

WES-BCA PRESS RELEASE

WES-BCA project Webinar supports Partner Countries in reporting national policies and strategies to conserve and sustainably use biological diversity under the 7th National Reports to the Convention on Biological Diversity

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The EU funded “Water and Environment Support-Biodiversity and Climate Action (WES-BCA) in the Neighbourhood South region” project held its regional online Webinar “Reporting Structures and Indicators for the 7th National Reports (7NRs) under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)” on the 21st of January 2026.

The webinar was co-organised with the Union for Mediterranean (UfM) in cooperation with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD), Directorate-General for the Middle East, North Africa and the Gulf (DG-MENA), and Directorate-General for Environment (DG ENV) of the European Commission.

The webinar provided support to Partner Countries such as guidance on reporting structures, indicators, in aligning with the CBD, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)*, and Mediterranean biodiversity commitments (including SAPBIO), taking into account and benefitting from relevant regional approaches including the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030.

The 7NR assesses national biodiversity trends, policies, and strategies. Its preparation involves cross-sectoral data collection and stakeholder engagement, ensuring transparency and accountability. Countries are requested to effectively prepare and submit their 7NR by February 2026.

The webinar also helped the participants to understand that an alignment between national strategies and regional frameworks could ensure coherence with the biodiversity commitments under the Barcelona Convention (UNEP/MAP and its protocols), the UfM and relevant EU policies and initiatives.

As a result, it facilitated knowledge exchange, regional cooperation and peer learning on biodiversity challenges and commitments in the Mediterranean.

The webinar was attended by the Focal Points of the Convention of Biological Diversity, the WES-BCA Environment and Water Focal Points, consultants appointed to support the national efforts for the preparation of the 7NR, ministry representatives and key stakeholders involved in the CBD reporting in the Partner Countries.

Mr Lijie Cai, Programme Management Officer, Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, stated during his opening speech: “The submission of the 7NRs by all the Parties before or by the deadline is crucial for the global review of collective progress in the implementation of the Kunming Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework to be undertaken at COP 17 in Armenia in October this year, as the seventh national report has been identified in COP decision 16/32 as a primary source of information for the global review”.

Ms Alessandra Sensi, Head of Sector, Environment, Green and Blue Economy, UfM, highlighted the importance of the webinar, which served as bridge between the Global Biodiversity Framework, the European Med and Ocean Pacts, and the EuroMed context represented by the UfM. The webinar is directly aligned with the implementation of the UfM GreenerMed Agenda and Sustainable Blue Economy Roadmap. As first event of this kind, it has the potential to become a regular practice in the future.

Mr Mahmoud Elyes Hamza, Director, SPA/RAC, in his opening speech, referred to the operations of the Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC), a monitoring framework in line with GBF to measure SAP BIO implementation that in fact represents our GBF for marine and coastal area that the Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) has already developed under the Barcelona Convention (UNEP/MAP and its protocols).

Mr Youssef TADROS, Programme Manager, Environment, Water & Biodiversity, DG-MENA, European Commission, underlined the EU support through WES-BCA Project, in cooperation with the UfM and the CBD secretariat, in helping Partner Countries on reporting national policies to conserve biological diversity under the 7th National Reports to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Professor Michael Scoullos, Team Leader, WES-BCA, emphasized that the project contributes, beyond facilitation at regional level, to supporting PCs in meeting their CBD obligations through the 7th National Reports. In addition, WES-BCA provides targeted coaching to specific countries (Algeria, Palestine, and Tunisia) for the preparation of their 7NRs. Furthermore, it aims to strengthen synergies among all relevant organizations on biodiversity protection in the Mediterranean—an ecoregion spanning three UN regions, where biodiversity represents a major natural, cultural, and economic asset, and a shared source of inspiration that brings us closer together. The Mediterranean is rich in biodiversity but faces serious threats, including habitat loss, pollution, climate change, overuse of resources, and the spread of invasive alien species. Rapid urban growth further endangers ecosystems and essential services for both nature and people. To protect biodiversity, international and regional efforts are in place.

A Euro-Mediterranean cooperation is underway to conserve and sustainably use biological diversity, including the EU 'Biodiversity Strategy for 2030', UfM '2030GreenerMed Agenda' and UfM 'Roadmap on SBE'.

Recently, in collaboration with UNEP/MAP Plan Bleu and IUCN-Med, the EU convened a Mediterranean regional workshop focused on effectively conserving 30% of marine and terrestrial areas.

In addition, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD) serves as the global focal point supporting Parties in implementing the CBD and achieving the goals of the GBF.

**The GBF, adopted at COP 15 in 2022, sets ambitious global biodiversity goals for 2050 and 23 targets for 2030, including indicators for monitoring, financial support, and scientific cooperation.*

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WES-BCA project

The EU funded "Water and Environment Support-Biodiversity and Climate Action (WES-BCA) project in the Neighbourhood South region" is the continuation of the WES project and aims to improve the protection of the environment, the restoration of biodiversity and the management of scarce water resources, while enhancing the resilience to climate change in the Mediterranean region, strengthening the formulation and enforcement of the relevant policies of the Partner Countries and the two regional political frameworks, namely the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and the Barcelona Convention.

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