

## SIDE EVENT

### ***Science and awareness: building Mediterranean networks against marine litter***

Online, 28th of June  
9:30-11 am (Portuguese time)

<p><b>Organizers</b></p>	<p><b>Legambiente</b> has a strong experience on monitoring campaigns, citizen science activities and the involvement of different stakeholders.</p> <p><b>University of Siena</b> is a leader group on research of impact of marine debris on marine biodiversity and on the development of new tools to investigate ecotoxicological impacts of microplastic on endangered species.</p> <p><b>Union for the Mediterranean</b> is the intergovernmental Euro-Mediterranean organisation which brings together all the EU, Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries. The UfM, promoting political strategic and technical dialogue and cooperation between the 42 member countries, has the role, mandate and the capacity to facilitate exchanges within the region through a multi-stakeholder's approach.</p>
<p><b>Context</b></p>	<p>More than 450 million people populate the Mediterranean region, and the anthropogenic pressures are on their rise due to forecasted population growth, coastal urbanization, maritime traffic, fishing, inputs from large rivers. Furthermore, the Mediterranean, that is one of the 25 major biodiversity hotspots in the world and is home to about 17000 different species, is warming 20% faster than the rest of the world and, with current policies, temperatures are expected to increase of 2,2 °C by 2040.</p> <p>According to the IUCN report "Mare Plasticum: The Mediterranean", the region is one of the most polluted in the world mainly due to the threat of marine litter and, to one of the highest concentrations of plastic debris, producing between 208-760 kg of solid waste per capita per year. About 229.000 tons of plastic end up in the Mediterranean every year, mainly from Turkey, Egypt, and Italy,</p> <p>This specific situation requires, in fact, a strong governance and a joint policy among the Med countries, NGOs, local authorities, research institutions and other stakeholders.</p> <p>To better understand sources of pollution and try to propose valuable solutions, marine litter monitoring activities are crucial, they need to be harmonised and jointly implemented as common solutions for a sea without borders. In this respect, a strong link between scientific research and awareness activities, in our vision, is the best option to reach these objectives.</p>
<p><b>Objectives</b></p>	<p>The side event will allow to have a useful discussion about this global threat with different actors that, in their various capacities (institutional and not), are working for the protection of the Mediterranean.</p> <p>In the wake of the commitment presented in 2017 by Legambiente and University of Siena (Science and awareness: a Mediterranean connection against marine litter), with the support of the Union for the Mediterranean, InterregMed and ENI CBC, the main goal of this side event is to present the advancements in terms of common monitoring protocols and new technologies; the findings in terms of impacts on the environment and biota, the results and possible upscaling of pilot mitigation actions around the Mediterranean sea and the creation of a large multistakeholders network to discuss and develop joint solutions.</p> <p>Sharing our experiences, we are trying to develop new tools and actions integrating science and awareness campaigns. The collection of data through citizen science activities, following the protocols developed with researchers, could help to build specific actions and scientific reports used in the pressure made on the decision makers.</p>

<b>UNOC2022 context</b>	The health of the Mediterranean is of fundamental importance for the life of the people who inhabit its coasts and for the health of the ecosystems, marine and terrestrial, that depend on this basin. As well as being of strategic and economic importance, this sea serves as a climate regulator and a great food resource for many populations. For this reason, it is of fundamental importance to protect the delicate ecosystems that govern it and the resources that it has, creating networks of various stakeholders, involving citizens in citizen science activities and implementing common monitoring actions all around the basin.
<b>How to participate</b>	REGISTRATION LINK

## Agenda

9:30-9:40	<b>Opening and overview of the side event</b> <i>Giorgio Zampetti</i> , General Director of Legambiente Onlus
<b>Session 1: Governance</b>	
9:40-10:15	<i>Sigi Gruber</i> , Active Senior Advisor, Marine Resources Unit, DG Research /RTD (Mission restore our Oceans), EU
	<i>Eleni Hatziyanni</i> , DG MARE, Policy Officer, Sea-basin Strategies, Maritime Regional Cooperation & Maritime Security, Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE), EU
	<b>Promoting regional cooperation to protect the Mediterranean Sea</b> <i>Alessandra Sensi</i> , Head of Sector Environment, Green and Blue Economy, Union for Mediterranean
	<i>Vincent Ernoux</i> , Coordinator of Western Mediterranean, ENI CBC Med Program/Interreg NEXT MED
	<i>Francesca Marcato</i> , Project Manager EU InterregMed Program
	<b>Critical points and issues on north-south political integration</b> UNEP MAP (TBC)
<b>Session 2: Science and research</b>	
10:15-10:40	<b>How to monitor marine litter presence and its impacts on the marine biodiversity</b> <i>Maria Cristina Fossi</i> , University of Siena (SDSN-Mediterranean)
	<b>The importance of monitoring and analysis processes in Mitigation Action</b> <i>Thomas Vlachogianni</i> , MIO-ECSDE
	<b>Science-policy interface: to encompass the importance on the relationship between scientists and other interested parties</b> <i>Sana Ben Ismail</i> , INSTM
10:40-11:00	<b>Q&amp;A</b>
<b>Wrap up and Closure</b>	