

EMEA at COP28

Dubai, UAE,
30th November – 10th December 2023





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Introduction:

As COP28 concluded, the Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association - EMEA emerged as an active contributor to the discussions surrounding innovative solutions to mitigating and adapting to climate change, climate finance mechanisms, and the just transition. Our engagement extended beyond mere participation, as we organized six-panel events at the Mediterranean Coalition Office and joined in discussions at various prominent pavilions, including the Spanish Pavilion, Moroccan Pavilion, and the ILO's Just Transition Pavilion.

This report delves into EMEA's role in shaping the dialogue during COP28, highlighting the EMEA-led events at the Mediterranean Coalition Office and our participation in thirteen other events across different pavilions. As a member of the Mediterranean Coalition, EMEA aimed to foster collaborative efforts and bring diverse perspectives to the forefront in addressing the challenges posed by climate change.

In Numbers:



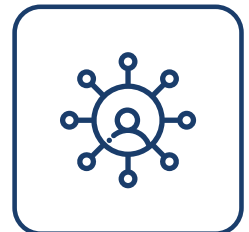
6

EMEA organised panel events



13

Panels with EMEA participation



8

Pavilions

All EMEA events at the Mediterranean Coalition Office are available on our [YouTube channel](#).



EMEA Events:

Brain Capital: Vital to the Post-SDG Agenda

3rd December, 16:00-17:00 GST, Mediterranean Coalition Office and online

Co-organised by EMEA, Baker Institute, and the Brain Capital Alliance

Panel:

Moderated Prof. Rym Ayadi, President and Founder, Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association

Speakers:

- Dr Harris Eyre, Co-founder of Brain Capital Alliance, Fellow at Baker Institute, Senior Fellow at Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute
- Dennis Pamlin, Executive director, The Net-Zero Compatibility Initiative (NCI), Mission Innovation
- Grammenos Mastrojeni, Senior Deputy Secretary General, Union for the Mediterranean
- Dr. Nathalie Hilmi, Section Head of Environmental Economics, Centre Scientifique de Monaco

Background

A recent Lancet Neurology editorial noted how sustainable development demands brain health. However, this demonstrated how little brain health is included in existing goals and suggests a future agenda for more comprehensively integrating it. A distinguishing trait of the contemporary Industrial Revolution we are currently experiencing - driven by artificial intelligence and other next-generation technologies - is that it has altered our actions and reshaped us as individuals. The success of our economies is fundamentally intertwined with our citizens' psychological and emotional welfare. The mental well-being of individuals and our economic vitality are inextricably connected.

Herein we wish to extend to the concept of brain capital: the complete set of an individual's mental and emotional abilities, which includes their cognitive skills, capacity for learning, emotional and social intelligence, and their ability to cope with stress. As such, brain capital is well-placed to serve as a key pillar for the post-SDG agenda, given how much the latter needs to be about systemic change.

Nations must understand the importance of harnessing the brain capital of their populace in order to thrive, benefiting both economically and socially. The upcoming roles for which we must equip ourselves today will prioritize the qualities that define our humanity, which technology cannot replicate or supplant, and that enable us to adapt and excel in diverse environments.

Although brain capital is a recent concept, it is already well-equipped to provide the underpinning for the post-SDG agenda. It has developed its own Global Dashboard, which can assist policy-makers in cross-cutting and transformative agenda-building. The Dashboard is focused on three elements: Brain Capital Drivers, Brain Health and Brain Skills. Its logic is based on the value of creating a comprehensive reservoir of data that can offer a global comparative frame of reference and aggregate related data sets across disciplines.

Among the emerging policy blueprints, the one that stands out deals with the brain capital industrial innovation strategy. While most conventional industrial policy approaches would focus on subsidies for emerging technologies or trade protection, this one argues that we already live in a brain economy, where nourishing our cognitive skills is the best recipe to formulate *modus vivendi* with omnipresent technologies.

We have recently discussed the impact of brain capital on the international agenda at a UN Science Summit event in New York, where leading experts from a variety of disciplines came together, from brain and mental health through education, economic security, and resilience, all the way to the built environment. Our conclusion was that comprehensive regional, national, and global Brain Deals are needed to link related policy fields together and create transformational agendas. This conference report captures the main ideas that were raised, while the videos of the full-day program are available via this YouTube playlist.

As the Summit of the Future is being prepared for September 2024, the most impactful contribution of the brain science and brain health community would be to provide the key that unlocks transformative change. Brain capital should be at the core of a nation's growth and prosperity.





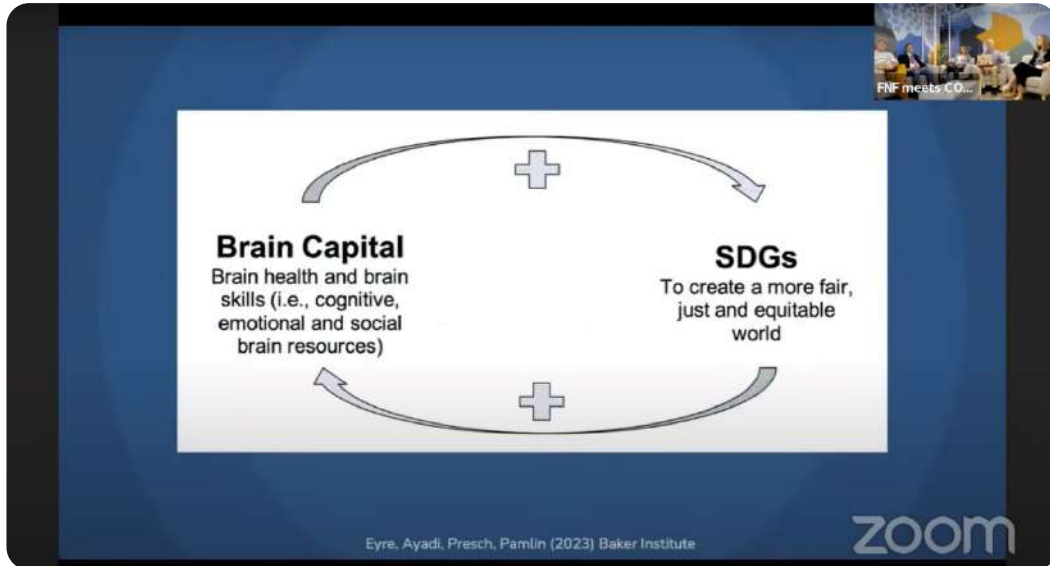
Event Summary:

In 2015, the United Nations adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a call to action for countries to use their resources, knowledge, and technologies to achieve a holistic, sustainable, and equitable form of global development. The deadline for the SDGs is fast approaching 2030. Policymakers and researchers must consider what is important to incorporate in the post-SDG agenda. One concept that could provide a dynamic center to the post-SDG agenda is Brain Capital.

On December 3rd, 2023, the Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association (EMEA) hosted an event entitled “Brain Capital: Vital to the Post-SDG Agenda” at COP28 in Dubai. **Professor Rym Ayadi, the President and Founder of EMEA**, opened the session with a discussion of how Brain Capital must be an essential part of our plans for the future. With the rising tide of stressors on brain health, such as global warming and higher levels of forced migration, we must prepare a strong set of socioeconomic policies and actions. Professor Ayadi stressed that the ‘silo approach’ of dealing with issues individually will not be sufficient to tackle the complexity of the problems we are facing.

Professor Ayadi then introduced the first speaker, **Dr. Harris Eyre, a physician and neuroscientist**, whose personal mission is to improve the brain health of the population at scale. Dr. Eyre warned the audience that the Brain Capital of nations is under siege. Chronic stress, COVID-19, disinformation, ultra-processed diets, and more are disrupting the healthy brain functioning of the global population.

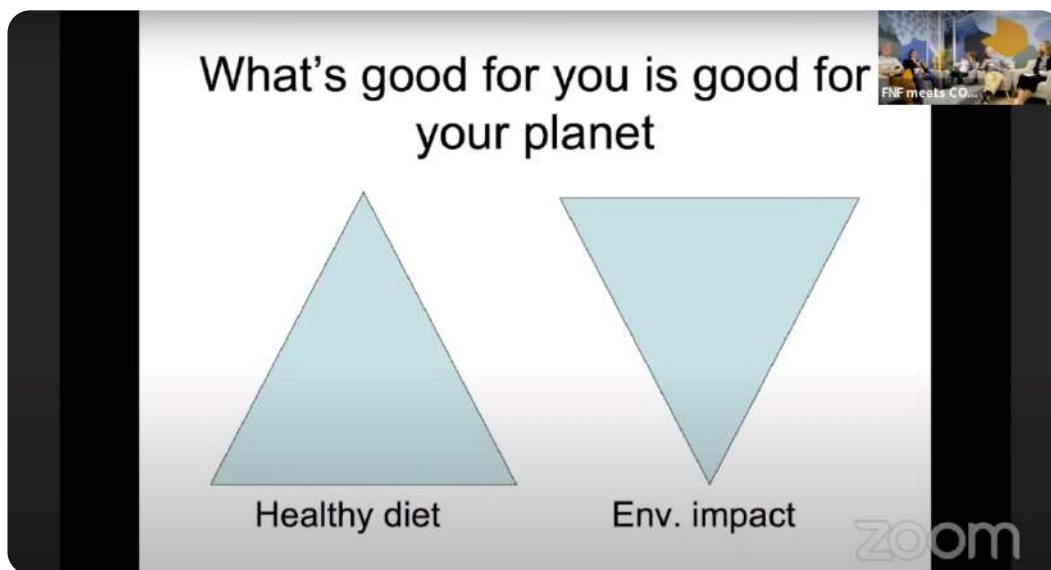
Brain capital is vital to flourishing in the modern economy, therefore, it is critical to consider how the structures of our social, economic, and natural environments are impacting our brains. As co-founder of the Brain Capital Alliance, Dr. Eyre is working to show governments that the brain is relevant to almost every policy agenda. Dr. Eyre and co-authors recently published a paper entitled, “[How Brain Capital Can Drive Progress on UN’s Sustainable Development Goals.](#)” The paper describes how each UN SDGs can be advanced through investing in Brain Capital.



