

ACTIVITIES REPORT 2025

"As the first Regional Initiative established under the Ramsar Convention, MedWet continues to stand as an active and effective platform for regional cooperation and collective action in support of Mediterranean wetlands. Over the years, it has brought together countries, institutions, experts, and local stakeholders around a shared commitment to protecting wetlands and promoting sustainable management across the Mediterranean region.

The year 2025 has once again demonstrated the importance of solidarity and cooperation in addressing the increasing pressures facing wetlands across our region. In particular, MedWet played a highly visible and active role during the Ramsar COP15 discussions held over the past year. Through the engagement of our members and partners, the Mediterranean perspective was strongly represented in global discussions on biodiversity conservation, climate resilience, and sustainable development. This active participation reaffirmed the strategic role of MedWet within the wider Ramsar community and highlighted the value of regional collaboration in shaping global environmental priorities.

Another important milestone of 2025 was the organization of the MedWet/Com meeting, which provided an essential opportunity to review our progress, exchange perspectives, and strengthen our common vision for the years ahead. During this process, new members of the Steering Group were also appointed, further reinforcing the inclusive and dynamic governance structure of MedWet.

This report reflects only part of the profound dedication and collective effort demonstrated throughout the year by our wide community of partners and contributors. These include technical experts, scientists, institutional partners, local leaders, educators, volunteers, and many others who work tirelessly to ensure that Mediterranean wetlands remain a symbol of our region's rich ecological and cultural heritage.

We extend our sincere appreciation to all stakeholders for their cooperation and solidarity. Their commitment continues to inspire us and strengthens our determination to work together for the future of Mediterranean wetlands and for a more resilient and sustainable Mediterranean region. Report."

Serih Hizli
Chair of the MedWet Steering Group
Government of Türkiye

"2025 was a busy year for the MedWet team and its governance, with delivery of multiple projects and some major events taking place across the year. It was also my first full year as MedWet coordinator, and gave me a real chance to meet partners, understand policy and governance structures, and spend time visiting sites and meeting people delivering work on the ground. Highlights included spending World Wetland Day in Algeria, meeting local stakeholders in Egypt, watching turtles lay eggs in Patara, Türkiye, and regular visits to the Camargue, showing me the amazing wealth of wetlands across the region, the challenges they face and the great work being done by our members and partners.

We had a very constructive role at the Convention on Wetlands CoP15 (Conference of the Parties), really promoting the role of MedWet and all the RRI's in delivering the objectives of the Convention in our regions. I have also had the pleasure of working closely with our governance, our new Chair Türkiye, and with the new members of our Steering Group. We are grateful for their support, particularly to Spain for pushing the updating of our Terms of Reference.

Finally I would like to congratulate the MedWet team for delivering so much work across the year. You will read in this report the huge amount that we achieved, and this is testament to their hard work, with limited time and resources, across some complex projects. We have all worked hard to deliver for wetlands and to raise the visibility of MedWet across the region."

