



 **Biodiversity strategy in the Mediterranean basin** 2012/01/17-20  
*Think global, act local*

**A joint meeting of the Mediterranean regional workshop for national biodiversity strategies and action plans, and of the Mediterranean cities and local authorities network for biodiversity**

*To strengthen collaboration between national and local governments, and to foster regional cooperation in the Mediterranean Basin to reinforce the implementation of the Strategic Plan on Biodiversity for 2011-2020 in the region.*



### Purpose of the Workshop:

The meeting was organized by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the City of Montpellier, and ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability. Its goal was to review progress with, and assist Mediterranean Parties in reviewing their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and national biodiversity targets, by fostering cooperation at the regional level in line with the Strategic Plan and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Another objective was the establishment of a Mediterranean network of cities and local authorities engaged in biodiversity management, in order to support the national level implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The workshop was prepared by Didier Babin (CBD) and Sylvie Blangy (CNRS Centre d'Ecologie Fonctionnelle Evolutive CEFE), the Mayor's office of Montpellier's City Hall. It was also supported by the Japan Biodiversity Fund. In all, 55 participants from 17 countries attended the meeting.

**Location:** New City Hall of Montpellier, 1 Place Georges Frêche, Montpellier, France

### Countries represented:

Albania  
 Algeria  
 Bosnia and Herzegovina  
 Croatia  
 Egypt  
 France  
 Israel  
 Lebanon  
 Macedonia  
 Malta  
 Monaco  
 Montenegro  
 Morocco  
 Palestinian Authority  
 Serbia  
 Spain  
 Tunisia



*Top: Salle du Conseil  
 Left: Salle des Rencontres*



## Tuesday 17 January

On this first day of the workshop, participants were separated in two rooms. In the first one, Salle du Conseil, national authorities identified the main challenges in the implementation of their NBSAPs. They considered how they could further improve their achievements, with the help of local authorities. In the second room, Salle des Rencontres, local authorities identified the main challenges and strategies to protect biodiversity, as well as identifying their needs and what they could offer to the national authorities.

### LOCAL AUTHORITIES PRE-SESSION

- Exercise 1: Identify major biodiversity related challenges by area, and collect best practices.



*The Western Balkans and Adriatic Sea group*

The Western Balkans and Adriatic Sea group identified:

- A lack of a budget for better cooperation with national governments, companies and NGOs.
- A lack of strategic documents at all levels and certain documents and strategies at the national level.
- A lack of communication at all levels (NGOs, academics, and associations)
- A need to raise public awareness and participation.
- A need to improve legislation related to biodiversity, deforestation, waste management, bird ecosystems, greenhouse gases and illegal hunting,

The South Mediterranean area group identified:

- A need to raise public awareness.
- A need to maintain a network of green areas, and to better protect their access.
- A need to conserve cultural heritage while simultaneously conserving biodiversity (e.g: Israel explained that there were excavation operations that were destroying ecosystem, however, these excavations were necessary from the perspective of conserving cultural heritage in the area).
- The difficulty of protecting biodiversity in the context of poverty.
- The problem of water quality.
- The issue of political and social instability in the area as well as immigration problems.
- A need for a better autonomy of the regions.
- A need to improve legislation in terms of environmental protection and mainstream biodiversity.



The Western Europe group identified:

- A need for a better management of fisheries stocks and to reduce overfishing. It is necessary to improve water quality, reduce pollution, and support more protected areas and conserve marine species and habitats.
- Issues related to climate change and a urgent need to get adapted to the shift to reduce climate change,
- The need to reduce the presence of invasive species
- The increase in the frequency of natural risks.
- The problem of rising sea levels.
- Population growth: job population, social and economic development, green economy and multiple

benefits.

- The need for capacity building for local governments through decentralisation.

- Exercise 2: Identification of major common issues

After having been divided into groups according to their geographical representation, participants collected information from the previous exercise in order to identify six major common issues.

- Exercise 3

The six issues developed during the previous exercise were divided into 3 new groups. Each of these groups had 2 issues to discuss and they identified what were the offers and demands they could submit to the national authority.

### NATIONAL AUTHORITIES PRE-SESSION



Representatives from national authorities gathered in the Salle du Conseil

and identified what they have already achieved in their NBSAPs, what are the current actions on biodiversity at the national level, and what still needs to be done. Technical, scientific, and other related elements needed for cooperation with local authorities were formulated as “needs” and “offers”.

