

THE ECOPLANTMED PROJECT: "ECOLOGICAL USE OF NATIVE PLANTS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION"

Gianluigi Bacchetta¹, Daniel Ballesteros Bagues¹, Magda Bou Dagher Kharrat², Bouchra Douaihy², Christini Fournaraki³, Dany Ghosn³, Panagiota Gotsiou³, Raquel Herreros García⁴, Abdelhamid Khaldi⁵, Marwa Khammassi⁵, Ali El Khorchani⁵, Adamantia Kokkinaki³, Antoni Marzo i Pastor⁴, Francesca Meloni¹, Faten Mezni⁵

¹ Centro Conservazione Biodiversità (CCB), Dip.to di Scienze della Vita e dell'Ambiente, Università degli Studi di Cagliari, V.le Sant'Ignazio da Laconi, 11-13, I-09123, Cagliari, Italia
² Saint Joseph University, Laboratory for Seed Germination and Conservation (LSGC), Campus of Sciences and Technologies, Mar Roukos-Mkalles, Lebanon
³ CIHEAM - Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Chania, Mediterranean Plant Conservation Unit, Alsyllo Agrokipiou, P.O. Box 85, Chania 73100, Greece
⁴ Regional Ministry of Infrastructure, Territory and Environment, Centre for Forest Applied Research (CIEF), Av.da Comarques del País Valencià 114, 46930, Valencia, Spain
⁵ National Research Institute for Rural Engineering, Water and Forestry, Laboratory of Management and Valorisation of Forest Resources (INRGREF), BP.10 Ariana 2080, Tunisia

ECOPLANTMED is a joint Mediterranean initiative based on the collaboration among seed banks, research institutes and institutions dealing with native plant conservation and management. The project aims to contribute to halting the loss of biodiversity and to promote a sustainable development model in the Mediterranean region by enhancing the conservation of native plants and promoting their use in habitat restoration and the plant production sector.



Seed collection



In situ monitoring activity



Partners of the project ECOPLANTMED



Seed cleaning, testing and storage

The Mediterranean Basin is one of the most bio-diverse regions and the third most significant plant diversity hotspot worldwide with 25,000 plant species, over half of which are found nowhere else in the world. A mere five percent of the original extent of the hotspot remains with relatively intact vegetation and this is mainly due to human activities.

Using native plants for habitat restoration or as a substitute for exotic ornamental plants on both public and private land can contribute to long-term protection and enhancement of our natural and cultural heritage as well as landscape protection, management and planning. Furthermore, using native plants can increase ecosystem resilience to climate change and combat the proliferation of invasive alien plants.

The project addresses public authorities and development agencies, public and private plant production sectors, landscape architects, garden designers, researchers, environmental organisations and educators, local communities and the wide public. The main outputs of the project are:

- Ex situ conservation of native plant species in seed banks
- Manual with protocols for the propagation of native plant species
- Guide of best restoration practices for Mediterranean habitats
- Management plans for the restoration of Mediterranean habitats using native plants for two pilot areas initiating to be restored in Lebanon and Tunisia
- Local workshops and dissemination events involving target groups and beneficiaries
- Initiation of collaborative actions in the Mediterranean region in relation to the conservation, sustainable use and valorization of native plants.



Photos from the 1st Steering Committee meeting, Crete: the kick-off meeting and the field trip to Kedrodasos



Restoration ecology activities using native plants: reinforcement of population and habitat restoration



The project ECOPLANTMED total budget is 1.050 million Euro and it is financed, for an amount of 0.945 million Euro (90%), by the European Union (ENPI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme) through the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument . **Website:** www.ecoplantmed.eu

The 2007-2013 ENPI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme is a multilateral Cross-Border Cooperation initiative funded by the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). The Programme objective is to promote the sustainable and harmonious cooperation process at the Mediterranean Basin level by dealing with the common challenges and enhancing its endogenous potential. It finances cooperation projects as a contribution to the economic, social, environmental and cultural development of the Mediterranean region. The following 14 countries participate in the Programme: Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Palestine, Portugal, Spain, Syria (participation currently suspended), Tunisia. The Joint Managing Authority (JMA) is the Autonomous Region of Sardinia (Italy). Official Programme languages are Arabic, English and French (www.enpicbcmcd.eu).

The European Union is made up of 28 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

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