Chris Rostron, MedWet Coordinator

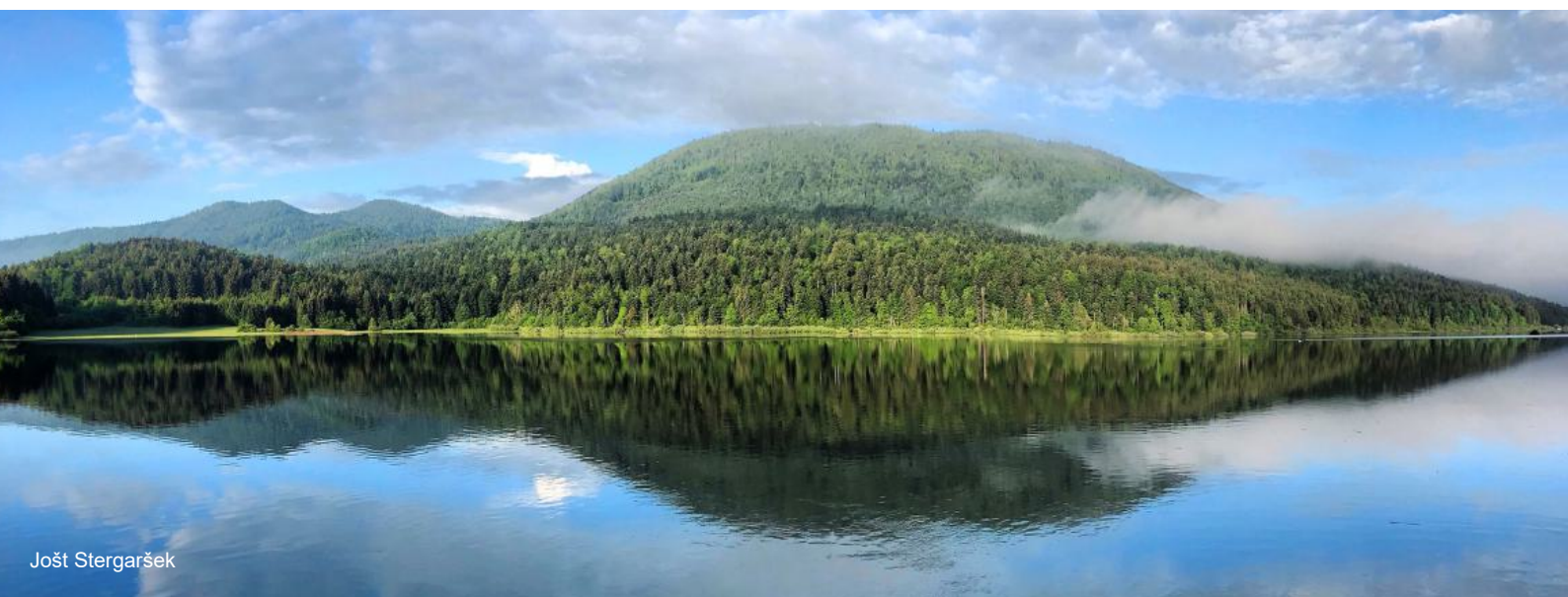
Our vision

MedWet : a community at the service of Mediterranean wetlands

The MedWet mission is to ensure and support the effective conservation of the functions and values of Mediterranean wetlands and the sustainable use of their resources and services.

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 centres are also part of the MedWet Initiative.

One of MedWet's successes lies in establishing a community of stakeholders committed to wetland conservation: governments, scientists, managers, and Non-governmental organization (NGOs) from across the Mediterranean. This community supports governments in adopting policies and implementing on-the-ground actions.



Jošt Stergaršek

Thank you to the funders who have supported us in 2025

In 2025, the MedWet Secretariat received contributions from member countries of the Initiative as well as some additional voluntary contributions from Spain.

The organisation receives support from the French Biodiversity Agency (OFB) to implement a Communication, Education, Awareness, and Participation (CEPA) program.

The MedWet Secrétariat is also an associate beneficiary of several consortia:

- Horizon Europe RESTORE4Cs - EU funding
- H2020 Rest-Coast - EU funding
- Interreg Med - WE GO COOP - EU funding
- Mediterranean Consortium for Biodiversity - MAVA - FFEM funding



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.

It works to achieve 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 team is composed as follow :



Abderahim Smari
Communication Officer
webdesigner



Chris Rostron
MedWet Coordinator



Isabelle Perroud
Admin & financial management
Programme CEPA



Marianne Courouble
Policy Expert



Pierre Vignes
Training Officer



Sana Mezoughi
Network facilitator
Advisor For Wetland City



MedWet at COP15 of the Ramsar Convention

The 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (COP15) took place from 23 to 31 July 2025 in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. Based on the theme “Protecting Wetlands for Our Common Future,” the conference highlighted the crucial role wetlands play in maintaining ecological health, supporting biodiversity, and strengthening climate resilience.



