

CONCEPT NOTE



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط

Mediterranean Green Week

14-16 May 2024
Istanbul, Türkiye



1. Preface

This first edition of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Green Week on Energy, Environment and Climate Action aims to advance dialogue, collaboration and action among Mediterranean countries and stakeholders to tackle the ongoing triple climate, energy and environmental crisis, including water related aspects.

Focusing on promoting sustainable development, climate change mitigation and adaptation, energy transition, and environmental protection and restoration in the Mediterranean region within a green, circular economy approach, the event serves as a platform for progressing in policy dialogue, strategy formulation, knowledge exchange, and partnership building. This is the first time that the UfM organizes an event bringing together two UfM Regional Platforms on energy, and on environment and climate action, as well as the Working Group on Water-Energy-Food-Environment, fostering synergies and recognizing the intertwined aspects of each sector.

The Flagship Event includes the UfM Regional Platforms on Environment and Climate Action, the Platform on Energy and working groups on environment, and climate action, the Working Group on WEFE Nexus as well as a series of dynamic and impactful multi-thematic workshops. These ensure contributions from a wide range of actors committed to collaborating for a sustainable and inclusive future in the Mediterranean. By mandate, UfM Regional Platforms and working groups, comprising 43 UfM member States and external stakeholders, aim to enhance the effective implementation of the ministerial mandates and promote specific initiatives and projects. External stakeholders contribute to the work of the platform and include international and regional organizations, civil society organizations, local authorities, financial and development institutions, academia, the private sector, and other bodies.

This year the Mediterranean Green Week (MGW) is hosted by the OECD Global Relations Center in Istanbul. This will help deepen cooperation with regional and international partners in areas like energy, environment, climate, governance, and economic and social development.

2. Background

The [Union for the Mediterranean](#) (UfM) is an intergovernmental organization that brings together 43 countries to strengthen regional cooperation and dialogue, stability, and integration in the Euro-Mediterranean area. As a direct continuation of the Barcelona Process, the launch of the UfM in 2008 was the reflection of its Member States shared political commitment to enhance the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership.

UfM actions on Energy, Environment and Climate Action are framed under the mandate given by its Member States through the following Ministerial Declarations:



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- The [UfM Ministerial Meeting on Energy](#) was held in Lisbon, in June 2021 to enhance regional cooperation on energy and foster the gradual integration of energy markets, reinforcing the energy exchange and interconnections and removing existing and potential barriers, for the common benefit of the Mediterranean citizens. To do so, one Energy Platform was established with three Working Groups on (i) Gas, (ii) Regional Electricity Market, and (iii) Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency.
- The [UfM Ministerial Meeting on Environment and Climate Action](#) was signed in Cairo in October 2021, and agreed on a common agenda to strengthen efforts to urgently tackle the multiple climate and environmental challenges. This commitment reflected the highest possible ambition in accelerating the transition towards sustainable, climate-neutral, and green economies to address the combined climate, biodiversity and pollution crisis hitting the Med region. The UfM Regional Platform on Environment and Climate Action was tasked to follow up on the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration through its two Working Groups: The Working Group on Environment and the Working Group on Climate Action.

The Mediterranean is a region particularly affected by the environmental, energy and climate crisis, warming 20% faster than global trends, both historically and according to climate model projections (MedECC, MAR1, 2020). The acceleration of climate change impacts has exacerbated the already critical situation of the Mediterranean basin, caused by population growth, rapid urbanization, declining biodiversity, changes in land use, as well as economic and social challenges. In most impact areas (such as energy, water, ecosystems, food and health), current changes and future scenarios consistently point to significant and growing risks over the coming decades.

Faced with these cumulative challenges, the theme of Mediterranean Green Week: "*Towards a greener and more resilient Mediterranean*", underlines the urgent need for collective action and a new ambition for regional and local cooperation to move towards a decarbonized, energy-efficient economy, mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change, and safeguard the unique ecological diversity of the Mediterranean region.

Fossil fuel emissions accelerate climate change, food production is energy intensive, energy generation impacts and depends on natural resources, and climate change disrupts energy production. On the other hand, renewable energy sources reduce reliance on fossil fuels and lower greenhouse gas emissions, sustainable management of ecosystems empowers local stakeholders, and the development of a green and circular economy can provide jobs. Considering the interdependency of the energy, climate and environment sectors, participants can explore ways to holistically manage the three sectors, leveraging opportunities and reducing risks, as a fundamental condition for development and security. This requires regional cooperation to harmonize policies, regulatory frameworks, and local actions to build resilient and prosperous territories.

The Mediterranean Green Week (MGW) aims to encourage collaboration, dialogue, and action among Mediterranean countries to tackle such challenges. Focusing on the promotion of



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sustainable development, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and environmental protection and restoration in the Mediterranean region, the event serves as a platform for policy and strategy formulation, knowledge exchange and partnership building.