Following Dr. Eyre, **Dennis Pamlin, the Executive Director of the Net-Zero Compatibility Initiative, Mission Innovation**, discussed some of the issues with the big-picture approach that is being taken to combat climate change. So far, the way countries are tackling climate change has been static. The focus has been on how to efficiently reduce emissions. However, Mr. Pamlin argues that we can't solely focus on polluters, we need to highlight people and organizations that are providing solutions. A dynamic approach to preventing climate catastrophe goes beyond emissions towards envisioning how we want the future to look. Mr. Pamlin stated that Brain Capital can help inspire the path that we take in building our future. Instead of focusing exclusively on what is damaging our brains, we can look at what is increasing our brain capacity. Centering Brain Capital in the post-SDG agenda could be a key tool for leaders to deliver a better vision for society in the future.



The following speaker **Grammenos Mastrojeni, the Senior Deputy Secretary General of the Union for the Mediterranean**, sparked an important conversation about how we shape public opinion and behavior regarding the climate crisis. Mr. Mastrojeni posited that when most people think about climate change, they consider the big problems and believe that the big players should be the ones to solve them. However, top-down policies will not be enough to stop climate change. To prevent climate catastrophe, we need people to think and act in the interest of the common good. Current media campaigns for the climate often show sad images in an effort to evoke empathy. However, most people are principally motivated by their own interests. Fortunately, according to Mr. Mastrojeni, there are ways in which sustainability and climate-friendly practices can be aligned with individual interests. Meeting our basic needs without excess can be a sustainable venture, especially when it comes to things such as a healthy diet.



The final speaker, **Dr. Nathalie Hilmi, the Section Head of Environmental Economics at the Centre Scientifique de Monaco**, warned that both planetary health and the well-being of humans are under threat from climate breakdown. As the frequency of extreme events such as heat waves, drought, and wildfires increases, our Brain Capital is impacted at the individual, company, country, and global levels. Although Brain Capital is threatened by climate disasters, Dr. Hilmi argued that Brain Capital can also be part of the solution to mitigate climate change. By protecting our brain health and enhancing our brain skills, we can facilitate innovation in the economic and policy spheres. It may be helpful to assess Brain Capital in a similar way to natural capital, giving it economic value, we are better able to emphasise its importance to decision-makers.



In closing, Professor Ayadi stated that Brain Capital will be a vital driver for building a well-being economy. Looking towards the post-SDG world, it will be increasingly important to include brain health and brain skills in the vision of our shared future.

The recording of this session can be found below on the EMEA YouTube channel.

[Link to Video Recording](#)



Speaker Biographies:



Moderator: *Rym Ayadi*
President and Founder
Euro-Mediterranean Economists
Association

Professor Rym Ayadi is the Founder and President of the Euro - Mediterranean Economists Association (EMEA). She is Founder and Director of the Euro-Mediterranean and African Network for Economic Studies (EMANES). She is Senior Advisor at the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS); Professor at the Bayes Business School, City University of London; and Member of the Centre for Banking Research (CBR); Academic member and Chair (2018-present) of the European Banking Authority - Banking Stakeholders Group (EBA- BSG). She is also Associated Scholar at the Centre for Relationship Banking and Economics (CERBE) at LUMSA University in Rome.



Dr Harris Eyre
Co-founder of Brain Capital
Alliance

Originally from rural Australia, Harris Eyre MD PhD is a global physician-executive and neuroscientist focused on advancing the field of brain capital. He is lead of the Brain Capital Alliance and co-lead of the OECD Neuroscience-inspired Policy Initiative. He is Fellow with the Baker Institute for Public Policy and Senior Fellow with the Meadows Mental Health Policy Initiative. He is an advisor the Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association and the Texas Medical Center Innovation Institute. Harris maintains adjunct roles with the Global Brain Health Institute, Baylor College of Medicine, Deakin University, the Latin American Brain Health Institute, and the University of Texas Health Sciences Center at Houston.



*Dennis Pamlin, Executive
Director, The Net-Zero
Compatibility Initiative (NCI),
Mission Innovation*

Pamlin is a senior advisor at RISE, senior associate at Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, visiting research fellow at the Research Center of Journalism and Social Development at Renmin university, advisor to Centre for Sustainable Development at Confederation of Indian Industries (CII), Advisor to the EIT Climate KIC, and is a founding partner of UNFCCC's "International Innovation Hub" that launched at COP26.

Pamlin is currently the executive director, The Net-Zero Compatibility Initiative (NCI), Mission Innovation

<https://www.misolutionframework.net/>



*Grammenos Mastrojeni
Senior Deputy Secretary
General, Union for the
Mediterranean*

Grammenos Mastrojeni is an Italian diplomat, professor and writer who has focused for the past 25 years on the societal, geo-strategic and economic impacts of environmental degradation, as well as on topics related to environmental protection, human cohesion, peace and security. He has taught sustainability and conflict resolution in various universities in Italy and abroad, and in 2009, the Ottawa University in Canada entrusted him with the first class by a University on the issue of Environment, resources and geostrategy. Formerly, until August 2019, he was the Coordinator for the Environment and Head of the Science Policy Interface at the Italian Development Cooperation, heading Italian delegations on lands, water and oceans and joining negotiations on climate and biodiversity.

Chair of the UN Mountain Partnership, and Co-Chair of the Global Islands Partnership, he is President of the largest Italian association for sustainable development education "Isola della Sostenibilità" and member of the Scientific Boards of numerous university courses and entities. Author of numerous articles and official reports on the environment, he published 8 books including "Greenhouse effect, war effect", written together with the climatologist Antonello Pasini (Chiarelettere, 2017), and "The Ark of Noah - Saving together our Common Home" that ranked as best-selling essays. Among his publications there are also "The indissoluble cycle. Peace, environment, development, and freedom in the global balance" (Vita e Pensiero, 2002); "The necessary eco-revolution" (Italian Scientific Editions, 2008); "Now or never. A decade, and not beyond, to save ourselves and the Earth" (Amazon, 2016).



*Nathalie Hilmi, Head of
Research Department,
Environmental Economics,
Centre Scientifique de Monaco*

Dr Nathalie Hilmi is an expert in Macroeconomics and International Finance. In 2010, she joined the Centre Scientifique de Monaco as head of the section « environmental economics » and collaborated with IAEA's Environment Laboratories to initiate correlation studies between environmental sciences and economics to better evaluate the socioeconomic extent of impacts and costs of action versus inaction with regard to carbon emissions.

She works on Sustainable development in a multidisciplinary spirit. She is lead author for IPCC Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate (SROCC) and IPCC main report AR6 WGII.





Energy Transition in the Mediterranean and Africa: Needs and Perspectives

5th December, 14:00-15:00 GST, Mediterranean Coalition Office

Organised by the Euro-Mediterranean Economists' Association

Panel:

Moderator: Prof. Rym Ayadi, Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association - EMEA President and Founder

Speakers:

- Lisa Guarrera, Director of the Monitoring and Modeling Division, Observatoire Méditerranéen de l'Énergie
- Nadim Abillama, Middle East and North Africa Programme Officer, International Energy Agency (IEA)
- Giulia Giordano, ECCO think tank Head of International Programmes
- Bhekumuzi Dean Bhebhe, Campaigns Lead, Power Shift Africa
- Federico Pontoni, Program Director of Technology for the Energy Transition Research Program, Fondazione Eni Enrico Mattei

Background

The transition to clean and sustainable energy sources is a global imperative that serves the dual purpose of addressing climate change and fostering socio-economic development. The Mediterranean region and Africa, endowed with abundant renewable energy resources and diverse energy needs, play a pivotal role in spearheading this energy transformation.

Notably, North Africa and Southern Europe present immense solar energy potential. Indeed, countries in the region have also made substantial investments in large-scale solar projects, while also wind power is rapidly gaining traction in the region, together with hydroelectric power generation in some cases. Moreover, they are also delving into the production of green hydrogen, recognized as a key component in the global shift towards clean energy, as acknowledged by the European Union.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, significant strides have been made in the adoption and development of green energy solutions, albeit with varying degrees of progress from one country to another. It's important to acknowledge the region's energy landscape is multifaceted, with certain countries more advanced in their transition to green energy.



On the other hand, the primary focus of Sub-Saharan countries lies in expanding energy access, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions. In this context, off-grid and decentralized renewable energy systems, including mini-grids and solar home systems, are gaining popularity, particularly in rural and remote areas with limited access to centralized electricity grids. Nevertheless, despite the progress, Sub-Saharan Africa confronts big challenges related to energy infrastructure, financing, and regulatory inefficiencies. Additionally, in some cases, intermittent renewable energy supply due to factors like weather conditions that could be hampered by climate change in the future represents a further impediment to a stable long-term energy transition plan in the region, together with the lack of infrastructure.

The European Union (EU) has initiated various programs and partnerships with both North and Sub-Saharan African partners, particularly following the Russian war in Ukraine. With the REPowerEU communication, the EU provides a blueprint to stop imports of fossil energy from Russia completely, well before 2030. Against this backdrop, the EU issued the Joint Communication EU external energy engagement, launching the initiative of an EU Hydrogen Corridor with the Southern Neighbourhood, to be started with the EU-Morocco Green Partnership agreement, the EU-Egypt green hydrogen partnership, and an energy dialogue with OPEC countries as Algeria and Libya. Most recently, the EU has also launched a Green Hydrogen Strategy and Roadmap for Kenya, showing high interest in increasing green hydrogen supply in partnership with African countries.

In line with these developments, this event seeks to foster a vibrant exchange of ideas and experiences among experts to better understand which are the current paths for energy transition in the Mediterranean and Africa and explore future scenarios. Moreover, this event seeks to bring into the discussion the role of the African civil society, investigating the main challenges and opportunities for the region and the possible conflicting interests at stake.