The MedWet/COM 16

MedWet held the 16th meeting of the Mediterranean Wetland Committee (MedWet/Com 16), its governing body. Government representatives, national and international organizations, and wetland experts gathered to discuss and adopt key decisions that will shape the future of MedWet and strengthen efforts to protect Mediterranean wetlands. Key decisions made during MedWet/Com 16 include the election of Turkey as the new MedWet Chair, with Egypt as Co-chair, the appointment of new regional representatives, and the adoption of a three-year budget and workplan.

Wetland Resolutions

The key Resolution for MedWet was the one on RRIs, confirming our role in the delivery of the Ramsar objectives, outlining the importance of the RRI mechanism to a successful implementation of the Convention.

Map of Wetlands of International Importance in the Mediterranean region

The Mediterranean Sea is the meeting point of three continents, creating a unique region of the planet. This beautiful map was produced by the Spanish Government with support from Portugal and the MedWet network for first use at COP15the 15th Conference of the Parties in Zimbabwe.

It aims to show the richness and diversity of the region, its wetlands, nature and the efforts that have been made to conserve them through the Ramsar Regional Initiative. The map can be downloaded it for use to promote, educate and raise awareness of the importance of wetlands.

<https://medwetmanagers.net/wp-content/uploads/Mediterraneo02.pdf>



MedWet's significant contribution to side events

The Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory: A science-policy interface to guide decisions

MedWet facilitated a special side event and highlighted the Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory's role as a science-policy interface, providing data to monitor Mediterranean wetlands and support the work of MedWet. It brought together representatives from Contracting Parties, researchers, and NGOs to discuss wetland trends, share knowledge, and propose collaborative, nationally tailored solutions. The session emphasized translating scientific data into policy to advance MedWet's strategic objectives and Ramsar commitments.

More information about the "Mediterranean Wetlands Outlook 3" report can be found here : <https://medwet.org/mediterranean-wetlands-outlook-3-mwo-3/>

Overseas dialogue between the Caribbean, Europe and the Mediterranean – Building skills and knowledge to address climate change through wetland-based solutions

This event showcased how three regional projects—RESTORE4Cs (Europe), RESCOM (Mediterranean), and the Wise Use of Caribbean Wetlands—are building capacity for wetland

monitoring, and a Community of Practice for Wetland Restoration. It promoted interregionall dialogue on barriers, drivers, and enablers of restoration, highlighting governance tools, policy examples, and approaches to identify priority sites.

The Mediterranean Biodiversity Consortium (MBC), represented by MedWet, took part in a side event on the Freshwater Challenge

This side event looked at how governments and partners are taking action to scale up the restoration of freshwater systems. Marianne Courouble, from MedWet participated under the banner of the RESCOM project — the first regional initiative led by the MBC, a consortium of key conservation organisations. She used this opportunity to introduce the initiative as a Mediterranean community of practice with the involvement of 9 coastal Mediterranean sites, including many wetlands that includes capacity building modules on Nature-based solutions involving site managers, an innovative Think and Do Tank and an advocacy strategy aimed at influencing regional policy to better integrate risks associated with climate change and biodiversity loss.

From the Mediterranean to the world: RRI shine at COP15

MedWet coordinated with the other RRI to host a 6m x 3m stand at COP15, showcasing global wetland information and screening the RRI film produced by the Ramsar Secretariat, which highlights the diverse and far-reaching impact of the RRI worldwide. MedWet also created a world map featuring all the RRI, each accompanied by QR codes linking to their respective websites.



SARRI & MedWet at COP 15



MedWet plays a key role in supporting the Ramsar Regional Initiatives and the launch of the SARRI Initiative

MedWet chaired the meeting of the 15 RRI's attending the conference, with Musonda Mumba, Secretary General of the Convention on Wetlands, and Beom-sik Yoo, Senior Advisor for Asia/Oceania at the Convention. The group discussed the issues facing RRI's, how they can support each other and learn from each other, and how the Secretariat could better support them by using reporting to promote the achievements of the RRI mechanism.

