



**Water and
Environment Support**
in the ENI Southern Neighbourhood region

WES PRESS RELEASE

WES supports Morocco's fight against marine litter with comprehensive monitoring actions in Tetuan

Athens, 9 May 2023

A group of 25 Moroccans came together at a two-day hands-on training workshop organised by the EU-funded "Water and Environment Support (WES) in the ENI Southern Neighbourhood region" project and the Ministry of Energy Transition and Sustainable Development (MTEDD) of Morocco.

The workshop, held in Tetuan on April 23-24, 2023, aimed to strengthen the skills and knowledge of the participants in utilizing cutting-edge techniques for monitoring macrolitter and microlitter on the sea surface, as well as macrolitter on the seafloor.

According to Dr. Khadija Rhayour, Quality Manager of the National Laboratory for Pollution Studies and Monitoring (LNEPS), in charge of the sand and seaside bathing waters quality monitoring program and member of the team following the WES project: 'Plastic pollution, particularly from microplastics, is a new field for me. The monitoring activities conducted for marine litter on beaches, the seafloor, and the sea surface have provided invaluable insights into the adverse effects of plastics on the ecosystem. Through diligent monitoring and meticulous investigation of the source of marine litter in our marine ecosystems, we can equip ourselves with the knowledge necessary to develop effective tools for proper waste management. This immersive training experience has proven to be of immense scholarly value, and I express sincere appreciation for the comprehensive learning it has afforded.'

The workshop followed a two-fold approach: the first day entailed theoretical sessions focusing on research and policy advances related to marine litter monitoring at Mediterranean, European and national level; and the methods to monitor macrolitter and microlitter on the sea surface and macrolitter on the seafloor. The second day comprised practical sessions, allowing participants to actively engage in seafloor litter monitoring surveys. Moreover, they were equipped with the necessary skills to transform their marine litter observations into fit-for-purpose data.

"Participating in the workshop was truly a remarkable experience. The conducive atmosphere fostered dynamic discussions among the participants, creating an engaging and productive learning environment", said Mr Er-ramy Nouredine, PhD student at the Department of Geology, Faculty of Sciences, University of Abdelmalek Essaadi in Tetouan.

The workshop was organized back-to-back with a marine litter monitoring campaign conducted in Tamuda bay, as part of WES. This campaign marks the second in a series, with the first one taking place in October 2022. Both campaigns, along with the workshop, are integral components of WES's technical support activity, designed to assist Morocco in fulfilling its obligations and implementing relevant measures outlined in the Regional Plan for Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean and the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme of the Barcelona Convention.

The support provided by WES focuses on generating fit-for-purpose data regarding the quantity, types, composition, and sources of marine litter on both the sea surface and seafloor. It also aims to identify effective management measures to address the identified sources and types of marine litter and result in a proposed plan encompassing priority measures for the reduction of marine litter in Morocco.

"Being involved in this outstanding initiative and witnessing the unwavering dedication displayed by all participants in the WES marine litter activities in Morocco fills me with immense joy. Very soon we will have



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in place a wealth of comprehensive scientific data and associated knowledge, which will serve as powerful tools for informed decision-making in Morocco, enabling us to effectively address the pervasive issue of marine litter”, said Dr. Thomais Vlachogianni, WES Marine Litter Expert.

This activity is implemented with the support and services of the Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE) and LDK Consultants Global EEIG.

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The Water and Environment Support project in the Southern Mediterranean Neighbourhood aims to protecting the environment and improving the management of scarce water resources in the Mediterranean region. It will tackle problems related to pollution prevention and water use efficiency. WES is a regional project with emphasis on the countries of North Africa and the Middle East (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, and Tunisia).

Disclaimer

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