National authorities identified main challenges and issues and agreed that the Mediterranean Basin is currently political unstable. It was determined that it is essential to develop an integrated policy related to biodiversity, ensure law enforcement, reduce threats and make sure that biodiversity is considered a priority by governments.

### Major Common Issues

Local	National
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coordinated governance in terms of adequate distribution of mandate to local authorities</li> <li>- Green development for economic development and job creation using sustainable resources</li> <li>- Sharing knowledge with national authorities to ensure a decentralised cooperation</li> <li>- Land use planning</li> <li>- Green infrastructures that need to be developed in partnership with national authorities</li> <li>- Communication, Education and Public Awareness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Governance, biodiversity and policies</li> <li>- Threats or pressures on biodiversity</li> <li>- Research and Knowledge</li> <li>- Human and financial resources</li> <li>- Strengthen territorial cooperation</li> <li>- Strengthen capacity, sensitization and education</li> </ul>

**Wednesday 18 January**

**FORMAL OPENING**

The meeting was formally opened by Helene Mandroux, Mayor of Montpellier, Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the CBD and Monique Barbut, Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson of the GEF, Kobie Brand, ICLEI Director and Paul Delduc of the French Ministry of Ecology.



*From left to right: Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, Mrs Helene Mandroux and Mrs Monique Barbut, at the Meeting formal Opening*

- Panel discussion on the Mediterranean Region in the next decade

The discussion focused on current demographic evolutions in the Basin and its links to biodiversity and ecosystem services. They demonstrated how Mediterranean society is linked to biodiversity and how a good management of ecosystems plays a very important role on quality of life, development, and human health.

- Gilles Pipien (World Bank) and Maxime Thibon (Biodivnet) presented the Mediterranean Biodiversity Institutional Framework and the potential tools and partners that will be needed for the creation of a network.



*Up, from left to right: Panelists Serge Morand, John Thompson, Youssef Courbage, Bernard Hubert and Nicolas Arnaud*



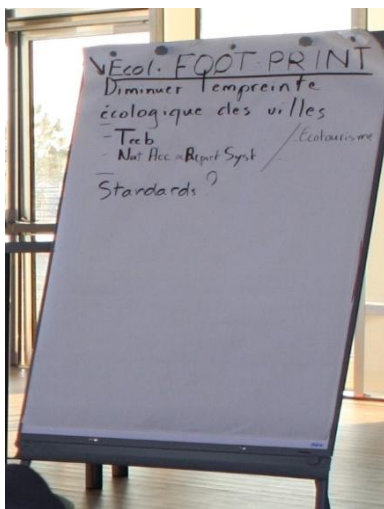
*Left: Maxime Thibon and Gilles Pipien*



• Exercise 1: Correspondence between Offers and Demands:

National Request	Local Offer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The implementation of NBSAPs, including monitoring /evaluation;</li> <li>- The mainstreaming of biodiversity in local development policies land use planning/development, exp eco-village;</li> <li>- The use of town planning to secure sights, places, areas with rich biodiversity;</li> <li>- The development of transports such as bikes;</li> <li>- To encourage environmental friendly buildings, green buildings, ensure proper waste water treatment;</li> <li>- To ensure participation of local communities and safeguard traditional knowledge;</li> <li>- To develop tools for CEPA (Communication, Education and Public Awareness) at local level and</li> <li>- To seek local funding for research, knowledge initiatives;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To create job opportunities;</li> <li>- To share knowledge;</li> <li>- An expertise and experience of work;</li> <li>- To provide best practices;</li> <li>- To engage citizens;</li> <li>- The respect of national guidelines;</li> <li>- To help meeting the health related national requirement</li> </ul>
National Offer	Local Request
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The decentralization of biodiversity conservation efforts plus its management : decentralize any activities biodiversity;</li> <li>- To ensure the involvement of local authorities in implementation of NBSAP;</li> <li>- To ensure capacity building of local authorities to enforce the implementation of laws and NBSAPs;</li> <li>- Technology transfer;</li> <li>- A better communication and education as well as public awareness's coordination;</li> <li>- To provide technical researches, monitoring outcomes;</li> <li>- The provision of positive incentives and removal of negative incentives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The respect of national guidelines;</li> <li>- More land use planning tools;</li> <li>- Green funding of infrastructures funding;</li> <li>- Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) financial support coordination and compiling strategies;</li> <li>- Creation of standards : and</li> <li>- Engagement of citizens and communities and alignment with national rules</li> </ul>

• Exercise 2: Define the first steps of a Network



After these discussions, participants identified four main challenges that would be the first steps of the activities of the Network.