The RRI's reaffirmed the importance of stronger collaboration, peer learning, and using the identity of the Convention on Wetlands to increase visibility, influence, and opportunities.

Then the MedWet Coordinator participated in a panel during the launch side event of SARRI. The main objective of the launch was to formally introduce SARRI and raise awareness about its mission to support a broad range of conservation and development opportunities in wetland landscapes across the SADC region.

MedWet participation at the Ramsar Pre-COP meeting for Africa and SARRI workshop in Morocco

MedWet took part in two Ramsar events in Marrakech, supporting the South Africa Ramsar Regional Initiative (SARRI) and attending the Ramsar Pre-COP meeting for Africa.

The SARRI initiative aims to create a new Ramsar Regional Initiative (RRI) for Southern Africa, and this was the second workshop that we attended, run by NatureXperts and supported by the French Biodiversity Agency. The event brought together representatives from 12 southern African countries. Tobias Salathé, Gordana Beltram (online) and Chris Rostron took part, leading discussions and using the experience of MedWet to support SARRI's next steps.

Through a series of presentations, workshops and interactive activities, the meeting resulted in signing of the terms of references, developing the basis for a work plan and strategy, and starting to identify specific projects to get the initiative going. MedWet continues to be involved in SARRI's development.



Report on MedWet's Participation in the 24th Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, Egypt



The Barcelona COP24Med meeting, organized by UNEP/MAP, took place from 2 to 5 December 2025 in Cairo, Egypt. The meeting brought together accredited delegations from the 22 Contracting Parties - 21 Mediterranean coastal states and the European Union - along with observers, MAP Partners, and intergovernmental organizations. MedWet actively contributed to COP24 through its involvement in several side events.

Side event: Mediterranean Coastal and Marine Restoration: Bridging Local Practice and Policy for Biodiversity and Climate Resilience

The event was organised by MedWet, ETC-UMA, IUCN, and the Mediterranean Biodiversity Consortium. Drawing on insights from major Mediterranean initiatives such as RESCOM, RESTCOAST, Restore4Cs, and Wetland4Change. The session underscored the urgent need to embed coastal and marine restoration within national and regional policy frameworks. A multi-ecosystem approach was highlighted as essential for strengthening resilience and advancing climate mitigation and adaptation across the region.

The MedWet Coordinator, facilitated the panel discussion, while our MedWet policy expert, presented on behalf of the Mediterranean Biodiversity Consortium, the policy recommendations to upscale Nature-based Solutions and strengthen the resilience of coastal ecosystems at the forefront of climate change.

Find these detailed recommendations in the policy brief published by the Mediterranean Biodiversity Consortium <https://bit.ly/4pjYrfY>

Side event: The protection, restoration and connectivity of marine, coastal and freshwater ecosystems in the Mediterranean: the challenges ahead

MedWet took part in the side event “The protection, restoration and connectivity of marine, coastal and freshwater ecosystems in the Mediterranean: the challenges ahead”, co-organised by the Fondation Prince Albert II de Monaco and PAMEx.

As 80% of people living on the southern shore of the Mediterranean Basin are already experiencing severe water scarcity and water pollution, the event highlighted the urgent need for collective action to restore and sustainably manage freshwater ecosystems across the region. It also explored how restoration, ecological connectivity, and effective regional cooperation can advance progress toward the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) Targets 2 and 3.

The Fondation Prince Albert II de Monaco also showcased DIMFE as a strong example of a donor-led initiative strengthening freshwater and wetland resilience across the region.



