



DesirMED Adaptation Festival: The Mediterranean We Desire

IN COLLABORATION WITH



25th and 26th
September 2026
Larnaka, Cyprus

In collaboration with
Mediterranean Coast Day 2026
and the GreenLink project



DRAFT AGENDA



The Mediterranean we desire



Co-funded by
the European Union



Swiss participants in this project are funded by
Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra
Federal Department of Economic Affairs,
Education and Research EAER
State Secretariat for Education,
Research and Innovation SERI
Swiss Confederation

Day 1:

25 September - Coast Day 2026 celebration

Policy Panel Location: Allilodidaktiko, Saint Lazarus Square

Giant Interactive Map and other activities Location: Saint Lazarus Square

Policy Event "Nature-based Solutions for Coastal Resilience in the Mediterranean"

Mediterranean coastal zones are increasingly exposed to anthropogenic pressures and the impacts of climate change, including erosion, sea-level rise, water scarcity and biodiversity loss. In response to these challenges, NbS are emerging as effective, sustainable, and multifunctional approaches that also deliver long-term socio-economic benefits.

Mediterranean Coast Day, the UNEP/MAP observance celebrated annually on 25 September, offers an opportunity to raise awareness, exchange experiences, and promote innovative approaches to coastal management, including NbS.

The 2026 edition in Cyprus will highlight the role of NbS in climate adaptation and coastal resilience, showcasing concrete examples from across the Mediterranean region. It will benefit from the presence and contributions from the partners of DesirMED, a project which places a strong emphasis on Nature-based Solutions.

The event will also highlight local and regional initiatives and contribute to strengthening regional cooperation within the framework of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM).

The event is jointly organised by the Department of Environment of the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment of Cyprus and PAP/RAC, with the support of the DesirMED partners, in particular its lead partner - CMCC.

After the end of the policy event, one of the main festival interactive activities will be available on St. Lazarus, the Giant Interactive Map, open to the public. The main interactive activities of the festival (including the Giant Interactive Map) will be held during Day 2.

Draft Agenda



POLICY EVENT PROGRAMME COAST DAY CELEBRATION



8:30 - 9:00

Welcoming of the participants

9:00 - 9:30

Opening of the Med Coast Day

- Representative of the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment of Cyprus
- Elisa Furlan, CMCC (Coordinator of the DesirMED project)
- Olfat Hamdane, UNEP MAP, Deputy Director

9:30 - 9:45

Ambassador's remarks

- Charis Nika, New Coast Ambassador
- Relevant Video

9:45 - 10:45

The importance of NbS and resilient coastal planning - panel discussion

Moderator: Ivan Sekovski, PAP/RAC Programme Officer

Panelists:

- Elyes Hamza, SPA/RAC, Director
- Daria Povh, PAP/RAC, Director
- Susanne Pedersen - IUCN Centre for Science and Knowledge (CSK), Director
- Michael Scoullou, Team Leader/WES-BCA

10:45 - 11:00

Q&A

11:00 - 11:20

Coffee break

11:20 - 12:20

Interactive poster session on Mediterranean case studies

Dialogues/exchanges of experiences/solutions across different projects and regions.

12:20 - 13:20

Pathways towards climate adaptation and NbS adoption - Panel discussion

- Céline Damery, Conservatoire du littoral, Project Officer
- Aradippou Municipality representative, tbc

13:20 - 13:30

Award ceremony for the winner of the DesirMED photo contest
Andrea Belmartino, University of Sassari

13:30 - 13:45

Overview of the Festival programme and closing remarks

13:45 - 14:30

Lunch

14:30 - 15:00

Tour of the Giant Interactive Map (St. Lazarus Square)

15:00 - 19:00

Giant Interactive Map open to the public (St. Lazarus Square)

Day 2:

26 September - Interactive, open activities

Location: Europe Square

What is happening in Europe Square?

Open to all, festival participants and citizens will have the opportunity to discover adaptation and engagement initiatives from across the Mediterranean through a programme jointly supported by the DesirMED and GreenLink projects. Throughout the afternoon, simultaneous interactive activities will take place across Europe Square, including the DesirMED Giant Interactive Map, workshops, participatory activities, live music performances and networking opportunities.

What is the Giant Interactive Map?

