COP, Barcelona Convention, EU Green Deal, UfM, UNFCCC, CBD, etc.), in particular promoting a strong Euro-Mediterranean coastal wetlands conservation and restoration plan.

Undertaking lobbying activities with the EU and the private sector to capture dedicated financial support for effective initiatives in favour of coastal wetlands in the Med.

Project partners

- communication and public awareness activities: IUCN, BirdLife Europe, MedSea, Tour du Valat
- policy advocacy: Tour du Valat, BirdLife Europe, Wetlands International, WWF Spain, MedIsWet



Main policy and advocacy achievements in 2020

MedWet has taken the lead, within its partnership, in advocating the conservation, wise use and restoration of Mediterranean wetlands with key regional and international institutions:



Alessio Satta, MedWet Coordinator, , PAP RAC Director & Lorenzo Galbiati, Project manager of the Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem (MedPartnership)

Barcelona Convention

At the last Meeting of the Barcelona Convention, COP 21 in December 2019, MedWet has become an Observer to the Convention and presented a policy position paper on the crucial role of coastal wetlands, and thereby their maintenance and restoration, in the framework of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Protocol.

MedWet is pursuing its advocacy work with the Barcelona Convention, in preparation of the next Conference of the Parties.

The EU

All through 2020, MedWet has built a working dialogue with the European Commission to make sure that the conservation of Mediterranean wetlands is taken into account into the new EU policy instruments of the EU Green Deal. Regular meetings have taken place with relevant EU officials in 2020 with plans to ensure that the restoration of the Mediterranean wetlands is part of the EU strategies in the forthcoming months.

An EU advocacy strategy has been drafted and a report produced for activities up to July 2020 (attached).

Direct advocacy activities has been undertaken in October- November 2020 with the EU to try to influence the next operational programme of work (2021-2027) of the European Neighbourhood and Partnership instrument (ENI) and to make sure that the conservation of Mediterranean coastal wetlands and the reduction and sustainable use of water resources in the Med are among the priorities of the EU Neighbourhood programme.

Union for Mediterranean (UfM)

MedWet has successfully achieved the labelling of the project "Enhance the conservation of coastal Wetlands in the Mediterranean Basin" as one of the implemented UfM projects to achieve the UfM Strategy for a Greener Med by 2030. The labelling is a key success as it gives additional advocacy opportunities, in a coordinated way at Med level, for the conservation of coastal wetland, but also to access additional relevant funding. <https://ufmsecretariat.org/project/enhancing-conservation-coastal-wetlands-mediterranean-basin/>

Medwet has contributed to the UfM Seminar on Blue Economy in March 2020, raising awareness of the contribution of the conservation and restoration of Mediterranean wetlands to climate change adaptation in the Med.

Other Policy and Advocacy achievements

1 / In 2020, MedWet has consolidated the Policy and Advocacy Task Force (PATF) (covering the projects: Off Your Map, MedIsWet et Water Plateform) that MedWet established in November 2019. Throughout 2020, MedWet, through the PATF, has led the advocacy work.

2 / Drafting of a full policy and advocacy strategy in favour of the conservation and restoration of coastal wetlands for the period Sept. 2020 to Oct. 2022, including drafting a resolution for the restoration of Mediterranean coastal wetlands to be adopted at the next conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention in November 2021.

3 / MedWet is developing a technical partnership with MedPan with a view to increasing advocacy impacts in favour of Mediterranean wetlands, in particular with the EU.



MedWet at the service of the Mediterranean Ramsar Site Managers !

In 2020 MedWet put itself at the service of managers by launching the Network of the Mediterranean Ramsar Site Managers.

There are **194 coastal Ramsar Sites in the Mediterranean region**. The MedWet Initiative encourages and supports governments to adopt policies and implement actions on the ground in favor of the conservation and the sustainable use of those ecosystems. Wetland Managers have a key role to play on the ground.

In order to support them, MedWet is building the Mediterranean Ramsar Site Managers Network (MeRSiM-Net). MeRSiM is a membership network of wetland managers dedicated to fostering best management practices, knowledge exchange and public education about wetland values and services.

Objectives

The aim is to upgrade wetland conservation to a more effective level, ensuring a promising future for Mediterranean wetlands.

The network provides managers and MedWet focal points the opportunity to share knowledge and experiences through online platforms and physical forums, to reinforce their capacities and to advocate for the conservation and effective management of their wetlands. The network will also allow the twinning of Ramsar Sites and produce guidelines to highlight best practices on the ground.