Side Event : Presentation of the Mediterranean Wetlands Outlook 3 (MWO-3)

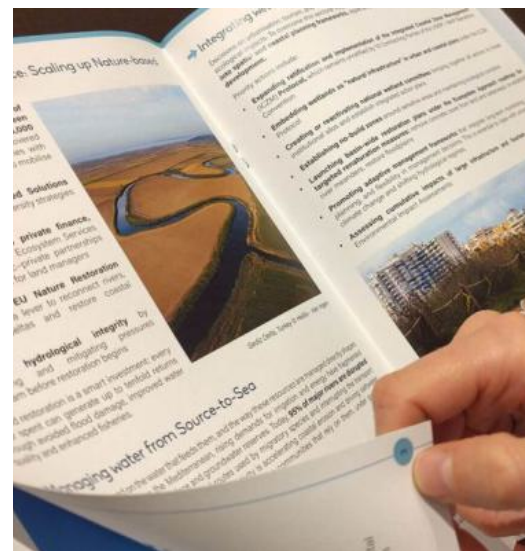
The side event unpacked the MWO-3 and its value not only for the Convention on Wetlands but also for advancing the goals of the UNEP/ MAP-Barcelona Convention.

Produced by the Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory (MWO), MWO-3 (2025) is the most recent and comprehensive scientific assessment of the state of Mediterranean wetlands. It combines ecological data, socio-economic analyses and recommendations for decision-makers, providing a decision-making tool for governments, local authorities and other stakeholders. Find the report here.

A policy brief outlining key levers for strengthening coastal wetland conservation was presented during the event. The discussions highlighted three key recommendations:

Closer alignment with the Barcelona Convention, notably its Integrated Coastal Zone Management protocol, by developing coastal-wetland-specific indicators that can directly support implementation across Mediterranean countries.

https://tourduvalat.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/2025_Policy-brief-Outlook_web.pdf



The National Conference on Wetlands In Egypt

MedWet also participated in the National Conference on Wetlands in Egypt which took place on 7 December in Cairo. The event was co-organised by the Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory, in partnership with MedWet, the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency and the RAED- Arab Network for Environment and Development. Bringing together 50 participants from across Egypt and several international organisations, the conference raised awareness of the crucial role of wetlands for water, biodiversity, climate adaptation and human well-being in Egypt, shared the latest data from the Mediterranean Wetlands Outlook 3,

presented ongoing national initiatives, including the RESCOM project led by the Mediterranean Biodiversity Consortium recently launched on Lake Burullus. It also strengthened dialogue between public institutions, researchers and civil society, and laid the foundations for updating Egypt's National Wetlands Strategy.



MedWet strengthens the promotion of Communication, Education, Awareness and Participation (CEPA) activities in the Mediterranean with the support of the French Biodiversity Agency



To raise awareness of the importance of wetlands for humanity and the planet, **World Wetlands Day (WWD)** is celebrated every year on 2 February, 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 Agency MedWet has developed the World Wetlands Day dynamic at the Mediterranean level.

This project aims to mobilise governmental and non-governmental actors in wetland conservation issues by weaving a territorial network around the celebration of World Wetlands Day. This action has made it possible to significantly strengthen links with civil society, particularly local NGOs working with future generations. **In 2025 :**



Key elements for success :

- A regional network of actors: Ramsar Site managers and local NGOs enabled the project to be carried out and a regional network to be set up.
- Tools in the languages of the countries around the Mediterranean: registration forms and event maps, designed with MedWet partners and used to relay information to local players.
- A call for projects open to all local organisations provides concrete support for their actions. This call will make it possible to support 34 events per year, to create a Mediterranean identity for the WWD,