Event Summary:

Professor Rym Ayadi initiated the panel discussion by emphasizing the importance of collaboration between academia, the public, and the private sector to accelerate the energy transition. The discussion focused on the needs and perspectives for the energy transition at the core of the global agenda. Policy frameworks and investments are required for the integration of renewable energy and the phasing out of fossil fuels. Fossil fuels continue to dominate the economy, and the transition to alternative energy sources is becoming increasingly difficult and costly due to the geopolitical context, particularly for countries lacking the necessary infrastructure and innovation. It is crucial to maintain a focus on justice during the energy transition in the Mediterranean and Africa, as highlighted by Rym Ayadi when introducing the panelists.

The first panellist, **Ms. Giulia Giordano, Head of International Programmes at ECCO Think Tank**, emphasized the significance of the energy transition in the Mediterranean. She noted that this topic has gained considerable attention from various institutions and policy debates. The Mediterranean region has enormous potential for renewable energy deployment. However, she stressed the importance of strengthening the political will to facilitate practical solutions and of bridging the gap between the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean to address common climate challenges effectively. She concluded by stating that the green partnership between Morocco and the EU could serve as a model for other partnerships in the region.

The panel continued with **Mr. Nadim Abillama, the Middle East, and North Africa Programme Officer at the International Energy Agency (IEA)**. He mentioned a recent IEA report highlighting that since 2021, over 90% of the additional investment in clean energy has come from advanced economies and China. The transition to clean energy has been accelerated by the post-pandemic recovery and the aftermath of the Ukrainian crisis, but it is also concentrated in a few countries. Nevertheless, he stressed that developing and emerging economies often fail to benefit from economic growth due to the high cost of capital and lack of finance. Indeed, Mr. Abillama stated that investment in the MENA region is still dominated by fossil fuels. From 2019 to 2023, the Middle East's investment in the clean energy sector is weaker compared to other regions. Furthermore, the ratio of investment in clean energy to investment in fossil fuels is only 0.1 for every dollar invested, which is significantly lower than in other regions. He said that it is worth noting that in some cases, such as Morocco and Jordan, the ability to attract investment in the energy sector is increasing, and GCC countries are investing heavily in cleaner energy, particularly nuclear, which could positively impact the region's capacity.



Lisa Guarrera, Director of the Monitoring and Modeling Division at the Observatoire Méditerranéen de l’Energie (OME), presented key findings from their recent report on Mediterranean Energy Perspectives 2023. She stressed that if current trends continue, energy demand in the southern Mediterranean will rise and fossil fuels will dominate the supply. On the positive side, all countries in the region have committed to a net-zero target for 2050. One of the key challenges she sees for the region is ensuring green and inclusive energy efficiency, especially with the projected population growth and subsequent increase in energy demand, particularly in the southern shore. She stressed that it is important not only to electrify transportation but also to reduce it and create efficient transport infrastructure. The report also analyses power generation and finds that renewable energy is expected to increase substantially under all scenarios by 2050. This would require significant investment in solar and wind to meet both internal demand and export capacity while also reversing the trend in energy dependency, particularly in the South. Ms. Guarrera concluded that achieving Net Zero requires an increase in renewables and improved energy efficiency, as well as the use of green gases, Carbon Capture and Utilization (CCU), electrification, and energy storage. Finally, she emphasised the importance of aligning strategies between the Northern and Southern Shores of the Mediterranean and stressed that the cost of inaction is much higher than actions in the energy transition field, and this should provide a good incentive for investors.

Mr. Federico Pontoni, Program Director of Technology for the Energy Transition Research Program at Fondazione Eni Enrico Mattei (FEEM), presented the results of a study conducted by the foundation on energy transition in the Mediterranean. The study employs a macro econometric model to assess the impact of various energy transition (decarbonisation) scenarios on GDP. The model includes countries from the Mediterranean’s Northern and Southern shores. The results indicate that if the region were to pursue aggressive decarbonisation investments in the short term (2030), all Southern Mediterranean countries would experience lower GDP growth compared to the reference scenarios. However, in the long term (2050), almost all countries are expected to benefit from the energy transition, with the exception of Algeria. He highlighted that the study’s results demonstrate the importance of compensating for short-term losses to increase southern countries’ willingness to invest in the energy transition. Additionally, he noted that while investing in fossil fuels can benefit southern Mediterranean countries through exports, this is not the case for renewable energy, where most purchases come from the local market. He stressed the need to increase EU guarantees and investments in infrastructure to connect the southern and northern shores of the Mediterranean.



The last panellist was **Mr. Bhukumuzi Dean Bhebhe, Campaigns Lead at Power Shift Africa**. He highlighted the need to acknowledge the energy crisis we are facing. From an African perspective, the focus should be on avoiding emissions and building developmental pathways based on clean energy rather than simply reducing emissions. Mr Bhebhe emphasised Africa's potential to produce clean energy, as it holds 60% of the world's solar potential. Increasing investment in this potential is pivotal in addressing the current global energy crisis. Additionally, it is important to consider the global financial architecture and its implications for energy transition. Decolonising the financial system is necessary to unlock Africa's potential and avoid repeating past mistakes. Mr Bhebhe highlighted the importance of Africa's ownership and control of land and production in future strategies. They also emphasised the negative impact of unfair exchange rates, which make African countries more vulnerable and exposed to volatility and uncertainty.

Finally, he expressed concerns about the global focus on Carbon Capture Solutions (CCS) and carbon credit systems, which are already causing human displacement and other socio-economic side effects in many African countries. He concluded by emphasising the importance of considering sustainability in a holistic manner, encompassing all SDG targets collectively.

The recording of this session can be found below at the EMEA YouTube channel.

[Link to Video Recording](#)



Speaker Biographies:



Moderator: *Rym Ayadi*
President and Founder
Euro-Mediterranean Economists
Association

Professor Rym Ayadi is the Founder and President of the Euro - Mediterranean Economists Association (EMEA). She is Founder and Director of the Euro-Mediterranean and African Network for Economic Studies (EMANES). She is Senior Advisor at the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS); Professor at the Bayes Business School, City University of London; and Member of the Centre for Banking Research (CBR); Academic member and Chair (2018-present) of the European Banking Authority - Banking Stakeholders Group (EBA- BSG). She is also Associated Scholar at the Centre for Relationship Banking and Economics (CERBE) at LUMSA University in Rome.



Lisa Guarrera, Director of the
Monitoring and Modeling
Division, OME

Lisa Guarrera joined OMEC in 2005 and is currently the Director of the Monitoring and Modeling Division. As such Ms. Guarrera oversees OMEC's work on historical data, outlooks and forecasts and is in charge of overall consistency of modelling work and resulting messages.

Ms. Guarrera is also in charge of producing the Mediterranean Energy Perspectives, OMEC's flagship publication. The Division produces medium to long term energy demand, efficiency, power generation, renewables and environmental analysis for the Mediterranean Energy Perspectives and other publications. She also conducts analysis on various energy topics such as energy efficiency, energy security, carbon emissions, energy transition, electrification and hydrogen.

Prior to joining OMEC in 2005, she worked at the International Energy Agency as an energy analyst for the Economic Analysis Division contributing to five editions of the World Energy Outlook. Lisa Guarrera holds a Post Graduate degree in international economics (majors: macroeconomics and economic development) and a masters in management studies (majors: finance and tax law) from the University IX of Paris Dauphine



*Nadim Abillama, Middle East
and North Africa Programme
Officer, IEA*

Nadim Abillama is currently responsible for the Middle East and North Africa Programme at the International Energy Agency (IEA).

Prior to that, he work in international strategy consulting concentrating on public sector and energy topics at the global level.

He also previously worked at the European Commission and the United Nations. He graduated from the Colleague of Europe in Bruges.



*Giulia Giordano, Head of
International Programmes,
ECCO Think Tank*

Giulia is an Italian researcher and practitioner with extensive experience in the Middle East. She joined the creation of ECCO at its early stage of conception as the Head of Strategy and Development. She is now leading the International Programme. Before joining ECCO, she was the Director of International Programs at EcoPeace Middle East, a trilateral organization based in Israel, Jordan, and Palestine. In her previous capacity she was responsible for leading the organization's international advocacy and outreach programmes vis-à-vis foreign governments, diplomatic representatives, and international organizations, while frequently representing the organization by speaking at international public events.

Formerly she was a visiting researcher at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and a fellow lecturer at Al-Quds University in East Jerusalem, where she taught two courses in Human Rights and International Environmental Law. She has worked with several organizations of the civil society and academic institutions and has written extensively about water security and environmental diplomacy. She received her PhD in Cooperation for Peace and Development from the University 'Stranieri' of Perugia. Her research interests include environmental diplomacy, transboundary water cooperation and Middle Eastern politics. She is an alumna of the Water Diplomacy Initiative, a joined programme by the MIT, Harvard Negotiation Program and Tuft University, a founding member of the Environmental Peacebuilding Association, and a member of the Bosch Alumni Network.



*Bhekumuzi Dean Bhebhe,
Campaigns Lead, Power Shift
Africa*

Bhekumuzi Dean Bhebhe is a PhD Candidate at the University of Witwatersrand and a 2018 Mandela Rhodes Scholar with several years' experience building and implementing campaign strategies across Africa. He is currently the Campaigns Lead for Power Shift Africa.



*Federico Pontoni, Program
Director of Technology for the
Energy Transition Research
Program, FEEM*

At FEEM, Federico is the programme director of the research program Technologies for Energy Transition. He is a research fellow at GREEN, the research center on Geography, Resources, Energy and Environment of Bocconi University, where he teaches Energy Economics and Ocean Management. Federico is also a member of the Senior Energy Advisory Program of the Tony Blair Institute (TBI) funded by Power Africa.

His areas of expertise are energy markets, environmental and water economics, with a specific focus on economic regulation of energy markets, financial analysis and the enabling conditions for private sector involvement and public-private partnerships. Federico holds a double Ph.D. in Economics, one from Université Paris Ouest Nanterre La Défense (mention très honorable avec les félicitations du jury) and one from Bocconi University, at the completion of a joint Ph.D. program.