A new website dedicated the Mediterranean Ramsar Site Managers (MeRSiM) was also created (in the English language)

<https://medwetmanagers.net/>



2019 - 2020

MedWet launched a Mediterranean dynamic to celebrate World Wetlands Day

World Wetlands Day is celebrated annually to raise awareness of the importance of wetlands for humanity and the planet, on February 2, the anniversary of the adoption of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, in 1971.

Based on the French experience and with the support of the French Biodiversity Office, MedWet developed the momentum for World Wetlands Day at the Mediterranean level.



In 2020, MedWet's actions made it possible to identify 94 events in 12 countries around the Mediterranean, 24 of which were financially supported as part of a call for projects !

Objectives

This project aims to mobilize governmental and non-governmental actors around the issues of the preservation of wetlands by weaving a territorial network around the celebration of World Wetlands Day.

Partners

French Biodiversity Agency, Ramsar Secretariat, Ramsar France, Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT), Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory



Elements of success

A regional network of players: MedWet's census of Mediterranean Ramsar site managers and local NGOs allows the project to be relayed and a territorial network to be woven. The network thus constituted allows WWD to be amplified at the Mediterranean level.

That also permitted establishment of two national steering committees in Tunisia & Albania !

Tools in the languages of the countries around the Mediterranean: registration forms and maps of events, designed with MedWet partners, allow a relay with local players.

Financial support for events: a **call for projects open to all local organizations** provides concrete and effective support for their actions. This call helps to create a Mediterranean WWD identity and to strengthen cooperation between all the

The TUNE UP Project to Promote multilevel governance for biodiversity protection

The year 2020 is an important step in the life of the MedWet Secretariat funding. MedWet plays a transversal role and is responsible for capitalisation activities.

TUNE UP is a multi-module project tackling the need for a strategic and collaborative approach to Med MPAs management and biodiversity protection, by testing and capitalizing a multi-stakeholder/multi-level governance tool based on River/Wetland Contracts experience tested by the INTERREG MED WETNET project. TUNE UP will build on WETNET results exploiting the flexibility and feasibility of the River/Wetland Contract methodology and further developing it to MPAs management, assessing its effectiveness through the implementation of 10 MPA Contracts.

TUNE UP approach is based on vertical and horizontal subsidiarity, to achieve coordination among institutions at all involved levels, as well as to integrate funding, resources and plans. Indeed, the project will ensure higher coordination among stakeholders and decision makers, limiting any conflicts between preservation and economic issues, and will enhance the goal of biodiversity protection.

Objectives

- Stronger, coordinated and proactive involvement of key stakeholders in MPAs management.
- Improved effectiveness of MPAs management by integrating multilevel governance tools into national and regional policy instruments.
- More intensive transnational cooperation and networking between Med MPAs.

Main activities carried out

MedWet has built a strong partnership with project members to prepare the important strategic capitalization work that will culminate in 2021 and 2022.

MedWet has strengthened its positioning on policy advocacy with the integration of this programme.

Project partners

12 partners from 7 countries: Albania, France, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Slovenia and Spain. Anatoliki S.A., FAMP, MedWet, MedSea, Ministry of Tourism and Environment of Albania, Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy, ZRC SAZU, Spanish Ornithological Society (Birdlife), Tor du Valat, University of Montenegro Institute for Marine Biology, Amvrakikos Gulf – Lefkada Management Agency, University of Roma Tre Department of Architecture, AQUAPROGRAM

MedWet's other areas of expertise

Our organization has been involved in several other projects !

In 2020, we were happy to announce the publication “the Governance of Coastal Wetlands in the Mediterranean – a Handbook”

The Handbook has been developed as part of the overarching initiative of the MAVA Foundation ‘Coastal Wetland Action Plan’. Its preparation was initiated by the Priority Actions Programme Regional Activity Centre (PAP/RAC).

It was supported by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the MAVA Foundation for Nature. A valuable contribution to the content of the Handbook was made by the Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative (MedWet), the IUCN Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (IUCN ECARO), the Global Water Partnership-Mediterranean (GWP-Med) and the Network of Marine Protected Areas Managers in the Mediterranean (MedPan).

Valuable insights and reflections for the preparation of this Handbook were also provided by the following Mediterranean wetlands:

- Ghar el Melh Lagoon
- Lower Delta of the Bojana-Buna River
- The Buna River-Velipoje Protected Landscape
- Oristano Gulf

The handbook and the the Self-Assessment and Planning Tool have been translated into nine languages and is available on medwet website.



