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Mediterranean biodiversity challenges: acting against marine litter

By Interreg MED Programme and UNIMED Mediterranean Universities Union

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12:30 – 13:30

Speakers



Dania Abdul Malak
ETC-UMA

Director, The European Topic Centre on Spatial Analysis and Synthesis (ETC-UMA) / @abdul_dania

Dania has over 15 years' experience in environmental assessment and management. Her research focuses on setting transferable guidelines to apply ecosystem-based management to nature conservation and biodiversity protection at regional scales, including the Mediterranean and Europe. Her work supports the evidence behind the implementation of different global and regional Directives such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Ramsar Convention on wetlands, the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2030, and the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Coastal and Marine Environment, among others. Dania supports the European Environment Agency (EEA) and various EU expert groups including the Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystems and Ecosystem Services (EC MAES) Working Group by developing integrated ecosystem assessment frameworks and spatial data indicators to evaluate the functional capacity of ecosystems to provide ecosystem services. Furthermore, she coordinates several regional initiatives and participates in numerous international research projects related to her field of expertise.



Cristina Fossi
University of Siena

Maria Cristina Fossi is Full Professor of Ecology and Ecotoxicology at the University of Siena (UNISI) and since 2000 is Scientific Director of the Biomarker Laboratory (CIBM). She gave a key contribution to the development of the biomarker approach in terrestrial and marine ecotoxicology. Since 1991 she developed innovative diagnostic tools for ecotoxicological assessment of threatened species (marine mammals, birds, reptiles) bringing to the establishment of methods (non-destructive biomarker approach) currently acknowledged as golden standard at the international level. In 2012 she provided the first evidence worldwide on the effects of microplastics on baleen whales.

She is author or co-author of over 800 scientific papers (articles and review articles (289), chapters (28) and books (6), abstracts in national and international

conferences (over 380). In the field of marine litter, she has been the scientific coordinator (PI) of the "Plastic Busters"(PB) project elected as Flagship Project of Med-SDSN since 2013. The project, developed to monitor and mitigate the impact of plastics in the Med, was labelled in 2016 from Union for the Mediterranean and financed in 2018 by Interreg MED EU Programme – Plastic Busters MPAs. PB was elected in 2019 as a flagship project for the "BLUAMED Pilot for a Plastic free healthy Mediterranean" from the EU. She is the WP3 coordinator of the COMMON, ENI-CBC project. In 2019-21 she has been the PI of the FEAMP Project AdriCleanFish supported by MIPAAF. She is involved in an intense scientific communication and dissemination activity on the topic of the effects of microplastics on biodiversity (including endangered species).



Thomais Vlachogianni
MIO ECSDE

[Dr. Thomais Vlachogianni, Senior Programme/Policy Officer & Marine Litter Expert, Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development \(MIO-ECSDE\)](#)

Thomais Vlachogianni (BSc, MSc, PhD) is an environmental chemist and ecotoxicologist, specialized in oxidative stress mediated toxicity induced by environmental pollutants and molecular biomarkers of oxidative stress for marine pollution monitoring. Her 16-years work experience in environmental research and management stretches over vast areas including monitoring and assessment, prevention and mitigation of marine litter. Since 2008, she has been working at MIO-ECSDE as a Programme/Policy Officer, and has been involved in several projects implemented at European and Mediterranean level. She has a list of more than 80 peer-reviewed publications that address environment protection issues, with some 9423 citations and i10-index equal to 36. Thomais has led within the framework of the Interreg Med Plastic Busters MPAs, the Interreg Med ACT4LITTER, the WES, the SWIM-H2020 SM, the FP7 MARLISCO and the IPA-Adriatic DeFishGear projects several marine litter activities addressing the entire management cycle of marine litter. She participates in and contributes to the work carried out by the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) Good Environmental Status (GES) Technical Subgroup on Marine Litter; the UNEP/MAP Experts Group on the application of the Ecosystem Approach in the Mediterranean and the Correspondence Group on Monitoring, Pollution and Litter (CORMON). Currently she is leading the smarine litter monitoring and mitigation component of the ENI CBC Plastic Busters CAP project.