ESG in Focus: Driving Sustainable Growth and Responsible Investments

8TH December, 15:00-16:30 GST, Mediterranean Coalition Office and online
Organised by the Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association

Panel:

Moderator: Yeganeh Forouheshfar, Senior Researcher, EMEA

Speakers:

- Giovanni Ferri Professor of Economics, LUMSA University
- Alex Struc Founder and CEO, GOALSFIRST
- Véronique Ormezzano Founder and Chairperson, VYGE Consulting
- Kwame Sarpong Barnieh Partner, KPMG Ghana, EMEA Executive Board Member
- Andrea Abbate ESG and Impact Specialist, Banca Etica
- Nisaa Jetha - Founder & CEO, Impact-for- SDGs

Background

Growing awareness of business impact on the environment and society has fueled demand for ESG investments. Institutional investors and asset managers now integrate ESG factors, recognizing their link to long-term performance and financial returns. This approach helps identify overlooked risks and opportunities beyond traditional financial analysis.

However, there is currently no universally accepted set of ESG metrics and reporting standards. This lack of standardization makes it difficult to compare and evaluate the ESG performance of companies accurately. Efforts are underway to establish common frameworks, but achieving global consensus remains a challenge. Obtaining reliable and consistent ESG data is a challenge. The availability and quality of ESG information vary across companies and sectors, making it challenging for investors to make informed decisions. Improved data collection methodologies and increased corporate disclosure can help address this issue. Greenwashing, defined as the practice of presenting a misleadingly positive impression of a company's environmental practices, can undermine the credibility and effectiveness of ESG initiatives. Ensuring transparency and accountability in ESG reporting is crucial to mitigate greenwashing and build trust among stakeholders.



Governments and financial regulators are taking steps to standardize ESG reporting and disclosure requirements. This move aims to enhance transparency, comparability, and reliability of ESG information, enabling investors to make informed decisions. The development of frameworks such as International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB), the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB) are notable examples.

This webinar will delve into innovative approaches, best practices, and policy recommendations to advance ESG integration in both business practices and investment strategies. Our primary objective is to raise awareness about the significance of considering ESG factors in decision-making processes, while sharing success stories and best practices in implementing ESG frameworks and metrics. We will also explore the hurdles faced by companies and investors when incorporating ESG considerations, discuss emerging policy frameworks and regulatory developments in the ESG space, and outline strategies to enhance transparency, comparability, and reliability of ESG data and reporting.



Event Summary:

Sara Ronco, EMEA Researcher opened the session from the Mediterranean Coalition Office in COP28 in Dubai. She highlighted the importance of ESG as a pillar for an inclusive and sustainable transition. She gave the floor to the moderator of the session, Yeganeh Forouheshfar, EMEA senior researcher. She mentioned that there has been a growing recognition among investors, consumers, and policymakers about the impact of business activities on the environment and society. This has led to increased demand for Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) -focused investments and greater transparency in corporate reporting on ESG metrics. However, even though European flows into ESG have held steady recently, US investors have been pulling cash out of funds. Eighteen states have adopted some sort of anti-ESG legislation. Some of the laws ban “discrimination” against companies that sell fossil fuel and guns, and others order state pension funds not to consider environmental and social factors while investing. It is argued that one of the problems is that ESG funds often try to address too many factors at once. Others find the ESG reporting to be too burdensome.

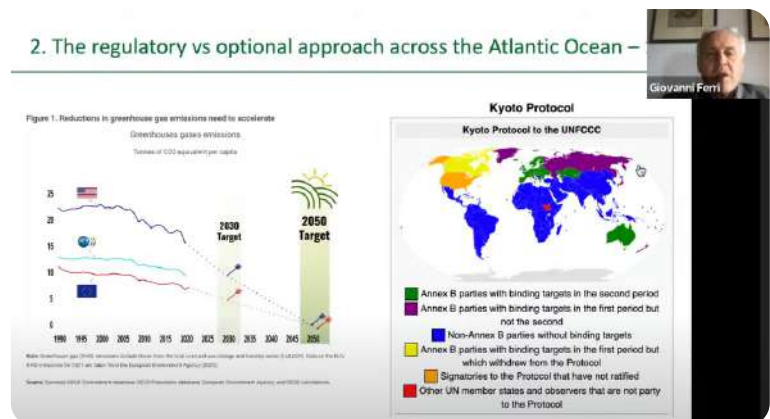


Dr Forouheshfar invited Nissa Jetha to shed light on ESG integration and negative screening approaches in the investment management space and the role of impact investment in promoting SDGs.

Nisaa Jetha, the Founder of Impact-for-SDGs, outlined a proprietary thematic investment screening approach that spans both emerging and developed markets. Rooted in a global governance lens at the top, her methodology incorporates a responsible governance metric at the bottom to assess and measure the governance practices of potential investments. Ms. Jetha employs tools such as policy documentation and Environmental Social Management Systems (ESMS), consistently updating her lens with a focus on climate compliance to align with evolving global standards with a mapping towards targeted Sustainable Development Goals (she references SDG Integration).

Notably, she traces global governance considerations from 2015, marking the onset of the Paris Agreement and the shift from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to the SDGs. This historical perspective informs Ms. Jetha’s approach, adapting to changing impact considerations and wider policy reforms. Her strategy seeks to be an adaptive approach to responsible investing, emphasising the integration of ESG & SDG integration into global policy contexts. Ms. Jetha highlighted the crucial connection between effective global governance and navigating the extensive impact of investments. Her overview demonstrated how global governance informs and de-risks ESG practices, fostering cross-border collaboration and safeguarding against greenwashing risks. Additionally, Ms. Jetha emphasised the significance of responsible governance within organisations, promoting transparency, ethical practices, and the integration of ESG considerations into corporate strategies to build stakeholder trust and maintain sustainable business practices.

Then **Prof. Giovanni Ferri** provided some figures and data showing that sustainable finance and ESG disclosure policies are mostly applied in Europe, and in general, we can say they only belong to the Western world. Moreover, although reductions in greenhouse gas emissions need to accelerate worldwide, according to the Kyoto Protocol, only European countries, Australia and Russia kept binding targets in the second period of the agreement.



In Europe, we state a regulatory approach vis-à-vis sustainability reporting, namely, NFRD and, more recently, CSRD. However, the US has adopted a more optional approach. Hence, there is a difference in ESG disclosure practices across the Atlantic Ocean (on average, EU ESG ratings are 23% higher than in the US).

The reliability of the ESG ratings should be improved; a study by Berg, Koelbel and Rigobon at MIT Sloan School of Management showed a divergence of ESG ratings across a common sample of 954 companies. Meanwhile, the EU is issuing directives and regulations against greenwashing. The green taxonomy is an important milestone for sustainable investment. Meanwhile, we are still lacking a social taxonomy and perhaps a governance taxonomy.



Véronique Ormezzano focused on the inclusion of ESG factors into corporate governance and highlighted the progress made and the challenges in the face of ESG implementation. From a policy framework, since the creation of ESG, governance has been one of the main pillars, showing its importance and highlighting that without an efficient governance framework, we cannot reach our targets and that governance is at the heart of ESG policies and climate-related financial disclosure. The fundamental principle of corporate governance is that

the board needs to act in the interest of the company; therefore, incorporating ESG should be in the best interest of the company. The board must also monitor ESG-related KPIs.

The OECD principles (endorsed by G20) include integration of double materiality in the framework by taking into account the interests of the investors and the workforce. Another important aspect is that the board is protected if they have done due diligence. At the EU level, the SDRD directive is in place. In the EU in 2022, 22% of issued bonds are ESG-related (along with many other financial marker factors). For banks, there is an additional requirement in the reporting required by ECB. The supervision of ESG rating should be standardised.



Alex Struc described different metrics and the challenges in implementing them. Adopting the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) framework, we need to bear in mind 3 main factors of governance, strategy and risk management (estimating how much a mistake costs). Metrics without targets are useless. According to a report by Bloomberg, 31% of companies have a biodiversity policy, 9% have a biodiversity strategy, and only 2% are monitoring it, hence the importance of governance. GoalFirst is an advocate of the voting rights of the investors, known as “engagement alpha”, is mostly neglected but should be exerted as a property right, outcome orientation, asset management and innovation.

Kwame Sarpong Barnieh explained KPMG’s impact approach. ESG is going to stay, but navigating through it is not so obvious. AXA reported a 6.2 million € loss due to windstorms and a 4.3 million €. ESG is key because of the impact of climate risks on the financial sector and our lives. He continued with a number of success stories from companies such as UPS, TATA, and H&M. Showcasing ESG can be implemented at the company level if the key decision-makers are on board. IFRS1 and 2 have been published and provide a standard framework to measure ESG. The next

Why should Businesses Worry About ESG (Lessons)...

Exploring the lessons learned from companies that neglect or fail to implement Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles provides valuable insights into the potential pitfalls and consequences of overlooking sustainable and responsible practices.

- Increased Default Risks**
 - AXA reported an annual average loss of 6.2 million due to windstorms in their Real Assets.
 - AXA experienced an average annual loss of 4.3 million from floods in their Real Assets.
- Reputation and Stakeholder Trust**
 - The dieselgate scandal erupted in 2015 after Volkswagen was found to have installed illegal "defeat devices" to cheat emissions tests.
 - In 2018, ChemEarth filed a complaint against BP Oil, accusing it of deceptive marketing by portraying itself as environmentally friendly. Additionally, the oil spill had a detrimental impact on marine life.
- Operational Disruptions**
 - On June 3, 2015, Greece faced a severe natural disaster. Heavy rainfall in Kozani, Nafpaktos, Corfu, coupled with a nearby coal fuel station explosion, amplified led to the loss of around 156 lives, and numerous others sustained burns and injuries.
- Supply Chain Disruptions**
 - In March 2021, the Ever Given blocked the Suez Canal due to strong winds, causing a significant trade slowdown. Lloyd's List reported that the stranded ship delayed approximately \$9.6 billion of trade daily, equivalent to 340 million and 2.9 million tonnes of cargo per hour.

step is to collect the data correctly to quantify ESG impact. We can take steps to simplify the ESG adoption process: develop ESG policies, have employees trained properly for it, have board-level oversight, and continue improvement and integration into corporate strategies.