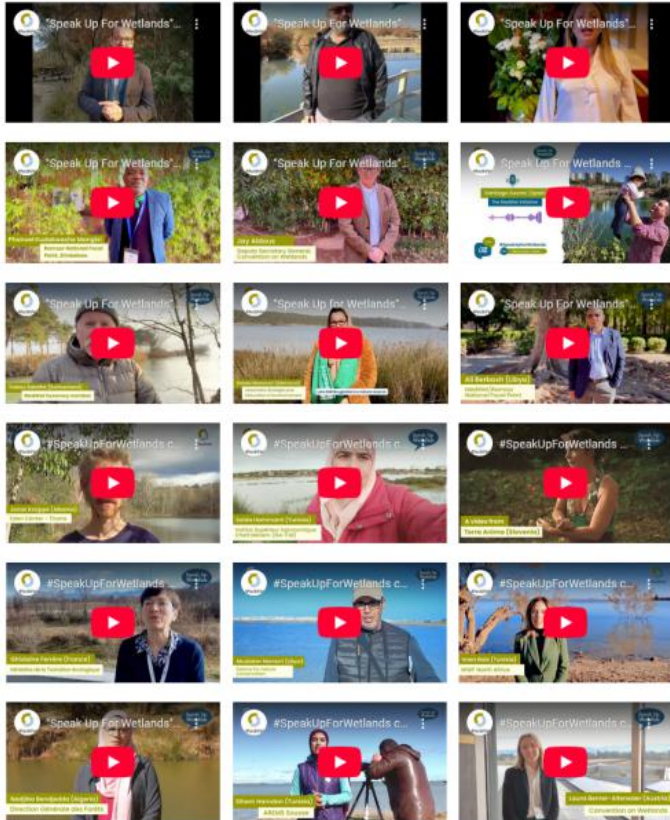
Partners

The Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention, the Ramsar France association, the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT), and the Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory with the support of the French Biodiversity Agency.

The Your voice can make a difference

MedWet launched the **#SpeakUpForWetlands campaign in the framework of World Wetlands Day 2025** to elevate the voices of people from across the Mediterranean and create a powerful collective message urging decision-makers to take action to protect wetlands.

<https://medwet.org/speakupforwetlands-campaign-your-voice-can-make-a-difference/>



MedWet organized a series of 4 webinars to design an awareness event on wetlands

4 WEBINAIRES

CONCEVOIR DES ACTIONS DE COMMUNICATION, D'ÉDUCATION, DE SENSIBILISATION ET DE PARTICIPATION SUR LES ZONES HUMIDES

REJOIGNEZ-NOUS

**7 MAI**

Construire sa stratégie zones humides de communication, d'éducation, sensibilisation et participation.

**21 MAI**

Promouvoir et valoriser ses actions de communication, d'éducation, de sensibilisation et de participation.

**12 JUIN**

Concevoir ses actions de sensibilisation ou d'éducation.

**26 JUIN**

Découvrir des dispositifs de sensibilisation et de participation.



MedWet participates in World Wetlands Day 2025 celebration in Algeria

The Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development, and Fisheries of Algeria, through the General Directorate of Forestry (DGF), celebrated World Wetlands Day by organizing an official national event on Sunday, 2 February, at the Djorf Torba reservoir in the Wilaya of Bechar. The event, held under the theme 'Protecting Wetlands for Our Common Future', aimed to highlight and valorize wetlands in the southern regions, such as those in Bechar. Local school children also joined the celebration, participating in a drawing competition.



MedWet and Wetland City accreditation

The 4th Roundtable of Wetland City Mayors: A Three-Day Celebration of Wetlands, Culture, and Global Cooperation in Tata, Hungary

From 27–29 November 2025, the city of Tata, Hungary, with the support of the Ramsar Regional Centre – East Asia RRC-EA, welcomed delegations from around the world for the 4th Roundtable of Wetland City Mayors.

MedWet's Contribution to the 4th Roundtable of Wetland City Mayors and the IAC

MedWet played an active role in discussions at the 4th Roundtable of Wetland City Mayors in Tata. The MedWet Coordinator, participated in the meeting of the Independent Advisory Committee (IAC) for Wetland City Accreditation, acting as the Ramsar Regional representative

Our MedWet Advisor for Wetland City Accreditation, delivered a presentation on “Strengthening the Mediterranean Dynamic for Wetland City Accreditation,” supported by the Office Français pour la Biodiversité. The session highlighted the strong engagement of Mediterranean cities and partners, notably Ramsar France and the importance of boosting collaboration, visibility, and support for future candidate cities.

