

MedECC: Network of Mediterranean Experts on Climate and Environmental Change

“Establish a regional science-policy interface mechanism, including the social and behavioural sciences, endorsed by all the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, with a view to preparing consolidated regional scientific assessments and guidance on climate change trends, impacts and adaptation and mitigation options”, is the flagship initiative under the Objective 4 “Climate change as a priority issue for the Mediterranean” of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) 2016-2025.

Background

The network of Mediterranean Experts on Climate and Environmental Change (MedECC) was formed in 2015, with the aim of providing sound scientific information about environmental and climate change issues of concern for the Mediterranean.

MedECC is an open and independent international scientific expert network providing support for decision-makers and the general public on the basis of available scientific information as well as on-going research. The network includes more than 380 scientists from 31 countries, working on climate and environmental changes from the natural sciences, social sciences and humanities perspectives.



The creation of MedECC responds to needs and intentions expressed by the UN Environment/MAP through the MSSD and the Regional Framework for Climate Change Adaptation in the Mediterranean, as well as the Expert Group on Climate Change of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM CCEG).

Objectives

MedECC builds on a community of scientific experts providing their expertise on a voluntary basis. The objective is of supporting decision-making in the Mediterranean with accurate and accessible information on current and future impacts of climate and environmental changes.

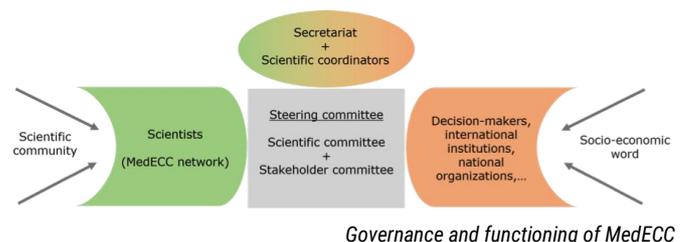
The network aims to consolidate and update the best scientific knowledge on climate and environmental changes in the Mediterranean basin, identifying possible gaps in current research and supporting capacity building of scientists from Southern and Eastern Mediterranean Countries.

By rendering this knowledge accessible to all stakeholders, MedECC also aims to bridge the gap between research and decision-making, contributing to the improvement of policies at all levels such as future Mediterranean assessments of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

MedECC works in two complementary directions of interest for the implementation of the MSSD, namely: Publishing improved assessments and comprehensive synthesis of global change knowledge in the Mediterranean region; and Building a relevant regional science-policy interface on climate and environmental change in the Mediterranean.

Leadership and partnership

MedECC is governed by a Steering Committee that decides on its functioning and focuses on strengthening the science-policy dialogue, as well as the visibility and credibility of the Mediterranean science-policy interface. It also reviews the evolution of membership in the network ensuring a wide and balanced thematic and geographic coverage.



MedECC is supported by regional, national, and local organizations and individual experts. These currently include: Union for the Mediterranean (UfM); Plan Bleu Regional Activity Centre of UN Environment/MAP; *Agence de l'Environnement et de la Maîtrise de l'Énergie* (ADEME), France; Mediterranean Integrated Studies at Regional And Local Scales (MISTRALS); Principality of Monaco; *Métropole Aix-Marseille Provence*, France; Aix-Marseille University, France; Advisory Council for the Sustainable Development of Catalonia (CADS), Spain; Institute of Research for Development (IRD), France; Laboratory of Excellence OT-Med, France; Government of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region, France.

Main achievements

MedECC has succeeded in building and mobilizing a network of scientific experts and in gaining political recognition from Mediterranean countries and IGOs. MedECC featured in several international and regional events, including:

- The Mediterranean Climate Conference (MEDCOP21) (Marseille, France, 4-5 June 2015) which listed the initiative as one of the 36 proposed solutions of the Mediterranean Positive Agenda;
- UNFCCC-COP21 (Paris, France, 4-5 December 2015), featured in various round tables and side events;
- MEDCOP Climat 2016 (Tangier, Morocco, 18-19 July 2016);
- COP22-UNFCCC (Marrakech, France, 14 November 2016) as organizer of a side event;
- UfM meetings on Environment and Climate Change in March 2017 and April 2018 in Barcelona, Spain.

The MedECC Scoping Workshop (Aix-en-Provence, France, 10-12 October 2016), co-organized by the Principality of Monaco was an important step towards the preparation of the first MedECC report on the current state and risks of climate and environmental change in the Mediterranean. The workshop gathered 68 participants from 16 countries, with the objective of defining the report's thematic scope and structure.

MedECC has also organized a series of scientific and technical workshops in order to produce the detailed outline of the report which is planned to be published in the end of 2019:

- MedECC WG1 Workshop "Water, food, energy", 10-12 May 2017, Rabat, Morocco;
- MedECC WG3 Workshop "Development, health, human security", 19-21 June 2017, Palermo, Italy;
- MedECC WG2 Workshop "Ecosystems and ecosystem services", 17-19 July 2017, Marseille, France;
- MedECC Workshop on drivers, 7-9 March 2018, Aix-en-Provence, France.

The Regional Workshop on human impacts on Mediterranean marine ecosystems and the economy (18-19 October 2017, Monaco) which was co-organized by Plan Bleu and the Scientific Centre of Monaco helped to establish recommendations, governance actions and practices to be implemented at the local and regional levels in order to mitigate the impacts of anthropogenic threats on the services provided by marine ecosystems in the Mediterranean.

Challenges and the way forward

MedECC will support the preparation of the UN Environment/MAP 2019-State of the Environment and Development in the Mediterranean Report (SoED 2019) and MED2050 foresight study.

The challenge is now to institutionalize the network and to strengthen stakeholder dialogue by confirming governance and publishing the first MedECC report by end of 2019.

Resources

Mediterranean Experts on Climate and Environmental Change (MedECC): www.medecc.org

UfM Climate Change Expert Group (UfM CCEG): <https://tinyurl.com/qg8nkp>

Plan Bleu Regional Activity Centre: www.planbleu.org



United Nations Environment Programme
Mediterranean Action Plan Coordinating Unit
Barcelona Convention Secretariat
www.unepmap.org