

WES-BCA PRESS RELEASE

The WES-BCA regional Webinar on regulatory frameworks for addressing plastic pollution and promoting circular economy in the Mediterranean region

Athens, 22 July 2026

How are global and regional policy developments shaping national responses to plastic pollution?

This question, among plenty others, were stated during the regional Webinar “Strengthening regional regulatory frameworks for plastics and circular economy alignment”.

The Webinar was organised by the WES-BCA project, on the 22nd of July 2026, to support the project’s 8 Partner Countries (PCs) for tackling plastic pollution, promoting sustainable alternatives and eco-innovation, in line with circular economy principles, regional commitments, and emerging international policy directions.

Topics such as the global and Mediterranean policy directions on tackling plastic waste, advancing circularity and promotion of sustainable alternatives, the related regulatory approaches addressing plastic pollution in **Mashreq and Maghreb regions**, the gaps and priorities, the national experiences and challenges (**case studies**) from **Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia**, along with the perspectives in the **private sector** in terms of adaptation, innovation and circular transition, were presented by the WES-BCA expert team and thoroughly discussed.

The need of the PCs national policies of to be aligned with the directives of the European Union (EU) with the guidance of the United Nations Environment programme (UNEP) through the Barcelona Convention and its Regional Activity Centers and the 2030 Greener Med Agenda of the Union for Mediterranean (UfM) was underlined.

Through peer learning, the participants, such as legal advisers the PCs Ministries of Environment and other related ministries, policy makers and representatives of international organisations, obtained clear reference points for drafting and amending national legislations; identifying concrete areas for future technical assistance for tackling plastic pollution.

The **Mediterranean Sea**, due to its semi-enclosed situation, touristic attractivity, and to the density of population living on its perimeter, is especially prone to plastic pollution and marine litter.

It is estimated that it **holds between 5% and 10% of the world’s plastic pollution**, making it one of the most polluted regions worldwide.

Each year, around 229.000 tons of plastic wastes end up in the Mediterranean Sea with 94% of it being macroplastics and 6% of it being microplastics.

The **EU** has been at the forefront to address plastic pollution through a range of **policy frameworks** and **legislative instruments**, including the European Green Deal, the EU Plastics Strategy in a circular economy, the Circular Economy Action Plan, and the European Single-Use Plastics Directive.

The European Union also supports regional initiatives addressing marine litter and plastic pollution in the Mediterranean, including the WES-BCA project.

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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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