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| **Journalists from 20 countries meet in Barcelona with scientists and experts to discuss environmental challenges in the Mediterranean**  ***This is the 3rd Meeting of Environmental Journalists of News Agencies of the Mediterranean, promoted by the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).***  **Barcelona, 14 November 2018 (UfM/IUCN-Med) –** Around 50 environmental journalists and scientists from 20 countries in the Mediterranean basin, researchers and experts in the field, NGOs, and international institutions are meeting on the 13th and 14th of November at the 3rd Meeting of Environmental Journalists of Mediterranean News Agencies, at the UfM headquarters, in Barcelona.  The event is promoted by the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), in collaboration with the Alliance of Mediterranean News Agencies (AMAN) and EFEverde of the EFE Agency.  Throughout the two days of the event, five sessions will be held with scientists and representatives from different institutions who are dedicated to, among other issues; the energy transition of the Mediterranean region, the circular economy and combatting plastic pollution. The program is completed with two sessions dedicated to presenting initiatives and new tools to the journalistic profession, and the debating and exchanging of experiences between professionals.  *“Our ocean plays such a critical role in our economy, and the Mediterranean is both a tourism and conservation hotspot filled with rich biodiversity. We cannot afford to continue turning our ocean into a vast, contaminated plastic soup*”, highlighted **Antonio Troya**, director of the IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation at the opening session.  *“The Mediterranean is one of the most vulnerable regions in the world to the effects of climate change and environmental degradation. Promoting a collective response from the countries of the region to these challenges is at the heart of the Union for the Mediterranean’s mandate”,* said **Jorge Borrego**, UfM Senior Deputy Secretary-General for Energy and Climate Action. *“We are pleased to bring together journalists from across the region and experts on environment and climate change from our Member States, who during these days in Barcelona, are discussing the environmental priorities of the region until 2030",* added **Miguel García-Herraiz**, UfM Deputy Secretary-General for Environment and Water.  **George Penintaex**, Secretary General of the Alliance of Mediterranean News Agencies (AMAN) and **Arturo Larena**, Director of EFE Verde at the EFE News Agency, also addressed the audience at the opening session. The meeting will conclude this afternoon with some closing remarks by the Secretary General of the Union for the Mediterranean, **Nasser Kamel**.  As part of the activities organised during these two days, journalists, scientists and experts yesterday paid a visit to the [**Switchmed Connect**](https://switchmedconnect.com/en/)**’s** exhibition on *“The Circular Economy in the Mediterranean region”.* The exhibition showcases impactful stories from the SwitchMed programme, an initiative that supports and connects stakeholders to scale-up social and eco innovations in the Mediterranean.  These meetings between environmental journalists, scientists and experts in the environmental field in the Mediterranean region were initiated by the IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation (IUCN-Med), who hosted the first meeting in Málaga in 2015 in collaboration with the EFE-Verde section of the EFE agency and the Alliance of Mediterranean News Agencies (AMAN). The second meeting was held in Marrakech in 2016, coinciding with COP22.  This initiative seeks to establish a network of communicators of environmental information and facilitate a platform and meeting point, where an exchange of opinions, debates and discussions thrive among the professionals of scientific and environmental journalism. In addition, this event facilitates direct access to important sources of environmental information in both scientific and political areas, as well as aspects of management.  The two previous meetings in Málaga (2015) and Marrakech (2016) enabled the consolidation of this network of communicators, and resulted in several important outcomes including; the publication titled “A journalist’s guide on environmental information”, the launch of the MAP Ecology section as part of the Moroccan News Agency, and the creation of the online platform ‘medgreenjournalism.net’ to foster networking of environmental journalists across the Mediterranean.  Photos from event [here](https://www.flickr.com/photos/165959437@N08/)  **For more information, photographs and interviews, please contact:**  **Isabel Pardillos**, Communication & Press Officer  T: +34 935 214 198 / M: +34 692 975 676 / Email: [isabel.pardillos@ufmsecretariat.org](mailto:isabel.pardillos@ufmsecretariat.org)  **Lourdes Lázaro Marín**, IUCN Communications  M: +34 615 44 14 08 / Email: [lourdes.lazaro@iucn.org](mailto:lourdes.lazaro@iucn.org)  **About IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation**  IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, is a membership Union composed of both government and civil society organisations. It harnesses the experience, resources and reach of its more than 1,300 Member organisations, and the input of more than 10,000 experts. IUCN is the global authority on the status of the natural world and the measures needed to safeguard it. The IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation opened in Malaga (Spain) in October 2001 with the core support of the Spanish Ministry of Environment, the regional Government of Junta de Andalucía and the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and Development (AECID). The Centre’s mission is to influence, encourage and assist Mediterranean societies to conserve and use sustainably the natural resources of the region and work with IUCN members and cooperate with all other agencies that share the objectives of IUCN.  Website: www.iucn.org/mediterranean | Facebook: IUCNMed | Twitter: @IUCN\_Med |

**About the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)**

The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) is the intergovernmental Euro-Mediterranean organisation that brings together all 28 countries of the European Union and 15 countries from the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean. The UfM provides a forum to enhance regional cooperation and dialogue, as well as the implementation of concrete projects and initiatives with tangible impact on the citizens, with an emphasis on young people, in order to address the three strategic objectives of the region: stability, human development and integration.

The Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean is the platform to operationalise decisions taken by the Member States, implementing strategic regional projects through a specific methodology based on dynamic multi-partner networks and the exchange of best practices and innovative tools: more than 50 regional projects labelled by the Member States worth over €5 billion, mainly in the areas of inclusive growth, youth employability, women empowerment, student mobility, sustainable urban development and climate action.