3. Objectives

The first edition of the Mediterranean Green Week is part of coordinated inter-institutional and intra-institution effort to streamline the annual meetings of its UfM Platforms and Working Groups, namely, the UfM Regional Platform on Environment and Climate Action (made of the UfM Working Group on Environment and the UfM Working Group on Climate Action), the UfM Energy Platforms, the Working Group on WEFE Nexus along with the Water representatives and stakeholders. The main aim is to encourage collaborative discussions among Member States and stakeholders through a joint event and a unified agenda covering diverse topics to maximize the impact and effectiveness of UfM collective endeavors.

The main objectives of the Green Week include:

- Follow-up on, assess and monitor the priorities set in the Ministerial Declarations through joint strategies and action plans as well as initiatives, programs, and projects.
- Monitor the priorities agreed by the 43 UfM Member States within the Ministerial Declarations mentioned above. This monitoring occurs through the regional platforms, working groups, and related activities supporting policies, strategies, and action plans, with clearly defined measurable objectives and indicators. The final plenary session is dedicated to specific stocktaking of the UfM's two Ministerial Declarations on Environment and Climate Action and the Declaration on Energy, while also linking with the Ministerial Declaration on water and other relevant ones.
- Encourage cross-sectoral cooperation, create synergies between interconnected sectors, such as blue economy, and promote "nexus" approaches, including the water, energy, food, and ecosystems (WEFE) nexus.
- Catalyze and foster cooperation among all stakeholders to engage in collective action and develop joint initiatives and projects to address common challenges related to energy, climate, and environment, including appropriate arrangements for the implementation and financing of such activities.

Specific Objectives

- Promote a whole-of-society approach by engaging local authorities and communities, supporting the engagement of young people, women, and vulnerable groups in contributing to the region's development, and ensuring that national policies align with local needs.



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- Inform on policy and decision-making processes and build partnerships at national, regional, and international levels by providing science- and evidence-based information, recommendations and solutions to climate and environmental challenges.
- Raise awareness among citizens, businesses, and communities about the importance of sustainable development, climate action, and environmental conservation; share best practices and showcase successful initiatives and innovative technologies.

Setting the path for progress towards 2030 **Key topics:**

The agenda has been structured around the UfM Regional Platforms and Working Groups on energy, environment, and climate action as well as on the WEFE together with a multi-thematic workshop held in plenary or in parallel sessions. This format provides all participants with opportunities to present and discuss regional and national initiatives in key areas, assess the impact of current actions and agree on future steps.

To meet the general and specific objectives of the MGW, the following key topics will be discussed during the MGW:

- Renewable energy transition, energy efficiency and energy security: Presentation of renewable energy projects, markets, and investment opportunities, as well as policy frameworks for securing access to energy in an unstable environment and accelerating the transition to a sustainable, efficient, and low-carbon energy system. In addition, discussions will also cover recent developments and technologies in the energy area including hydrogen, clean technologies, and emissions abatement.
- Climate Action and Resilience: Advancement of the UfM Climate Action Work Plan, strategies for mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, building territorial resilience to climate change, and adapting to its impacts in the Mediterranean region. Participants will prepare UfM contributions to (i) COP29 on climate to continue to actively engage international and regional stakeholders in facing the Mediterranean climate crisis and (ii) the next UfM Energy and Climate Business Forum which aims to showcase innovative private and public financing and investment solutions.
- Green, circular economy; pollution, with a focus on pollution prevention; biodiversity/ecosystems conservation, management and restoration: Advance the dialogue and implementation of the UfM Environment Agenda, so-called *2030 GreenerMedAgenda*, as a regional framework for policy, technical and financial convergence, collaboration and coordination of initiatives, programs and projects around mentioned joint priorities. Preparing UfM contribution to regional and global activities and events, as relevant regional and global events, including as appropriate 2024 COP16 on biodiversity.
- Multi-thematic workshops include highlights on key initiatives dealing with topics such as the Multistakeholder initiative for a Sustainable Food System in the Mediterranean,



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Mediterranean forest activities, plastic waste and marine litter management, and maritime and marine spatial planning.

- WEF E Nexus approach: With the growing recognition of the interconnectedness between Water, Energy, Food and Ecosystems, discuss the nexus to enable the mainstreaming of system-thinking and the application of the WEF E Nexus approach within governance structures at different levels, thereby increasing the ability to minimize risks and maximize benefits related to human livelihoods and socio-economic development.
- Governance and whole of society approach: Invite all stakeholders to the public sessions of the MWG and hold a dedicated plenary session on civil society engagement where regional, national and especially local stakeholders will ensure their contribution to the environment, energy and climate dossiers, where women and youth have a special role to play.
- Market, financing, and investment mechanisms: Show how carbon pricing and markets, EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, green funding mechanisms and climate and water financial flows, incentivize cleaner production of water and energy and the green transition, mobilize public and private financial resources for the non-conventional water resources, address regional vulnerabilities and promote international cooperation for a sustainable future in the Mediterranean.
- Science-policy-society interface: Build consensus and support for urgent climate and environmental action through a dialogue between scientists, policy and decision makers, including the presentation of the Special Report Climate and Environmental Coastal Risks in the Mediterranean prepared by the independent network of Mediterranean Experts on Climate and Environmental Change (MedECC).
- This first edition of the MGW represents a new ambition to increase synergies between sectors and foster regional and local cooperation, which is highly necessary in an increasingly complex and uncertain environment where silos lead to higher risks.