Andrea Abbate, presented the Banka Etica practice as a cooperative bank inspired by principles

BANK'S CARBON FOOTPRINT

2019
 Global Alliance for Banking on Values
 Signatory of GABV Climate Change Commitment: monitoring of emissions of investments by 2022

2020
 PCAF
 Following PCAF methodology, Banca Etica is the first Italian bank to disclose Scope 3 emissions.

Our direct emissions (Scope 1 and 2) have decreased by 69% since 2018.

With regards to indirect emissions from loans and investments, we are progressing towards a decarbonisation plan in accordance with the

of ethical finance. He presented the socio-environment assessment process of the Banka Etica and different aims of the ESG assessment of the bank, including 150 indicators in the fields of corporate social responsibility and 40 indicators for impact assessment at different levels of business loans, personal loans and securities portfolio. He gave a concrete example of Banka Etica ESG ratings.

He continued by presenting the Impact Appetite Framework (IAF), including 27 indicators in the 5 areas of environment, rights, governance, international peace and justice and promotion of ethical finance. He concluded by presenting the bank’s decarbonisation strategy and the carbon footprint.

To close the event, **Prof. Rym Ayadi** underlined: “ESG investing is not just about doing good; it’s about aligning capital with the innovative solutions essential for a sustainable future. By prioritising investments in companies that lead in environmental stewardship, social responsibility, and strong governance, we’re fostering a green transition and actively accelerating it, turning investment portfolios into powerful tools for positive environmental change.”



The recording of this session can be found below at the EMEA YouTube channel.

[Link to Video Recording](#)

Speaker Biographies:



Moderator: Dr. Yeganeh Forouheshfar, Senior Researcher, EMEA

Yeganeh Forouheshfar, is an economist and a researcher at EMEA, she holds a PhD in economics from Université Paris-Dauphine. Her research interests are economic modeling, entrepreneurship, digitalization, sustainable transition and demographic change. She is also an affiliate researcher at DIAL and a Member of EMANES network.

Yeganeh is involved in the implementation of EMEA's EU-funded projects: CREAT4MED and INVESTMED and in charge of mapping of the Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) as well as blue and green economy in the South Mediterranean countries. In parallel, Yeganeh is currently working on several research projects and development of data observatories.



Alex Struc, Founder and CEO, GOALSFIRST

Alex Struc is the founder and CEO of Goalsfirst - a UK-based alternative investment firm founded to enable equitable ownership of impact (or influence) and access to superior financial returns through an integrated multidisciplinary investment approach and strategic engagement with investees.

Before Goalsfirst, Mr. Struc spent 15 years managing credit assets at PIMCO, including firmwide exposure to banks and insurance and, in his earlier years, leveraged loans and collateralized loan obligations portfolios.

Mr. Struc led the industry-wide efforts on engagement as the Chair of the inaugural PRI Bondholder Engagement Committee in 2017, founded PIMCO's first dedicated ESG investment platform, and structured first-of-their-kind liquid bonds linked to the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals.



*Andrea Abbate, ESG and
Impact Specialist, Banca Etica*

Andrea works at Banca Etica as collaborator of Impact models and socio-environmental assessment office. The core activity of the team is the measurement and the disclosure of the socio-environmental impacts of Banca Etica's assets, in order to let the bank, and its members and customers, know how they create impact through the granting of credit (and to address it) and to respect their principle of transparency.

He has a bachelor's degree in Business Administration and Management from Bocconi University and a master's degree in Environmental Economics from Università degli Studi di Torino.



*Prof. Giovanni Ferri, Professor of
Economics, Università LUMSA*

Professor Giovanni Ferri received his BSc in economics from the University of Siena and his Ph.D. in Economics from New York University. Since 2012 he is full professor of economics at the Department of Law, Economics, Politics & Modern Languages at LUMSA University in Rome where, from 2014 to 2018, he was Deputy Rector for Academic Affairs and chaired the Quality Assurance and Library Committees. He also co-founded and chairs the Center for Relationship Banking & Economics to foster research for a better understanding of relational goods to promote society wellbeing. He founded and chairs the Master in Management of Sustainable Development Goals.

He previously served at the University of Bari, World Bank, Banca d'Italia. He visited: ADB Institute, HKMA, NBER, Princeton University, Tokyo University. He consulted for EU Commission/Parliament, Italy's Treasury and partook in EBA's Banking Stakeholder Group. He is editor-in-chief of Economic Notes and led (or consulted for) policy/research projects in many countries, including Albania, China, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Serbia, Thailand, Turkey, Vietnam.



He has published extensively on/for several world recognized journals/publishers on various fields: financial shocks, banking structure, rating agencies, corporate governance, migration, firm internationalization, Chinese economy, family firms, inequality, sustainability. To support the sustainable transition by providing innovative consulting and knowledge building to both public and private sector organizations through an ethically sound business model, he has co-founded (and is scientific chair) of Sustinentes.



*Nisaa Jetha, Founder & CEO,
Impact for SDGs*

Nisaa Jetha is a global impact strategist, policy advisor and solicitor with private equity experience across impact curation, ESG, SDG metric build out across mid-cap PE portfolios (USD 15-100 mil) in the regulated investment management space. Senior level board positions across the globe include her rank as a senior ESG officer, Head of Impact & In-House Counsel across a portfolio that spanned three nations.

Nisaa is a Founding UK Chief Member (77% of C-Suite Women Globally), Culture Council Member of Rolling Stone Magazine, and part of the Leadership Team of the Global Governance Philanthropy Network.

Additionally, she serves as a global Chair for World Logic Day (UNESCO) & Guide at the Resolution Project. She is the Founder & Curator of Impact-for-SDGs; her expertise extends to collaborating across institutions, investment vehicles, family offices, and governmental bodies, where she actively shapes policy alignment with the UN SDGs.



*Véronique Ormezzano, Founder
and Chairperson, VYGE
Consulting*

Véronique Ormezzano is an independent expert in financial regulation, financial policy, sustainable finance, communication.

Promoting effective regulation, sound risk management, efficient markets, ambitious ESG policies and financial stability, consulting public and private bodies and collaborating with thinktanks and industry associations in France, Europe and at international level:

- Member of European Banking Authority (EBA) Banking Stakeholder Group since 2018.
- Member of BIAC (Business @ OECD) Finance Committee.
- Chair of the « Cercle de la Régulation et de la Supervision Financière »
- Chair of Paris-Europlace European Regulation Committee

Retired from BNP Paribas since January 2023, where she was most recently responsible for the definition of BNP Paribas responses to new regulations, with a focus on prudential, capital markets and ESG regulations. In this role, she chaired the Association for Financial Markets in Europe (AFME)'s Prudential Regulatory Board from 2019 to 2023.

Her career at BNP Paribas covered a wide range of responsibilities such as Head of Official Institutions Coverage, as well as Risk, Economic Capital, Credit Portfolio Management and Investor Relations functions.

She has been serving as a member of the Board of Directors of BNP Paribas UK Holdings Ltd from 2017 to 2019.



*Kwame Sarpong Barnieh
Partner, KPMG, Ghana and
EMEA Executive Board Member*

Kwame Sarpong Barnieh (CPA, CGMA) is a Partner, in charge of Governance, Risk and Compliance Services (GRCS) in KPMG's Risk Consulting practice in Ghana with more than 21 years of audit and advisory experience.

As a Partner, he provides leadership in a wide range of advisory services spanning Financial, operational, and Performance Audits; Enterprise Risk Management Assessment and Implementation; Fraud Risk Management; Forensic Investigation; Board and Governance Review; Contract Compliance; Governance, Risk and Compliance Strategy Development; Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Strategy Development and Implementation; and the Sarbanes-Oxley Act.

He has facilitated leadership trainings for the Institute of Chartered Accountants, Ghana, and newly promoted managers in KPMG Ghana.

Kwame's ESG and sustainability experience involves serving as an Engagement Partner for Environmental and Social Risks Assessments, as well as Sustainability Assurance engagements. He has facilitated sessions on ESG and related topics to the Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association (EMEA), Ghana Chamber of Mines, UN Global Compact, and the Africa Real Estate Conference and Expo.

He is a Certified Public Accountant and Certified Global Management Accountant. He holds an Executive MBA from the Penn State University, Smeal School of Business, and an undergraduate degree in Administration from Fox School of Business & Management



“We need trillions, not billions”: the role of Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) in climate finance

6th December, 12:00-13:30 GST, Mediterranean Coalition Office, and online

Organised by the Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association

Panel:

Moderator: Prof. Rym Ayadi, Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association - EMEA President and Founder

Speakers:

- Eleonora Cogo, Senior Associate International Financial Reforms, ECCO think tank
- Carola Mejía Climate Finance Analyst - Latin American Network for Social and Economic Justice (Latindadd - Red Latinoamericana por Justicia Económica y Social)
- Alisher Mamadzhanov, Multilateral Governance Manager, Green Climate Fund
- Alina Saba, Program Officer for Climate Justice at the Center for Economic and Social Rights (CESR)

Background

Climate change is one of the most pressing global challenges of our time, with far-reaching economic, social, and environmental implications. To address this crisis, trillions, not billions, of finance are required for mitigation and adaptation efforts. Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) play a pivotal role in climate finance, not only due to the capital they have at their disposal and accessibility to international markets but also given their position working with governments and the private sector to create the conditions for investment and transformation. They are the most effective institutions to provide low-cost, long maturity financing, to mitigate risks faced by private investors, and to share risks in the most efficient way. However, there are key structural and organizational barriers blocking accelerated efforts.