The First Mediterranean Meeting of Ramsar Cities: Mediterranean cities united for the protection of urban and peri-urban wetlands

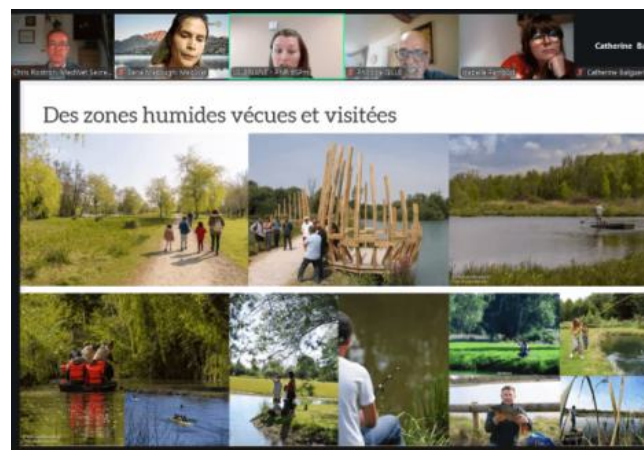
In October, the first meeting of accredited “Wetland Cities under the Ramsar Convention” in the Mediterranean region was held online, co-organised by MedWet and Ramsar France, with the support of the French Biodiversity Office (OFB). This bilingual webinar (French–English) brought together Mediterranean and peri-Mediterranean cities accredited as Ramsar Cities, along with municipal representatives and key stakeholders involved in the management and promotion of urban wetlands.

Through this webinar, MedWet and Ramsar France aimed to strengthen the Mediterranean dynamic around the “Wetland City” label and encourage exchanges among committed cities.

The testimonies of accredited cities formed the core of the webinar, showcasing their achievements, challenges, and ambitions to strengthen the integration of wetlands into local policies.

A collective discussion concluded the session, emphasising a shared commitment to enhance regional cooperation and revitalise the Mediterranean Ramsar Cities network. Find out more:

<https://medwet.org/first-mediterranean-meeting-of-ramsar-cities-mediterranean-cities-united-for-the-protection-of-urban-and-peri-urban-wetlands/>



The Mediterranean Wetlands Outlook 3 (MWO-3) A strategic assessment in a context of growing tensions

For over a decade, the Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory (MWO) has supported public policy and conservation efforts by producing regional assessments based on robust scientific data. This third edition **“Mediterranean Wetlands: Responses to ongoing Crises”** marks a new milestone, providing an up-to-date overview, in a context of mounting environmental, social and climatic pressures.

MWO-3 draws on a structured analysis using 18 DPSIR indicators (Drivers – Pressures – State – Impacts – Responses), developed by the MWO in close collaboration with a broad network of scientific and technical partners across the 28 countries of the MedWet, the Ramsar Regional Initiative, and beyond.

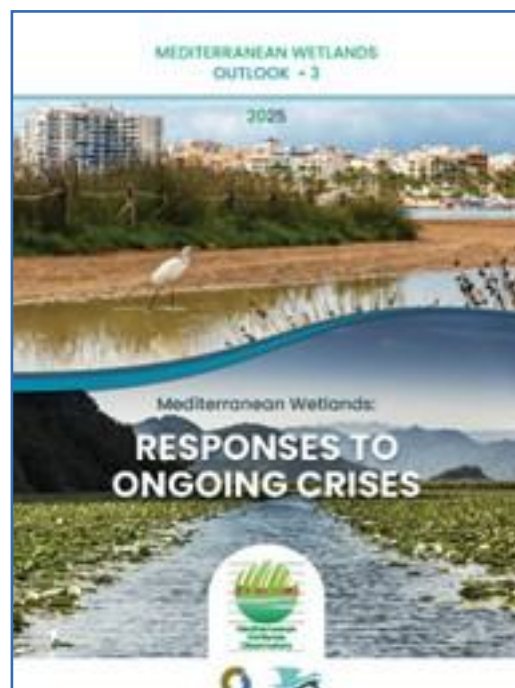
The findings highlight an ongoing degradation: continued loss of wetlands and ecological quality, alteration of hydrological connectivity, mounting pressure on water resources, and increasing vulnerability to climatic extreme events. Yet the report goes beyond diagnosis. It also sheds light on existing responses and potential for improvement. It identifies concrete levers for restoring ecological functions, strengthening ecosystem resilience, and ensuring the sustainable provision of services to Mediterranean societies.