- **Mainstreaming:** how to integrate biodiversity in urban planning, infrastructures, land use planning, green industries, business and local action plan?
- **Sharing:** How to facilitate exchanges of information, formation, tools, financial resources and human resources?
- **Knowledge interface:** There is a need to improve access to information, including decision making, education, and assessments.
- **Ecological Footprint:** there is a need to decrease the ecological footprint of cities. The main tool would be an economical evaluation of biodiversity and human impact on it. It is necessary to integrate the value of ecosystem in national and local accounting.

## Thursday 19 January

Participants continued the work on defining actions that would need to be taken in order to tackle biodiversity's erosion and debated on this issue. Many of them presented what they could do at their level in order to help the network to be to be efficient.

A competition to define the name of the future Network was organised among participants. The name "MEDIVERCITIES" was adopted.



*Kobie Brand, Philippe Croze and Oliver Hillel*



*Helene Mandroux with the deputies to the Mayor, and Kobie Brand*

The Mayor of Montpellier, Helene Mandroux, officially signed ICLEI's Durban Agreement, as a participant in their Local Action on Biodiversity programme.

Participants have exchanged presents from their countries.



The Declaration of Montpellier has been drafted, amended and adopted (in its French version) by the participants.



A press conference has been organised in presence of mayors and VIPs to announce workshop results and introduce MEDIVERCITIES.

## Friday 20 January

First Meeting of MEDIVERCITIES: Participants from local authorities established a strategy of actions and initiatives that would need to be taken for the Network.

- A steering committee has been created with:
  - Haris Piplas, Sarajevo, Bosnia
  - Danijel Katicin, Mayor of Tkon, Croatia
  - Patrick Berger, Director of the green spaces department of Montpellier, France
  - Oliver Hillel, SCBD
  - Georgi Hristof, Macedonia, Network of Association for Local Authorities (NALAS)
  - Maruxa Cardama, nrg4SD
  - Kobie Brandt, ICLEI
  - Salima Demnati, Morocco
  - Khaled Allam Harahash, Egypt
  - Edmond Panariti, Tirana, Albania
  - Mohammed Mahassneh, Palestinian territories
  - Lara Samaha, Lebanon
  - Eulalia Comas, Generalitat de Catalunya, Spain
  - Simon Woodworth, Region Languedoc Roussillon, France
  - Florence Clap, IUCN
  - Chantal Van Ham, IUCN
  - Michel Saraille, Saint-Orens-de-Gameville
  - Moty Lavie, Tiberias, Israel
- Definition of the next steps :
  - 1) Objectives and Terms of Reference of the Network:
    - Science and information: there is a need to develop tools to improve access to information, such as the Blue Plan, the United Nations Environment Programme's Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP), countries institutions, OSU-OREM (Montpellier).
    - Resources could be sought from France, the Japan Biodiversity Fund, and Monaco, the World Bank, the Arab League and the private sector.
    - Key players and partners: the Ramsar Convention, Medcities, Medwet, Tour du Valat, Ecocities, UNDP, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), and the city of Barcelona.

Terms of reference and objectives will be facilitated by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD), ICLEI, the City of Montpellier and the Steering Committee.

- 2) Next meeting: The meeting will be held in a Mediterranean city, probably Tlemcen, Belgrade, Tirana, Cairo, Oujda or Sarajevo in September 2012, for 2 days. The first day will be dedicated to knowledge sharing, case studies and best practices presentations whereas the second day will feature a high level meeting with mayors and regional representatives, and will be dedicated to discussion, commitments and signature of the Charter of MEDIVERCITIES. It will be organised by the city hosting the event, the SCBD and ICLEI. Expressions of interest will be invited from these cities. The outcomes of this meeting as well as the Charter will be presented at the second Cities and Biodiversity Summit that will be held in Hyderabad in India in parallel of the CBD COP in October 2012.