In their annual report, the principal 10 MDBs announced that in 2022, \$60.7 billion of MDB climate finance was provided for low-income and middle-income economies: \$38.0 billion, or 63% of this total, was for climate change mitigation finance, and \$22.7 billion or 37% for climate change adaptation finance. The amount of mobilised private finance stood at \$16.9 billion (EIB, October 2023). Despite this, relative to the GDP of borrowing countries, MDB gross disbursements are now just half as large as they were in 1990, and their net resource transfers are unacceptably low (IEG at G20, 2023). Whilst there has been progress, it is far from enough.



Following the annual World Bank and IMF meeting in Marrakesh in October 2023, it is almost unanimous that MDBs must change the way they operate. A cooperative system of MDBs would reduce the fractured policy and “disjointed entities”, streamlining and simplifying MDB processes, and implementing an oversight body could be approaches to accelerate the effective allocation of MDB finance. However, more funds are clearly another issue and mobilizing more private finance is key. Engaging further with the private sector systematically, rather than episodically, and doubling the mobilization compared to their own investments would close this gap, as well as increased co-investment projects to reduce, share and manage risks and thereby bring down the cost of capital. Finally, MDBs should not neglect the SDGs and ensure that they harmoniously fit with their climate agendas.

This panel session aims to look at structural changes that could enhance the impact of the MDBs, consider how private finance can be further mobilized, and consider whether more additional oversight would be helpful in reaching climate finance goals. It will consider whether MDBs working as a system could lead the way and serve as major sources of funding and expertise in accelerating the green transition and ensuring this opportunity does not escape us.

Event Summary:

Prof. Ayadi, President and Founder of EMEA, set the scene for the session and introduced the role of MDBs. She explained that MDBs have a long history of investing in green economy projects and financing climate change adaptation and mitigation whilst simultaneously trying to build support in the private sector, pushing the acceleration of this kind of finance. They also provide technical assistance and capacity building to ensure implementation. When discussing where the uptake of this climate finance should be, she highlighted adaptation actions, the loss and damage fund, and the central approach of the just transition.

The first speaker to intervene was **Eleonora Cogo, Senior Associate International Financial Reforms, ECCO Think Tank**. She began by highlighting the 2nd report of the Independent High-Level Expert Group on Climate Finance, co-chaired by Dr Vera Songwe of Vera Songwe, that was just recently released prior to COP, and said that the should be integrated into the COP final negotiated text. She also discussed the reaction of MDBs themselves, where some countries and regions have shown leadership. Looking inside the negotiations, it is positive that the financial system is being called into question. COP is a key event as it is a place where all countries are at the table, yet G7 and G20 countries must strive to take more concrete actions and bring more political influence.



Moving to a climate justice perspective in this framework, Prof. Ayadi gave the floor to **Carola Mejía, Climate Finance Analyst - Latin American Network for Social and Economic Justice (LATINDADD)**. She brought the urgency of the climate crisis to the forefront by stating that developing countries are in need of trillions worth of funding as they will be feeling the effects of climate change, despite not being responsible for the vast amounts of CO2 produced in the Global North. The last goal of 100 billion US dollars was not reached, and “climate finance” is not helping their situation. 91% of what MDBs mobilise are loans, which is creating more debt for a country already struggling with debt, as 75% of these loans are non-concessional. Under these circumstances, MDB finance is only adding to the debt problem. To pay back these loans, countries such as Bolivia are using their natural resources, such as fossil fuels, to ensure they do not default. This is a vicious cycle that the financial system is not equipped to deal with. An approach to tackle this would be to offer the funding in the form of grants and ensure developed countries truly take accountability. They argue that there isn’t enough public funding to finance developing countries; however, it is clear that fossil fuel subsidies persist, and public spending goes towards numerous wars. She argues that private finance is not a viable solution as the private sector does not have an interest in the type of activities that are crucial, such as loss and damage. She concluded by saying that the climate finance architecture is not fit for purpose and is not fit to tackle the needs of the most at risk of climate change.

Prof. Ayadi added to Carola’s intervention by discussing how transparency is key in the service of debt. All countries must be responsible for the management of their debt and demonstrate how the funds are being used and who exactly the creditors are. She then moved the panel on to **Alisher Mamadzhonov, Multilateral Governance Manager at the Green Climate Fund**. He explained the Green Climate Fund has reached 12.8 bn dollars’ worth of contributions to support them in their mandate, which is to support developing countries, with 243 projects and programmes working on adaptation and mitigation of climate change. They work with the World Bank and regional MDBs on a highly concessionary basis. They have grants, loans, guarantees, equities etc. – 42% of the portfolio is grants. He then gave examples of projects with the Asian Development Bank that looked at adaptation measures in the public sector, responding to the point that adaptation can be attractive to private-sector actors. He gave another example focusing on mitigation with the African Development Bank where the project ensured renewable energy access in loans, grants, and guarantees.

Prof. Ayadi thanked him for the intervention and asked for his view on whether conditionality should be substituted for transparency to ensure accountability. In his reply, he explained that there are elements of this that are already in force in the Paris Agreement. At the Green Climate Fund, they are completely transparent in their annual reports, and other financial institutions have their own ways of reporting the cash flow.

The final panellist to take the floor was **Alina Saba, Program Officer for Climate Justice at the Center for Economic and Social Rights (CESR)**. From the civil society perspective, she explained that climate finance is one of the key debates, but she is critical of “affordable” and “accessible” climate finance from MDBs. She agreed with Carola and went a step further in saying that finance needs to go beyond MDBs and look back to common and differentiated responsibilities. Countries continue to set goals they have failed to reach, turning it into a pledging game. She agreed with Prof. Ayadi that transparency is key, especially in the economies of developed countries and multinational corporations. She claimed that 472 billion per year is lost in the illicit financial flow, most of them from larger corporations. She questioned the need for private finance, highlighting that systematic reform is overlooked.

Following on from Alina’s point about private finance, Prof. Ayadi argued that there is no time not to involve the private sector, highlighting that the public sector is currently failing in its duties. She concluded that the private sector mentality has to adapt to the environmental risks currently present, as at a point in time, it will be transferred to the balance sheet. MDBs have a global mandate and a responsibility at that level. Countries have a responsibility in terms of a just transition and climate justice. However, the focus has to be kept on low-income countries that are mineral-rich, as they must be supported out of a situation of debt without having to extract the dangerous substances lying below ground.

The discussion ended with the panellists’ thoughts and expectations for the COP28 outcome. The recording of this session can be found below on the EMEA YouTube channel.

[Link to Video Recording](#)



Speaker Biographies:



Moderator: *Rym Ayadi*
President and Founder
Euro-Mediterranean Economists
Association

Professor Rym Ayadi is the Founder and President of the Euro - Mediterranean Economists Association (EMEA). She is Founder and Director of the Euro-Mediterranean and African Network for Economic Studies (EMANES). She is Senior Advisor at the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS); Professor at the Bayes Business School, City University of London; and Member of the Centre for Banking Research (CBR); Academic member and Chair (2018-present) of the European Banking Authority - Banking Stakeholders Group (EBA- BSG). She is also Associated Scholar at the Centre for Relationship Banking and Economics (CERBE) at LUMSA University in Rome.



Alisher Mamadzhonov
Multilateral Governance
Manager, Green Climate Fund

Mr. Alisher Mamadzhonov works in the secretariat of the Green Climate Fund as Multilateral Governance Manager a.i. in the Office of Governance Affairs. He manages GCF accountability and reporting to UNFCCC COP and activities on complementarity and coherence with other climate funds and finance delivery channels.

Prior to joining GCF in 2021, he had served for about 12 years in the United Nations Secretariat, including as a Regional Manager of the National Policy Dialogues on water resources management programme in the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia at the Water Convention Secretariat at UNECE. Previously he had also served in the secretariats of the Protocol on Water and Health and the Convention on Long-range transboundary air pollution, serving as secretary to intergovernmental working groups and compliance mechanisms. His areas of interest and expertise include climate policy and governance, water resources management, air pollution, water supply and sanitation.



During his tenure at the UN ESCAP Subregional Office for East and North-East Asia, he was involved in projects on nature conservation, desertification, land degradation and droughts under the North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC).

Alisher holds a bachelor's degree in Petroleum Engineering (Middle East Technical University, Turkey), master's degree in Sustainable Energy Engineering (Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden), and a PhD degree in Economics from the Washington State University (USA). Alisher Mamadzhanov is a national of Tajikistan.



*Eleonora Cogo
Senior Associate International
Financial Reforms, ECCO Think
Tank*

Eleonora Cogo is Senior Associate International Financial Reforms at ECCO, where she focuses on the G7 and G20 finance agenda. Within the UNFCCC process she follows the debate on the New Collective Quantified Goal, the operationalization of 2.1c and the Loss and Damage Fund. She was Senior Scientific Manager at the Euro-Mediterranean Centre on Climate Change (CMCC) Foundation. As a member of the Italian delegation, she participated in the UN climate change negotiations (UNFCCC), where she was a negotiator for the European Union. She was co-chair of the European Expert Group on Adaptation and a Board member of the Adaptation Fund.

Previously, she has worked as a Senior Project Manager on emission reduction projects (Clean Development Mechanism) at EcoSecurities in Oxford and on the European Emission Trading Scheme (EU-ETS) while at Alperia Bartucci SpA.

She holds a degree in Environmental Engineering from the University of Trento with an MSc in Environmental Management from Aalborg University in Denmark. In 2016, she completed an MBA at IE Business School in Madrid.



*Alina Saba
Program Officer for Climate
Justice at the Center for
Economic and Social Rights
(CESR)*

Alina Saba is a Program Officer for Climate Justice at the Center for Economic and Social Rights (CESR). In this role, she advocates for better economic governance that is aligned with climate justice perspectives and principles.

Ms. Saba has a background working in feminist and indigenous peoples' movements in Nepal and Asia Pacific. Before joining CESR, she worked with Public Services International (PSI) in Nepal. She holds a master's degree in Governance, Politics, and Public Policy from the University of Sheffield in England.



