

JOVES I MEDITERRÀNIA Clima 2020 WORKSHOPS Conclusions

Organiser:



In collaboration with:

Assembly of Citizens of the Mediterranean Foundation (FACM), CERAI, Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions — Intermediterranean Commission (CIM — CRPM) and the CIM Youth Council, European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed), MedCities, MedECC, National Youth Council of Catalonia, NovAct, Regional government of Sousse, Servei Civil Internacional de Catalunya, Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and the Mediterranean Youth Climate Network (MYCN), Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Women's Forum of Rif, Youth Council of Barcelona and Young Mediterranean Voices (YMV).

Workshop 1.

Activism, social movements and civil society

What strategies do activism, social movements and civil society use in the struggle for climate justice? How does the battle for environmental rights relate to broader political and social demands? What forms does environmental action take in the various Mediterranean region contexts? What happens when activists operate against a backdrop of occupation and repression?

The activism workshop sought to answer all these questions by means of a conversation with Mahfoud Bashri, a Western Saharan activist with the organisation Saharawi Campaign against the Plunder of Natural Resources, and Suha Jarrar, an environmental and gender policy researcher at Al-Haq, a human rights organisation in Palestine, working on the right of access to water.

The theoretical discussion was followed by the presentation of tools, strategies and a range of methods for taking action to put pressure on political authorities and bring about social change.

Finally, the participants designed a non-violent action and a campaign to carry out at the forthcoming UN Climate Change Conference (COP26).

Conclusions:

- There is considerable overlap between climate justice activism and human rights issues, in particular where repression is rife as is the case in the occupation of and conflict in Western Sahara and Palestine.
- The sustainability and effectiveness of any kind of activism or social movement hinges on the inclusion of cross-cutting issues such as social environmentalism and eco-feminism.
- Digitalisation and creativity are the foremost tools for driving the inclusion of climate-related struggles both locally and globally.

Workshop 2.

Cities, young people and sustainability

The workshop was hosted by Medcities and helped us to answer questions about how we can build more sustainable and inclusive urban environments and what the role of young citizens is and what kind of city they picture.

The first panel discussion brought together international and Mediterranean organisations working on issues in urban and youth policies, the fight against climate change and youth activism. The workshop's second session adopted a participatory approach to address the sustainability and inclusion of cities based on challenges, actions undertaken and key advocacy messages in relation to local governance and participation, environmental management, inclusive green urban spaces, and entrepreneurship and employment.

Conclusions:

- Cities should seek to grow fairly, i.e. distributing green spaces and basic services to ensure access for all and including by ambitious promotion of accessible and smart mobility.
- The human footprint is largest in cities and this is where action would be most critical. It is essential to improve efficiency in the use of core but limited resources, whether in buildings or in water and waste management.
- Local governments have a key role to play in accommodating all citizens' needs and identities. Public bodies should be required not simply to hope young people will participate but rather to devise participation mechanisms tailored to them.
- Localised policies targeting vulnerable groups are crucial to ensure no one is left behind. Hence the participants called for enhancing the value of all kinds of jobs and economic sectors together with more initiatives in formal, non-formal and vocational education which should also be promoted by our cities.

Workshop 3.

Digitalisation and innovative solutions for the climate emergency

This workshop addressed the significance of digitalisation in the climate emergency and the role it plays in youth action. The first session, hosted by the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed) and the Anna Lindh Foundation's Spanish Network, focused on the impact of digital transformation as a new need, especially in the context of COVID19. Young people from Lebanon, Tunisia and Egypt shared good practices and digital tools to face the climate emergency in their countries. The second session, organised by the Anna Lindh Foundation's Young Mediterranean Voices (YMV) programme, brought together young activists in an open discussion on different virtual and digital platform projects in the Mediterranean, highlighting the speedy take-up of new technologies, their impact on fast-tracking process of setting up action networks, and how this makes it essential for young people participation. The final session was also hosted by the YMV, presented the knowledge, tools, techniques and guidelines to be able to develop climate action projects, so that the young people could design their own proposals.

Conclusions:

- The climate emergency dialogue should be driven by setting up opportunities for virtual exchange and digital tools for young people while leveraging social media platforms to reach a wider audience of activists along with policymakers.
- We need to bridge the gap between Southern and Northern Mediterranean countries which draw on the multilateral Euro-Med partnership and its youth-led digital dialogue platforms while also redressing regional disparities. When we support vulnerable local communities, we are addressing justice, poverty, equality, social inclusion and a fair redistribution of resources.
- There is a pressing need to shift the global narrative and relate economic development to the climate crisis so that people come to see it as a priority and take on greater responsibility. Culture should be used as a means of communication and as a network to humanise the situation.

Workshop 4. Transformative economies

This workshop was led by a number of civil society organisations and governments from the southern shore of the Mediterranean. From their own standpoints they set out the individual and collective struggles to turn transformative economies into the economic alternative needed for a more sustainable, just and equal world.

The projects presented show that transformative economies are envisioned as an alternative economy anchored in the fundamental principles of agro-ecology and food sovereignty, gender and regional fairness, environmental protection, heritage recovery, good governance of the commons (natural resources and knowledge) and building on the creation of grassroots networks.