MedWet will play a strategic role in the new MAVA Restoration Project

This project aims to stimulate and support initiatives for the restoration of wetlands across the Mediterranean.

To provide wetland managers and decision makers with useful technical support, a Mediterranean wetland handbook of rules and standards for ecological restoration projects will be created.

The preparation of this manual is preceded by an assessment and identification of potential wetlands to be restored in each country - highlighting the main criticalities and threats - and by the identification of intervention priorities in Mediterranean wetlands, including those located in the islands, which have peculiar ecological characteristics.

The results of these activities will be presented to policy makers of various levels - to support them in launching regional and national strategies - and will be used for the drafting of a policy paper for advocacy at EU level.



MedWet joined the project: “Improving and Sharing the Knowledge base to promote Scaling up” coordinated by the Tour du Valat and funded by MAVA

The long-term goal of this project is to contribute significantly to the regeneration of the Mediterranean wetlands by focusing on the water abstraction and coastal development threats.

This strategy is structured along two operational axes:

- Using the MWO, the current major source of data on the trends of Mediterranean wetlands, as a link between Mediterranean partners in charge of managing and monitoring coastal wetlands;
- Transferring research results and lessons learned from two MAVA iconic sites (the Camargue and Doñana) to other key coastal wetland sites in the Mediterranean.

MedWet will organize online training courses (webinars) for wetland managers, members of the MedWet Network, capitalizing in particular on the Camargue/ Donana/ MWO experience on wetlands and climate change, management planning, invasive species etc.



Increased presence on the internet and social networks

www.medwet.org

A total of 117 articles and pages in three languages (EN, FR, AR) have been published in 2020. The website generated a high traffic with a total of 87,599 pageviews (2020), compared to 81,482 in 2019, with an increase of 7.51%. The number of users also has increased by 2.99%: 41,855 users (2020) compared to 40,639 users (2019).

www.offyourmap.org

The traffic of the website of the “Off Your Map” campaign on coastal wetlands has strongly increased from a total 1,718 pageviews (2019) to 12,298 pageviews (2020), with an increase of 615.83%.

MedWet is strongly active on social media through two Facebook pages, three Twitter accounts, one on LinkedIn, one on Instagram and a new YouTube Channel.

The two Facebook pages FR/EN (5284 likes) and AR (3566 likes), have gained a good number of subscribers in the period of early 2019 to end of 2020 with a total of 1301 new followers for the FR/EN page and 1230 for the Arabic page. On Twitter, the two accounts FR/EN (2379 subscribers) and AR (373 subscribers) gained a total of 586 new followers in the EN/FR account during the same period.

The Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory (MWO) in 2020



Thomas Galewski
MWO Coordinator

In 2020, major efforts have been made to update and acquire new biodiversity data or data obtained from satellite images:

- The MWO updated the database on the Land-Use and Land Cover (LULC) monitoring in Mediterranean wetlands (based on a sample of more than 300 wetland sites), and analysed the changes between 1975 and 2018. These data pave the way for analysing the causes and consequences of some of these changes, for wetland biodiversity and ecosystem services provided to humans.
- The MWO also prepared two new pan-Mediterranean databases, one on protected areas and the other on dams and reservoirs, which will be particularly useful for cross-analyses with other variables, such as waterbird counts.
- The MWO has developed a pan-Mediterranean and comprehensive map of Potential Wetland Areas. It is mainly based on hydro-ecological criteria and allows the detection and the delineation of areas where the occurrence probability of wetland habitats is high. This layer was also very relevant for detecting ancient and lost wetlands for instance. Through crossing it with global and pan-European land use maps, it provided a regional and pan-Mediterranean picture of potential areas for wetland restoration/regain projects.
- The MWO has obtained new data on species trends and conservation state to develop the first edition of the “Living Mediterranean Report” that will be released in 2021 and will provide an up-to-date picture of the state of biodiversity in the Mediterranean basin and encourage further actions.
- The MWO led a study on the exposure of Mediterranean Key Biodiversity Areas to climate change and land-use changes by 2100 that, when published, will provide a first basis for adapting and extending the network of protected areas.



We have continued to seek to strengthen the consideration of our messages:

- One of our priorities was the evaluation and improvements of the Mediterranean Wetland Outlook (MWO2) indicators and the format used. A survey started in 2019 among end users and our partners was followed up by a technical evaluation to improve the next issue of the Mediterranean Wetland Outlook (MWO3), planned for 2024.