Welcome to the DesirMED Giant Interactive Map, the largest phygital experience ever created about the Mediterranean. For these days, Europe Square becomes a whole sea: a place where children, families, neighbours and decision-makers can walk across the Mediterranean, from the Atlantic coast of Portugal to the shores of Larnaka.

But this is far more than a map to look at. It is a shared space to understand that our region is one connected body of land and water, where a drought in Greece, a wildfire in Valencia and the erosion of a Cypriot beach are chapters of the same story, and where the answers are shared too. Scanning, playing and exploring, visitors discover how eight European regions are learning to work together with nature. Through nature-based solutions that protect and restore forests, wetlands, dunes, rivers and seagrass, they adapt to a changing climate while benefiting both people and biodiversity.

Hosting the map places Larnaka and Cyprus at the heart of this Mediterranean journey, not as spectators but as protagonists of climate action, side by side with partners from across the basin and with the support of the European Union and Swiss cooperation. It turns science into experience, experience into pride, and pride into the everyday choices that build resilience.

Because the Mediterranean we desire is not something we wait for. It is something we transform, together. #WeTransformMED

Draft Agenda



GIANT INTERACTIVE MAP DAY



15:00-15:15

Institutional welcome and introduction to the Giant Map (IUCN Med and Cypriot host partners; brief words from local authorities). EN-EL

15:15-15:45

Opening performance

The grandmother of Larnaka and the journey across the Mediterranean. Audience on the "coasts", performers in the "sea"; it launches the journey across the map. EL

15:45-16:05

Giant Map Exploration & Orientation Challenge

Kinesthetic warm-up: locating basins, mountain ranges and coastal ecosystems. EN-EL

16:05-16:45

QR Explorer & Live Leaderboard Challenge

Free QR scanning, on-device quiz and a live ranking announced over megaphone. EN-EL

16:45 - 17:10

Augmented Reality Hologram Quest

Monk seal, Posidonia, flamingo, holm oak and carpenter bee at real size; photos and ecological role. EN-EL

17:10 - 17:25

Break

Free exploration and photos on the map

17:25 - 18:15

DesirMED Climate Detective Workshop

Investigation and co-design of nature-based solutions for a region in crisis. EN-EL

18:15 - 18:40

Eco-Reporter Challenge

Role-play: "reporter" teams interview experts and present nature-based solutions. EN-EL

18:40-19:00

Cartographic Bingo

Fast search-and-recognition game on the map; lively and for all ages. EN-EL

19:00-19:30

Team Trivia & Knowledge Match

Competitive team finale: a research phase followed by timed rounds on the Giant Map. EN-EL

19:30-20:00

Closing performance with final messages

The performance is repeated for newly arrived audiences and wraps up the journey with the programme's key closing messages.

20:00-20:30

Closing concert

The Windcraft Band - a 20-piece multicultural ensemble of wind players and rhythm section, with a fresh instrumental take on funk, pop and rock hits.

20:30

Closure of the Day

DesirMED Adaptation Festival: The Mediterranean we desire

25th and 26th September 2026
Larnaka, Cyprus



OUR SPEAKERS

MEET OUR SPEAKERS



**DARIA
POVH ŠKUGOR**

PAP/RAC Director

Daria Povh Škugor is Director of the Priority Actions Programme Regional Activity Centre (PAP/RAC) of UNEP/MAP. For over two decades she has been leading and participating in the numerous coastal management and coastal adaptation projects, from the Mediterranean to city level. Using integrated, systemic approach she gained on-the-ground experience of policy-science-community collaboration. Her main interest lies in SDG 17 – building partnerships for action. She is advocating for climate action and sustainability as a presenter, guest lecturer and a key note speaker. She holds a MSc in Coastal zone management (Ulster) and BSc in Economy of coastal zones (Split).



**SUSANNE
PEDERSEN**

IUCN Centre for Science and
Knowledge (CSK) Director

Susanne Pedersen joined IUCN as the Director of the Centre for Science and Knowledge (CSK) in June 2023. She has experience from international organizations, a science-based advisory centre, an innovation community, industry associations and consulting engineering firms. Prior to joining IUCN, she worked as the Assistant Director-General of the Global Green Growth Institute and Managing Director of Climate-KIC Nordic. She also spent 2 years as the Director of the UNEP Copenhagen Climate Centre (UNEP-CCC) engaged in implementing UNEP's Climate and Energy Program.

