



Ministerial Conference on the Action Plan for Education for
Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean

8-9 December 2016, Nicosia - Cyprus

“Youth, Education and Sustainable development at the core of the UfM mandate”

Dear Chair,
Minister Costas Kadis,

Dear Ministers,

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1/ Human Development and Sustainable Development are the two strategic priorities driving the action of the Union for the Mediterranean.

Regional cooperation has a strong potential to help shaping more inclusive, more prosperous and more sustainable societies in the Mediterranean, as it allows to exchange, promote, replicate and upscale best practices at regional level.

2/ To this end the UfM has developed a growing activity and a specific methodology which has yielded concrete positive results and given new momentum to the regional cooperation framework in the Mediterranean.

At the policy level, 10 Ministerial meetings have taken place in the course of the last years in key areas of activity – Energy; Employment and Labour; Regional Cooperation being the most recent ones – and several new ministerial meetings are foreseen in the coming months.



Increasingly structured regional dialogues have taken place under the UfM framework in different sectors through a multi-partners and inclusive approach.

These dialogue platforms are key instruments for promoting the exchange of best practices on common regional challenges and for identifying innovative solutions translating policy decisions into concrete regional projects on the ground.

On the operational dimension, the Secretariat of the UfM has been developing concrete regional projects with tangible impact on the ground. 47 projects have been labelled so far.

Excellencies,

3/ Strengthened regional cooperation on Education for Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean is needed **to improve the understanding of the complex environmental, economic and social challenges affecting our region.** It is also fundamental **to increase the awareness on the opportunities available in our region.**

This is all the more important given that almost 60% of the population on the southern rim is below 30, which makes the Mediterranean a particularly youthful region.

4/ Formal education plays an essential role here. With the huge number of students and teachers available in the region, the educational institutions have an enormous potential to change behaviors.



- The Euro-Mediterranean University of Fes, which recently celebrated the opening of its third academic year in October 2016, aims at building a **new generation of young people with a unique Euro-Mediterranean profile, who can actively play a role towards transforming the region** from their future positions.

Social responsibility, eco-citizenship and multiculturalism are amongst the core pedagogical pillars of the Euro-Mediterranean University of Fes, mainstreamed into all study programmes in an horizontal way.

The University delivers degrees which focus on important topics for the integrated development of the Mediterranean region, such as for instance Master programmes in Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency or in Environmental Engineering & Water Management.

As a further evidence of the University's dedication to environmental consciousness, the eco-campus of the University has recently been labelled by the COP22.

- **In the field of basic education, the UfM labelled project "Forming responsible citizens"** contributes to establishing schools as key vehicles to disseminate citizenship and gender equality values.

The project sustained the creation of a new curriculum guide on citizenship education, encompassing the concepts of inclusive and sustainable development. This new pedagogical material will be implemented in pilot Moroccan and Tunisian schools and supported by teacher training and innovative practices.

Excellencies,

5/ The engagement of young people is critical to our efforts.



- In July this year, the UfM and its partners gathered 300 young people from the region **into the first Mediterranean Youth Climate Forum** in Tangiers on the eve of the MedCOP22. This was a unique momentum to encourage youth to take ownership of the climate agenda.
- **At the UfM labelled Eastern Mediterranean International School**, which welcomes young people between the age of 16 and 18 coming from the whole region and beyond, **the green team is a student-led initiative which looks at how to make the school a more sustainable environment.**

Students were recently working on creating a sustainable solution to charge their electrical devices whilst they work outside using solar panels to generate electricity during the day.

Excellencies,

6/ Civil society actors have been recognized to have a prominent role in raising public awareness on sustainable development. They are key players in creating the appropriate environment conducive to a more sustainable future.

- **Through the project “Plastic busters for a Mediterranean free from litter”** the UfM is supporting a multi-partner effort to address the root causes of marine pollution.

Beyond the development of concrete prevention and mitigation actions to be tested in several pilot areas in the Mediterranean basin, the project aims to **enhance the awareness of stakeholders and catalyze change in their perceptions and attitudes towards waste.**



- **In another key area, the UfM works on changing consumption and production patterns in the Mediterranean.**

This is illustrated by the Mediterranean RESCP Post Rio+20 project, promoted by the EBRD and the UNIDO which promotes the adoption of sustainable consumption and production models and stimulates the development of green industries and entrepreneurship in the region.

Success stories exist. We must build on them, continuing identifying concrete steps and measures with governments, with the educational community, with the civil society and all relevant stakeholders in order to step up our regional cooperation.

The UfM Secretariat stands by you in order to move forward operationally in this direction.

Thank you for your attention.