- With our eyes on the future, we started preparing our presence and communication tools for the Ramsar COP and IUCN World Conservation Congress, in particular a Mediterranean contribution to the forthcoming Global Wetland Outlook 2, during which Ramsar will celebrate its 50 years of existence.



And what's new for the MedWet Scientific and Technical Network ?

In 2020, two important deliverables were produced by internal specialist groups of the STN. More specifically, we were happy to announce the publication of the Briefing Note “Environmental water requirements of wetlands and their importance for river basin management in the Mediterranean, including the effects of climate change on natural water flow”, developed by the Specialist Group on Water (Water-SG). This Briefing Note introduces a cognitive framework for the quantity, quality and timing of water flows required to sustain wetlands in the Mediterranean region.

The aim of this note is to support the conservation and the sustainable wise use of Mediterranean wetlands, in accordance with the implementation of the Ramsar Convention. Wetlands are vital for human survival. As one of the world’s most productive environments, wetlands are indispensable for countless benefits or ecosystem services. These benefits range from freshwater supply, food, building materials and biodiversity, to flood control, groundwater recharge and climate change mitigation. Nowadays, with the human population increasing rapidly and climate change representing a further challenge, there is an emerging demand for improving and consolidating basic and applied knowledge to address wetlands issues with a long-term and integrated vision. This document includes both theoretical and practical information, reporting on specific case studies from the Mediterranean region, and provides tailor-made management recommendations to support and serve both site managers and policy makers to assist them in developing and implementing adaptation strategies in the face of climate change.

Similarly, in collaboration with the IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation (IUCN-Med), the Biodiversity Specialist Group (Biodiversity/SG) has launched an exciting new collaborative storymap named “Unwelcomed guests” which focuses on the interactions and impacts of Invasive Alien Species (IAS) in Mediterranean wetlands.

IAS, as described by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), are “animals, plants or other organisms introduced by man into places out of their natural range of distribution, where they become established and disperse, generating a negative impact on the local ecosystem and species.” In the worst cases, these unwelcome guests can eventually cause the extinction of indigenous species and drive ecological devastation, especially in the Mediterranean wetlands that are familiar with their effects.

According to the IUCN Red List of Threatened SpeciesTM, IAS are one of the top five threats that drive species to extinction. Who or what are these threatening guests? How can they affect biodiversity, environment and people? What are the initiatives to tackle them in the Mediterranean? Discover all of that on the website of the storymap:

medconservationmaps.org/story/Unwelcomed_guests



IAS is a key issue for freshwater ecosystems and biodiversity conservation in the Mediterranean region and worldwide. MedWet, through the Specialist Group on Biodiversity of the MedWet STN, contributed to producing this storymap by providing advice and guidelines on which IAS should be eradicated as a priority, including best elimination techniques based on previous successful operations. In the storymap, the role of citizen science as an important data provider (involving citizens in collecting data on invasive species distribution) has been highlighted.

30th anniversary of MedWet !

Thirty years of engagement for wetlands and people in the Mediterranean



The Mediterranean Wetlands Initiative (MedWet), the first regional initiative under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, celebrates its 30th anniversary in 2021. The anniversary comes at a time of growing momentum to achieve a more sustainable future for the Mediterranean region. Established in 1991, MedWet already has a history of sharing knowledge, tools and technical capacities between governmental institutions and civil society working on wetlands in the Mediterranean.

“MedWet’s strength lies in its ability to bring together all those concerned by Mediterranean wetlands – from decision makers to field staff – to convince them of the need for good professional capabilities for management and restoration and to provide them with the tools for implementation,” said the late Luc Hoffmann (1923 – 2016), one of the founding fathers of the Ramsar Convention and co-founder.

<https://medwet.org/fr/30th-anniversary-of-medwet/>



© Guillem Casal Font, Andorre - Rivage Salses-Leucate, France - Generalitat Valenciana, Spain - Aib Slimane Yakoub, Algeria - Laurent Sorba, Corsica, France - Asso de Sauvegarde des Zones Humides du Sud Tunisien, Tunisia - Thanos Giannakakis WWF Greece, Turkey - MedWet, Albania - Isabelle Perroud, Camargue, France - Joao Carlos Farinha, Portugal - Yves Kayser, Camargue, France - Jean Jalbert, Morocco - E. Porcus, Sardinia, Italy