The report is structured into three complementary components: a technical summary based on 18 DPSIR indicators; recommendations built on five levers for action; and a series of indicator fact sheets.

MWO-3 is intended for all stakeholders concerned with the future of Mediterranean wetlands: national authorities, local governments, river basin agencies, civil society organisations, scientists, users and local communities. It aims to inform dialogue, improve policy coherence, and inspire coordinated, ambitious action that meets the scale of the challenges.

In a Mediterranean region facing multiple tensions, the message from the MWO is clear: protecting wetlands is not about halting development; it is what makes development possible, integrated and sustainable.

Download the report : <https://medwet.org/mediterranean-wetlands-outlook-3-mwo-3/>



Others Projects during 2025

The Mediterranean Biodiversity Consortium & RESCOM Project

The Mediterranean Biodiversity Consortium is an innovative partnership between leading conservation organisations around the Mediterranean, using a multi-ecosystem partnership to deliver conservation gains, through a Nature-based Solutions approach. The first major project is RESCOM (Strengthening the Resilience of Ecosystems in the Mediterranean), funded through the AFD and FFEM. Working across 9 pilot sites around the Mediterranean, the project consists of a small grants scheme, a 'Think and Do Tank', training and capacity building.

MedWet leads on the areas of Communication and Advocacy, training and capacity building and supporting the Think and Do tank. We lead on the website, social media and communications support, providing a structure to raise the visibility of the project across the region, as well as support local partners to better share their activities. We also work to produce policy guidance, and to represent the partnership at major international events such as the CoPs of the Convention on Wetlands and Barcelona Convention. We are working with PIM to create and deliver a programme of training across our local partners, building their capacity to deliver conservation work on the ground. Through the Think and Do Tank, a connection is made between delivery and policy / strategy, creating a two way exchange to strengthen the approach.

<https://www.medconsortium.org/>



Horizon Europe RESTORE4Cs

The Horizon project RESTORE4Cs, led by the University of Aveiro, assessed the role of restoration action on wetlands capacity in terms of climate change mitigation and a wide range of ecosystem services using an integrative socio-ecological systems approach. MedWet led on the aspects of training and capacity building across the six pilot sites, setting up of a community of practice and the production of 11 policy briefs. The CoP links to the Convention on Wetlands Resolution XIV.17, addressing the impacts of climate change through wetland restoration and multi-stakeholder involvement, and builds on our Wetland Base Solutions platform. The project demonstrated that wetland restoration has long term benefits for carbon sequestration and that working with local stakeholders is essential to achieve positive results.

<https://www.wetlandbasedsolutions.org/>

H2020 REST-COAST

This ambitious EU H2020-funded project across 11 countries aims to demonstrate that large-scale coastal restoration provides multiple benefits, including climate change adaptation, and promotes engagement through decision-makers, citizens and other stakeholders. MedWet's role was to produce policy support. Our policy expert Marianne Courouble worked to develop a document D5.6: A Blueprint for Coastal Restoration, and presented this in November at the European Parliament in Brussels by the MEP Group on Climate Change, Biodiversity & Sustainable Development co-chaired by MEP Gonzalez Casares.

Interreg Med WEGOCOOP

Through the WE GO COOP project, co-funded within the framework of the Interreg Euro-MED Programme, MedWet took part in the creation of the Community of Practice on Wetland Contracts in the Mediterranean which has been formally recognized as a collaborative space aimed at strengthening wetland governance, fostering knowledge exchange, and promoting coordinated action across the Mediterranean region.

<https://wetlandsgovernance.eu/>