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4. Date and Venue

The UfM Green Week will take place between **14-16 of May 2024**, in **Istanbul, Türkiye**.

- **Day one (14th of May 2024)** will be held at the **OECD Istanbul Regional Centre**, Türkiye (Asmalı Mescit, İstiklal Cd. No:142, 34430 Beyoğlu/İstanbul).
- **Day two (15th of May 2024)** will be held at the **OECD Istanbul Regional Centre**, Türkiye (Asmalı Mescit, İstiklal Cd. No:142, 34430 Beyoğlu/İstanbul).
- **Day three (16th of May 2024)**, will be held at the **The Sheraton City Center**, Istanbul, Türkiye (Hacıahmet, Kurtuluş Deresi Cd. No:23, 34440 Beyoğlu/İstanbul)



5. Agenda

The inaugural session, a **High-Level Plenary**, will set the scene and lay the groundwork for subsequent discussions. In the afternoon and over the next few days, participants will engage in **specialized break-out sessions**, with two distinct topics being explored concurrently. The concluding day will feature a **Joint Stocktake Session**, a comprehensive review during which the two Ministerial Declarations will be discussed, and Member States will share their advancements and forthcoming strategies for implementation.



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The overall agenda of the Green Week is as follows:

| 14 May 2024 OECD premises | | 15 May 2024 OECD premises | | 16 May 2024 Sheraton Istanbul City Center | |
|--|--|---|--|---|--|
| 08:30-9:30 Welcome Coffee and Registration | | | | | |
| 9:30-10:00 High level opening <i>Auditorium</i> | | 09:00-11:00 Carbon Mitigation (ex. CBAM) <i>Auditorium</i> | 09:00-11:00 WEFE Nexus Meeting <i>Merged Rooms</i> | 09:00-11:00 Forest and Landscape Restauration in the Mediterranean <i>Meeting room 1</i> | |
| 10:00-11:00 PLENARY OPENING SESSION <i>Auditorium</i> OP1 | | | | 09:00-11:00 Energy Platform Meeting <i>closed session</i> <i>Meeting room 2</i> | |
| 11:00-11:30 Coffee Break | | 11:00-11:30 Coffee Break | | 11:00-11:30 Coffee Break | |
| 11:30-13:00 UfM platform on environment and climate action (EU, OECD, UNFCCC, UfM) <i>Auditorium</i> OP2 | | 11:30-13:00 Plastic pollution and Marine litter <i>Auditorium</i> | | 11:30-13:00 Green Funding Mechanisms <i>Merged Rooms</i> | |
| 11:30-13:00 Green and blue, land and sea: Maritime/Marine Spatial Planning within an ecosystem based approach <i>Meeting room 1</i> | | 11:30-13:00 Energy Platform Meeting <i>Meeting room 2</i> | | 11:30-13:00 Energy Platform Meeting <i>Meeting room 2</i> | |
| 13:00-14:00 LUNCH | | 13:00-14:00 LUNCH | | 13:00-14:00 LUNCH | |
| 14:00-15:30 UfM WG on ENV - Policy papers; GreenerMed advancements, monitoring and reporting <i>Auditorium</i> WEBE 1 | | 14:00-15:30 Climate Working group/Platforms Meeting <i>closed session</i> <i>Merged Rooms</i> | | 14:00-15:30 Towards Sustainable Food Systems: Organic Waste/Composting and Carbon Farming <i>Auditorium</i> WEBE 4 | |
| 14:00-15:30 Science-Policy Interface <i>Merged Rooms</i> | | 14:00-15:30 Finance for Adaptation <i>Meeting room 1</i> | | 14:00-15:30 Energy Platform Meeting <i>Meeting room 2</i> | |
| 15:30-16:00 Coffee Break | | 15:30-16:00 Coffee Break | | 15:00-15:30 Coffee Break | |
| 16:00-17:30 Climate financial flows <i>Auditorium</i> ECA 5 | | 16:00-17:30 UfM WG on ENV - Towards 2030: New initiatives and projects <i>Auditorium</i> WEBE 5 | | 16:00-17:30 Energy Updates <i>Merged Rooms</i> OECD 2 | |
| Break | | 17:30-19:00 Civil Society Engagement <i>Auditorium</i> JO 3 | | 15:30-18:30 UfM platform on Environment, Climate Action and Energy Stocktake on the UfM Ministerial Declarations: Member States' Progress and Next Steps <i>Meeting room 2</i> JO 4 | |
| 19:00 GALA COCKTAIL | | 20:00 DINNER | | 18:30-19:00 CLOSING SESSION <i>Meeting room 2</i> CL | |

“No Women, No Panel” campaign. The UfM adheres to a strict “No Women, No Panel” policy by which all events and activities must feature balanced participation of women and men. This will require ensuring that panels are set up in which women and men are represented as equally as possible. This policy is directed at mainstreaming gender balance in its activities. Details for each session can be found in the respective Session Concept Note.



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