Conclusions:

- As this is a new culture of responsible citizenship, a lot of work needs to be done to raise awareness and popularise this concept before setting up social and solidarity-based economy (SSE) projects. It is accordingly crucial to learn about and educate young people in the values of the SSE (team spirit, collaboration, justice, equality and solidarity).
- Transformative economies are an opportunity for young people to reclaim the Mediterranean rural environment. Hence the initiatives of young rural people and enhancement of rural communities need to be bolstered by the engagement of public institutions and the implementation of public policies to drive scientific and academic research along with basic and leisure services.
- This economic model has to be included, largely through school and university textbooks, as an alternative to the mainstream economic approach. This goes hand in hand with the need to drive an appropriate and uniform legal framework which enables rural development.

Workshop 5. Influencing decision- making

This workshop exposed the need to increase the presence and influence of young people in decision-making in three sessions. The first, organized by the Catalan Advisory Council for Sustainable Development (CADS), the MedECC network and the Pompeu Fabra University, addressed climate justice analysing the role of the scientific sector in the definition of environmental policies and the role of youth organizations and universities in mobilizing against the climate emergency. The second session, hosted by the Union for the Mediterranean and the Mediterranean Youth Climate Network, focused on the participation of Mediterranean youth in international and regional forums and their influence in the elaboration of public policies. The last session, organized by the Intermediterranean Commission (CRPM) and its Youth Council, drilled down into the reality of young people's participation in the decision-making process and the actions currently underway and the hurdles they face. Moreover, it was analysed the role of youth in the decision-making process based on actions and real obstacles, as well as identifying youth needs and solutions, some of which were added to the Forum's Climate Declaration.

Conclusions:

- Young people's participation in the decision-making process is a key issue in democratic governance. As a result, the public authorities need to pay more attention to the role of formal and informal education.
- Both the grassroots movement and also local and international engagement are needed and reinforce each other. Participation in regional networks and initiatives is therefore essential to ensure that real synergies are leveraged. This means that formal and informal mobilisation is crucial to shape policy-making.
- Public authorities have to enhance communication strategies concerning climate policies and actions. Local and regional organisations also need support in setting up more venues for young people so as to encourage them to participate.

Workshop 6. Global justice, migration and gender

The impact of the contemporary ecological crisis, which is the upshot of the capitalist system and neoliberal ideology, is global in scale. However, it falls unequally on people and regions as they bear the brunt of diverse structures of oppression such as racism, neo-colonialism and patriarchy. We have consequently discussed global eco-social debt, climate refugees and eco-feminist demands while also mainstreaming an intersectional perspective and adopting a peace-building approach to conflict analysis.

Conclusions:

- We need a democratic economy which addresses the inequalities between North and South. We also have to put in place an egalitarian renewable energy model, secure a 10% reduction in emissions especially in rich countries and take on board the fact that the younger generations will have to use less energy.
- New and creative visions and most of all a democratic economy are indispensable when it comes to implementing a completely new model anchored in sustainability. This is because change will come not from institutions but rather from social mobilisation and civil disobedience.
- The climate crisis is the outcome of a congeries of systems of oppression which have unequal consequences. Accordingly this difference should be factored in when searching for solutions and achieving real and global climate justice which has to be founded on intersectionality.

Taller 7.

ARTIVISM

This workshop was organised by the Mediterranean Citizens' Assembly Foundation (MCAF) and dealt with the significance of art and culture in helping to prevent and overcome the isolation brought about by the pandemic. The purpose of the session was to bring together young people working on some of the projects sponsored by the MCAF for sustainability in which art, research and culture are used as tools to build people's resilience in terms of the climate emergency and also other economic, social and even health issues. These projects include several plays put on during lockdown and the *Online Accordion for Children on their Own* in Naples (Italy); the Mediterranean Congress "Music and Science": using ICT in the post-COVID Scenario in Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina); "Mediterranean Emergency: Citizens' Resistance" at the *Mostra Viva del Mediterrani meeting in Valencia* (Spain), and the first virtual residence for artists of the Mediterranean RAVMED-19 in Algiers (Algeria).

The workshop put young people at the forefront of the dialogue and also addressed issues such as raising awareness about sustainable consumption and identifying production guidelines to curb the effects of climate change (Food Wave — Empowering Urban Youth for Climate Action workshop in Rome, Italy), about gender and sexual diversity (the rock opera piece *Antigone 2.0* in Podgorica, Montenegro) and rallying young people in their cities to foster intercultural dialogue and the social integration of migrants (*Le dialogue interculturel et l'inclusion sociale des migrants* in Nador, Morocco).

Conclusions:

- More forums have to be arranged to drive youth participation, such as a safe space for dialogue, exchanging ideas and mapping out effective and shared solutions.
- Art is a communication tool which provides a chance for young people to express themselves. In this case, art was used as a way to work through the isolation brought about by the pandemic.
- There is a pressing need for young people's participation in decision-making. For example, declarations are powerful documents which can take on institutional meaning above and beyond any preceding discussions.