*Carola Mejía, Climate Finance
Analyst - Latin American
Network for Social and
Economic Justice (LATINDADD)*

Carola Mejía is a Bolivian economist, with a master's degree in Economics of Development, specialized in Sustainable Development, with 16 years of experience as advisor, consultant and regional coordinator for public, private and international cooperation institutions and networks, with main experience in environmental projects, climate finance and sustainable development in Latin America.

She also has experience in the academic sector. She currently works as Climate Finance Analyst for LATINDADD and is consultant in Fundacion Avina.



Built Environment and Green Living Areas as resilience and adaptation to climate change in cities

6th December, 15:00-16:00 GST, Mediterranean Coalition Office and online

Organised by the Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association

Panel:

- Judith Cazas Project Officer, Interreg Euro-MED Programme
- Upali Nanda, Global Practice Director, Research Partner at HKS, Inc., Assoc. AIA, EDAC, ACHE
- Amaia Celaya Alvarez, Shelter & Settlement and Climate Resilience, Advisor at IOM - UN Migration
- Julie Hiromoto, FAIA, Principal and Director of Integration at HKS, Inc., FAIA, LEED AP BD+C, WELL AP, LFA
- Esteban Leon, Head, City Resilience Global Programme (CRGP), UN-Habitat (United Nations Human Settlements Programme)
- Sheba Ross Titus, Global Practice Director, Cities and Communities, and a Partner at HKS, Inc. AICP CUD, Intl., Associate AIA, CDT, LEED AP
- Alejandro Lafarga Martinez, Programme Officer, Interreg NEXT MED

Background:

Climate change is altering all spheres of life from the environmental, social, and economic perspectives. A systemic and holistic vision is necessary to design and implement solutions to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. Strategic governance, based on cooperation and coordination, is needed to advance in the right direction to adapt the living areas. Incorporate sustainability and build resilience.

This challenge is tackled by the [EU INTERREG Euro-MED Green Living Areas Mission](#). The project aims to improve the lives of Mediterranean citizens by promoting the development of Green Living Areas. The Mission is to put sustainable development, management of living areas, and the energy transition front and centre to improve the quality of life of Mediterranean citizens. Throughout the project, green living areas will be developed with minimum impact on the Mediterranean and global climate systems by addressing air pollution, energy consumption, and mobility issues. The Community Project (C4LA), aims to build a community among thematic projects and facilitate resource transfers to stakeholders, focusing on technical and strategic content. This project has the twin Institutional Dialogue Project (D4LA), which aims to amplify the transfer of policies by fostering focused dialogue among policymakers and their stakeholders, focusing on policy mainstreaming.

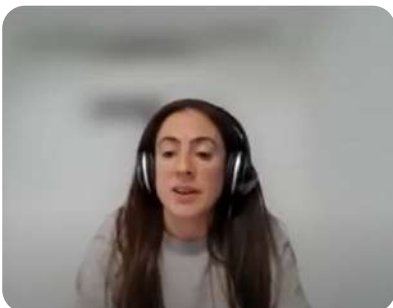


This session aimed to discuss the main challenges of living areas in the context of climate change, as well as the actions that should be adapted to make it more sustainable and have participants share their experiences on how to facilitate the green transition in the areas of energy, mobility, economy, urban health, and liveability.

Event Summary:

Prof Rym Ayadi, President, and Founder of EMEA, opened the session directly from Dubai by welcoming all the participants. Then, Sara Ronco, an EMEA researcher, underlined the importance of the urbanization strategy in the adaptation and mitigation process aimed at reducing the effects of climate change.

Starting the webinar, the moderator, **Joanna Grodzka, EMEA Project Manager**, presented the Green Living Areas (GLA) mission and C4LA Interreg project in which EMEA is a partner. The project aims to build a community between thematic projects focusing on developing solutions to accelerate the green transition. In the last few years, many local governments have become leaders in implementing solutions to prevent the negative effects of climate change and have spearheaded innovative approaches in cities. With this in mind, Joanna opened the floor to the panellists asking them to share their experiences and insights related to resilience and adaptation approaches to climate change in cities.



The discussion started with **Judith Casas, Project Officer, INTERREG Euro MED**, who presented the INTERREG Euro MED programme and the GLA mission. She also underlined the importance of capitalisation and the transfer of project results and explained the role of the governance projects in boosting cooperation and exchange between thematic projects (TP). She explained a new element of the programme - the INTERREG Academy where all the training materials developed by TP will

be available in the future to ensure co-learning and sharing of best practices.

The second panellist - **Upali Nanda, Global Practice Director, Research Partner at HKS, Assoc. AIA, EDAC, ACHE**, explained the link between GLA, environment, brain health and economy from her perspective. She discussed how the environment impacts physical and cognitive human health and, thus, human resilience. She stressed the built environment's impact on brain health and presented examples of architectural projects developed by HKS that caused measurable improvements in human health.



The next speaker, **Esteban Leon, Head of the City Resilience Global Programme (CRGP)**, presented the objectives of the Programme - an initiative of UN-Habitat. He insisted that urbanisation and human health should be discussed, involving all stakeholders, and applying a multisectoral approach. Given that climate change results in many natural disasters, it's necessary to incorporate resilience into sustainable development. The CRGP supports the local authorities (above all in developing countries)

in making their urban planning decisions based on data information that must be previously collected. His last point was about the urban and rural planning that must be approached from different perspectives.

Julie Hiromoto, Principal and Director of Integration at HKS, commented on the city of Dallas's first Comprehensive Environmental & Climate Action Plan (CECAP), in which she participated. The plan includes goals that promote environmental justice: buildings, renewable energy, access to convenient transit, zero waste and circularity, water, natural ecosystem, and access to healthy food and air quality. Julie underlined the particularity of the plan that was implemented in a business-friendly way limiting the exposure of small businesses and highlighting the need to see business opportunities. She added that the plan framed the climate actions in a way that mattered to the residents and inspired them to act.





After that, **Amaya Celaya Alvarez, Shelter & Settlement and Climate Resilience Advisor at UN - IOM**, commented on the necessity of an inclusive and just green transition that must be understood as a process built on connected actions. Those systemic actions must be affordable, performed democratically and with open access for everyone. The question is how to make the transition in a fair way and “not leave anyone behind” especially considering vulnerable people or vulnerable

regions. She mentioned that according to the EU climate observatory, there are three enablers to the green transition: green jobs, financial plans targeting regional territories, and education (focus on prosperity, planet, and people). She finished her intervention by underlining the need for public money to finance the green transition.

Next, **Sheba Ross, Global Practice Director, Cities and Communities, Partner at HKS**, continued with insights about how thoughtful design strategies can influence the way people engage with each other. From an architectural perspective, she explained that to progress with an urban design project, a global vision of the surrounding environment is necessary. The health of the environment and people’s health should be analysed together to create a humanised built environment. Designed spaces have the power to influence cities and help communities see themselves in the big picture. She shared an example of an urban design plan reflecting the DNA of the community, adding that a thoughtful design is contextually rooted and co-created with the local community. She stressed that the master planning focused on building resilience with the participation of the representatives of a community shouldn’t only be thought of in terms of ROI in dollars but, above all, in terms of ROI of our wellbeing in the future.





Following Sheba, **Alejandro Lafarga, Programme Officer, INTERREG Next MED**, talked about the previous edition of the programme, where many projects were dealing with the challenge of green transition in the energy and building sector, water regeneration, and circular and green economy. He also explained the priorities and scope of INTERREG Next MED programme. The program addresses climate change issues such

as access to water, circular economy, and green skills, which resonate with Green Living Areas. It also focuses on local authorities' actions and their role in green transition.

In the second part of the discussion, the panellists talked about nature-based solutions and flexible and multifunctional architecture strategies that must be incorporated into urban & rural planning to enhance resilience. Sheba commented that a holistic vision of habitat that allows multifunction spaces to connect people and create more diverse neighbourhoods. She mentioned the importance of transferring experience from one industry to another and gave an example where the guest-focused experience from the hospitality industry was transferred to the health sector to improve the well-being of patients.

Amaya added to that picture an example of regenerative use of nature to improve soil quality and, at the same time, create more green areas. Next, the problem of cost-effectiveness and social equity was discussed. Upali Nanda stated that effective resource use defines sustainability and is strictly connected with community engagement. Economic accountability of the living experience outcomes would help to enhance built environment design. Amaya added that social equity should come with good governance and a participatory process involving all the actors. All speakers emphasised the need for citizen involvement in the transition process, spanning different generations. They agreed that participatory planning is crucial for ensuring cost-effectiveness in decision-making, open governance, and public ownership over decisions.

Professor Ayadi concluded the discussion by highlighting, “In green living communities, adaptation and mitigation of climate change intertwine with the essence of resilience. By harnessing renewable energy, embracing sustainable agriculture, fostering green infrastructure, and promoting brain health for citizens, all integrated in sustainable planning and design, these communities not only reduce their carbon footprint but also fortify themselves against the impacts of a changing climate. Urban and rural areas alike can thrive by prioritizing ecological balance, local resources, and community-driven initiatives, thereby creating a harmonious relationship with the environment that ensures flourishing and resilience for future generations.”

The recording of this session can be found below on the EMEA YouTube channel.

[Link to Video Recording](#)



Speaker Biographies:



Moderated by: Joanna
Grodzka, Project Officer, EMEA

Joanna Grodzka, Bachelor's degree in business administration and management, MSc in International Economic and Political Relations from the Warsaw School of Economics.

She also holds a Master's in IT management from Université Paris Dauphine. Joanna has experience in administration and management, from planning and economic monitoring to reporting, gained in several public and private institutions in Poland, France and Spain. She was engaged in projects related to entrepreneurship, communication, and SME development, as well as management of the EU projects.



Judith Casas, Project Officer,
Interreg Euro MED Joint
Secretariat

Judith Casas, Project officer for the Interreg Euro-MED, the transnational cooperation Programme for the European Mediterranean area founded by the European Union.

She oversees the Green Living Area mission for the Programme, tackling the issues of climate change mitigation and adaptation in the Mediterranean area.