MEET OUR SPEAKERS



**PROF. MICHAEL
SCOULLOS**

Team Leader/WES-BCA

Michael J. Scoulllos is Professor Emeritus at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens and Director of the UNESCO Chair on Sustainable Development Management and Education in the Mediterranean. He is Founder and Chairman of MIO-ECSDE and a leading figure in Mediterranean environmental policy, education, and water governance, currently serving as Team Leader of the EU-funded WES-BCA programme.



**ELYES
HAMZA**

SPA/RAC Director

Mahmoud Elyes Hamza is Director of the Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Center (UNEP/MAP). He previously served as Tunisia's Minister of Agriculture, Water Resources, and Fisheries (2021–2023), President of IRESA (2017–2021), and Director of INAT (2009–2017). A professor specializing in rural engineering, water, and forests, he has held senior leadership roles in agricultural education and research since 1988.

MEET OUR SPEAKERS



CHARIS NIKA

New Coast Ambassador

Charis Nika is an architect and urbanist whose work spans across research, pedagogy, and practice. Her work focuses on the environmental, social, and political dimensions of architecture and urbanism.

Charis is a PhD Candidate at the Department of Architecture of the University of Cyprus and works as a researcher at the Laboratory of Urbanism (LUCY). Her research explores how critical urban practices can address issues of spatial justice in the Cypriot coastal zone within the broader context of contemporary urbanisation.

Alongside her academic work, Charis leads practice-based projects with diverse collectives and bottom-up initiatives. In 2025, her project "Coastal Urban Futures" received the TIDAL ArtS Lighthouse Grant, supporting the co-creation of alternative futures for the coast of Larnaca. She holds an MSc in Architecture, Urbanism and Building Sciences from TU Delft and a BSc in Architectural Studies from Cardiff University.



**CÉLINE
DAMERY**

Conservatoire du littoral
Project Officer

After a postgraduate cursus in marine and coastal management and conservation, Céline Damery joined in 2008 the Europe and International Department of the Conservatoire du littoral (french Public Agency dedicated to coastal protection) as project officer and became in 2026 Vice-Director for International and Patronage. She is involved in the development and implementation of international cooperation programs, notably with Mediterranean, Europe and Western-Africa countries. Over the years, she has been involved in projects in link with conservation and sustainable development of coastal natural sites and small islands, providing both institutional and technical expertise on various topics such as ecological restoration, management of visitors, development of partnerships and coastal adaptation to climate change.

MEET OUR SPEAKERS



IVAN SEKOVSKI

PAP/RAC
Programme Officer

Ivan Sekovski has been working at the Priority Actions Programme Regional Activity Centre (PAP/RAC) of UNEP/MAP since 2015, contributing to projects on coastal planning and management, nature-based solutions, climate resilience, and marine and coastal monitoring. His work focuses on supporting sustainable and climate-resilient development of coastal areas, with an emphasis on integrating environmental knowledge into planning and decision-making. He has experience working at the interface of science, policy and practice across the Mediterranean region. He holds a PhD in Marine and Coastal Management from the University of Cádiz, an MSc in Water and Coastal Management from the University of Faro, and an MSc in Marine Biology and Ecology from the University of Split.



**ELISA
FURLAN**

CMCC Senior Researcher
DesirMED Coordinator

Elisa Furlan is a Senior Scientist at the CMCC Foundation and Adjunct Professor at Ca' Foscari University of Venice. Her research focuses on climate change risk assessment and adaptation pathways for coastal and transitional ecosystem. She combines machine learning-based modelling and strategic foresight to assess socio-ecological vulnerability to multi-hazard risks and the potential of Nature-based Solutions. She leads the CMCC Research Unit on "Transformative Adaptation Measures and Planning for Resilience," supporting transformative societal change through scenario planning and the integration of stakeholder and decision-maker visions. As Project Coordinator of the Horizon Europe projects DesirMED and GRACE, she works to translate scientific knowledge into transformative, climate-resilient planning, with a strong focus on community engagement and capacity building. She is also a Coordinating Lead Author for Chapter 7, "Societal transformation for a sustainable future," of the MedECC Second Mediterranean Assessment Report (MAR2).



**Co-funded by
the European Union**

Swiss participants in this project are funded by



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Economic Affairs,
Education and Research EAER
State Secretariat for Education,
Research and Innovation SERI

Enjoy!



@DesirMED.EU



@desirmed.eu



@DesirMED



@desirmed.bsky.social



@DesirMED