Magali Outters
MedWaves

[Magali is an Engineer in "Materials: Economics and Environment" from the University of Technology of Troyes \(France\). She also holds a Master of Industrial Ecology and a Post-graduate degree in international development.](#)
She has a significant expertise in sustainable consumption and production (SCP) and circular economy in the Mediterranean region with 15 years advocating for this approach and by being actively involved in numerous capacity building projects, technical studies, developing specific tools and pilot initiatives with governments and other stakeholders. She is currently coordinating the Policy Area for MedWaves, previously known as SCP/RAC (Regional Activity Centre for Sustainable Consumption and Production). SCP/RAC is a Regional Centre of the UNEP/Mediterranean Action Plan/Barcelona Convention and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). The centre works with interested countries, international entities, business organisations and individuals for the integration of eco-innovation, the creation of sustainable businesses, the prevention of

land-based pollution, marine litter and the reduction of use of toxic chemicals towards a clean and healthy Mediterranean.



Christos Iokimides
UNEP MAP MED POL

Dr. Christos Iokimidis is a Marine Scientist with a multidisciplinary scientific background in the fields of Oceanology, Oceanography, Environmental Sciences, Marine Pollution and Marine Litter. He has more than 14 years of working experience in various sectors, including International Organizations, Research/Academia, as well as the public and private sectors. Since 2016, he has been working for UNEP / Mediterranean Action Plan in support of the implementation of the Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean as well as the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme for the Mediterranean Sea and Coast (IMAP) devised under the Barcelona Convention. He has also been actively involved in UNEP's Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML), supported the development of the Mediterranean Marine Litter Node, and the G7 portfolio of the UNEP/MAP Secretariat. He has represented UNEP/MAP at various international fora, marine litter expert meetings and working groups. Christos has contributed to collaborations in both the Mediterranean and Black Sea regions and has generated new knowledge in the field of marine litter management.



Josep Canals
MedCities

Josep Canals is an ecologist with extensive experience in urban management and sustainability. An environmentalist and ecologist, both by passion. Degree in Biology, a Postgraduate in Land Management for the protection of the landscape and the environment; and a Professional Master of Territorial and Urban Studies, he has been an advisor in environmental and urban policies for the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona (AMB) and the Parliament of Catalonia between 2003 and 2007. He was an advisor for public space, urban planning, and waste management to the Mayor of Bogota (Colombia) from 2012 to 2016. He was also an advisor for public space to the Mayor of Sabadell from 2017 to 2019. Also, he is a collaborator of the UN-Habitat in Latin America. He was Mayor of Corbera de Llobregat (Baix Llobregat) from 2009 to 2011. Nowadays, he is an independent advisor to the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB/IaDB) and the UNESCO Chair in Sustainability.



Ali Badreddine
Tyre coast nature reserve

Marine biologist-PhD-Researcher-Coastal ecosystems

Marine species (benthos/exotic) - Marine Turtles

My name is Ali BADREDDINE. I am from Lebanon. I have been a Ph.D./ Researcher in Marine biology since 2018. My research focuses on evaluating the ecological status of coastal ecosystems and guaranteeing their protection and conservation along the Lebanese coast. In addition, I follow and monitor the benthic fauna and flora (including important marine habitats/ flag species/ and Non-Indigenous species). I am also the national focal point for Marine Turtles activities (monitoring, stranding, and studying the impact of marine litter on sea turtles). I have been designated as a national consultant for fifteen regional projects. I have published, until now, 22 research articles in different international journals and 20 national reports related to new marine species records, coastal ecosystems, and the biodiversity associated, action plans, national strategy, and management plan of Marine Protected Areas along the Lebanese coast. I also participate in many international/ regional/ and

national workshops and symposiums. Recently, I have been designated the manager of Tyre Coast Nature Reserve, and I am the project Manager of four ENI CBC MED projects ongoing.



Alessandra Sensi
UfM

[Head of Sector, Environment and Blue Economy, at WEBE – the Water, Environment and Blue Economy Division Union for the Mediterranean \(UfM\).](#)

Alessandra Sensi has a University Degree in Political Science, Economic Branch, and a Master's degree in Management and Economics of Energy and Environment. She is Head of Sector for Environment and Blue Economy at WEBE – the Water, Environment and Blue Economy Division of the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean since March 2013. She was Programme Manager of the Environment/Green and Blue Economy/Climate Change portfolio at the European Commission, EuropeAid, between 2009 and 2012. Previously, she worked for FAO, Rome; for UNEP/GEF in Nairobi and Geneva; for the Development Cooperation Office of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Hanoi, Vietnam; and for Eurostat - the Statistical Office of the EU, Luxembourg.