She holds master degrees in energy economics and politics, and in urban planning. In previous positions, she supported local authorities and professional stakeholders in setting up sustainable energy action plans and local urban development projects.



*Amaia Celaya Alvarez,
Resilience Advisor, United
Nations - IOM and European
Commission*

Amaia Celaya Alvarez is an Urban and Climate Resilience expert with around 25 years of working experience in Europe, South America, East and West Africa, and the Middle East, among other places. She is an expert in resilience models, risk management procedures, and climate adaptive actions. She works with UN-IOM and INSPIRE+ consortium as an advisor for place-based integrated humanitarian practices. She is one of the four experts on the task force on knowledge transfer between cities for the European Urban Initiative - the technical programme for New Urban Agenda implementation in Europe. She contributed to the Emergency Response Unit of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO) during the Ebola crisis in 2014. As an expert/evaluator for the Horizon Europe programmes (EISMEA European Innovation Council Accelerator - HaDEA, CORDIS...), she has been revising proposals about resilience, secure societies, and nature-based solutions since 2015. Amaia learns from students in several universities, such as Columbia (NY), Newcastle (NC), Deusto, Unesco UPV (Bilbao), EAE, UB, UAB, Elisava, and Central University of Catalunya (Barcelona).



*Julie Hiromoto, Director of
Integration Principal at HKS,
FAIA, LEED AP BD+C, WELL AP,
LFA*

Julie is a Principal and Director of Integration at HKS. Her design, technical and management expertise excels in delivering complex, large-scale projects, including One World Trade Center.

She is the Mayor's appointee to the Dallas Environmental Commission, sits on the International Living Future Institute board, is the ULI Americas Sustainable Development Council Vice Chair or DEI, represented 95,000 AIA members when she testified before Congress in 2020 and also as a delegate to the United Nations Climate Conference, COP 26, in Glasgow, Scotland.

She will also represent Architecture 2030 as a virtual delegate at COP28.



Alejandro Lafarga, Programme Officer, Interreg NEXT MED Programme

Alejandro Lafarga is Programme Officer for the Interreg NEXT MED Programme, the largest cooperation Programme in the Mediterranean, cofounded by the European Union. Since 2019, he has been monitoring the implementation of the 80 Mediterranean cooperation projects under the previous Programme ENI CBC MED. He holds a master's degree in Business Administration and Market Research.

Prior to joining the Programme, he worked at the Valencia Port Foundation (Spain), the University of Limoges (France), the Valencia Region representation to the EU in Brussels (Belgium) and the multinational SGS. He is passionate about innovation and technology and is always up to date on the latest developments for green transition, energy, transport, and greening cities.



Esteban Leon, Head, City Resilience Global Programme (CRGP), United Nations UN-Habitat

Esteban has a background in economics and over two decades of experience building local capacities, designing and managing shelter, housing and settlement programs in pre- and post-crisis situations, and building urban resilience.

He has worked for UN-Habitat since 2002, based in Nairobi, Geneva, Panama and Barcelona.



Dr. Upali Nanda is Global Practice Director, Research, and a Partner at HKS. Based in Detroit, Upali has extensive experience leading research projects in design practice with a focus on the impact of design on human health and perception.

She is executive director of Center for Advanced Design Research and Evaluation, or CADRE, the research arm of HKS, and teaches as the Associate Professor of Practice at the Taubman School of Architecture and Urban Planning at University of Michigan.

Upali Nanda, PhD Global Practice Director, Research Partner at HKS, Assoc. AIA, EDAC, ACHE



Sheba is the Global Practice Director, Cities and Communities, and a Partner at HKS. Sheba, a highly engaged member of Atlanta's Urban Land Institute, combines the power of creativity and the joy of collaboration to create tangible project outcomes.

Sheba's focus is master planning, design development and schematic design.

Sheba Ross, Global Practice Director, Cities and Communities, Partner at HKS, AICP CUD, Intl., Associate AIA, CDT, LEED AP



Agroforestry sector in the EU and beyond: Towards novel policies and financing frameworks

9th December, 12:00-13:30 GST, Mediterranean Coalition Office

Co-organised by the Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association and CIHEAM

Panel:

Moderator: Yasmine Seghirate, Administrator at CIHEAM Headquarters

Speakers:

- Ivan Hajdukovic, EMEA Researcher
- Martin Lukac, Professor in Ecosystem Science, University of Reading, Coordinator of the ReForest project
- Rico Hubner, Researcher, Deutscher Fachverband für Agroforstwirtschaft (DeFAF) e.V
- Thierry DUPEUBLE, Director, CIHEAM Montpellier
- Michèle Gendreau-Massaloux, Vice-President of the GID (Group Interacadémique pour le Développement)
- Jaques Brulhet, Vice-President of the GID
- Martin Heibel Communication manager. Interreg NEXT MED Program

Background:

With the growing ambition of the European Green Deal and the regional development agendas to overcome current challenges related to climate change, environmental degradation and food security, policy initiatives and sustainable practices are needed to transform the Euro-Mediterranean region into a more integrated, resource-efficient and competitive economy.

Agroforestry, as a multifunctional system, could be at the centre of this transition given its potential environmental, economic and social benefits. Recent scientific studies reveal the need for a policy framework that links food systems, agriculture, forestry and rural development for a holistic approach to environmental, economic and social sustainability.

To undertake this transformation, it is essential to identify and put the socio-economic value of the ecosystem services and environmental benefits provided by agroforestry systems at the centre of the financial focus. Innovative financial instruments and policies need to be developed to overcome the most critical barriers to agroforestry adoption in the Euro-Mediterranean region and to empower farmers to deliver multiple objectives such as food production, carbon sequestration and biodiversity enhancement.



This session will present the latest developments and knowledge on finance and policies applicable to the agroforestry sector, supported by new tools and approaches. It will also make it possible to present the priority levers to be activated allowing strengthened Mediterranean cooperation in these areas.

Event Summary:

Yasmine Seghirate, Administrator at CIHEAM Headquarters, opened the session by explaining that agroforestry, as a multifunctional system, could be at the centre of the transition towards a more integrated and resource-efficient Euro-Mediterranean region given its potential environmental, economic and social benefits. She then asked the six panellists to introduce themselves.



Ivan Hajdukovic, Researcher at the Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association (EMEA), discussed key policy recommendations currently being developed under the ReForest project to promote the adoption of agroforestry in Europe and beyond. He explained that a policy framework that links food security, agriculture, forestry, and rural development is needed for a holistic approach

to environmental, economic, and social sustainability. Carbon farming is an initiative in the Mediterranean region, as it provides economic rewards for positive climate and environmental actions that benefit society. A sustainable financing scheme for agroforestry is proposed under ReForest, which is a hybrid carbon farming scheme complemented by ex-ante payments and advisory services to farmers.

Martin Lukac, Professor in Ecosystem Science at the University of Reading and Coordinator of the ReForest project explained that ReForest aims to join the dots between research and practice in agroforestry systems. Farmers need training and investment to support them in creating agroforestry networks, which are desperately needed to reform the agricultural landscape and bring down carbon emissions from this sector. ReForest aims to fill the knowledge and investment gap by creating financial and scientific monitoring tools directly for farmers.





Following that, **Martin Heibel, Communication manager, Interreg NEXT MED Program**, presented a Living Lab approach for innovation in agroforestry based on two Living Labs: Multifunctional olive living systems and Grazed woodlands. He emphasised the importance of co-creation, linking farmers' needs with what innovators and markets can offer, and bridging

the knowledge gap between the two sides. Capacity building, knowledge, incentives, and visibility are important in this sector, and decision-makers should further promote these sustainable practices.

Next, **Rico Hubner, Researcher, Deutscher Fachverband für Agroforstwirtschaft (DeFAF) e.V.**, explained the challenge of moving the agroforestry sector from a niche to a movement. He showed the long journey of policy development since agroforestry was first mentioned in 1986 and provided scientific evidence of the environmental benefits of agroforestry. He then explained that there is a growing need for planning, advisory and extension services. DIGITAF is working to develop tools for planning and decision support. Rico stressed the importance of knowledge sharing and education, including the role of the agroforestry academy and conferences at the international level. There are many opportunities for the development of new technologies and for businesses, companies, and consultants to get involved in the agroforestry sector. Rico also highlighted the public sector's importance in agroforestry's success. He concluded by saying that farmers are proud of their agroforestry work and willing to share their experiences.



Thierry DUPEUBLE, Director, CIHEAM Montpellier, stressed the importance of silvopastoral systems as an agroforestry practice that deserves further attention and policy support.

Michèle Gendreau-Massaloux, Vice-President of the GID and Jaques Brulhet, Vice-President of the GID, discussed the mutual benefits of cooperation between Mediterranean and European countries to resolve the crisis of forest ecosystems, agroforestry, and the environment in this region.



The GID organises an international conference on a key issue. These symposiums, called Parmenides, strengthen the GID's proposals and resolutions, which are sent to public and private decision-makers at the national and local levels. Michèle explained that preserving forests can ensure food security. The GID has also shown that contact between people and trees is essential

for the physical and mental health of the population. Consideration of local populations also includes knowledge of their customs, traditions, and the symbolism they attach to the forest. To improve analysis and cooperation, the GID supports databases and standardises data so that it can be used by all. Young people should be encouraged to work in the agroforestry sector, and their employability in the sector should be improved. The GID recommends improving the legal framework by adding forestry issues to environmental issues. In the GID's vision, broad communication must aim to become a permanent dialogue and cooperation between all stakeholders and the population.

Jacques explained that Mediterranean trees and forests are directly affected by climate change and that it is essential to coordinate and combine any new public policy with the extensive research being carried out by specialised institutes and the remarkable local initiatives being developed in several regions. Safeguarding our forests and planting trees is essential for the adaptation of Mediterranean ecosystems to climate change. He then mentioned the importance of financing these actions, which are essential for the ecological transition and for making agroforestry economically viable and sustainable. France has set up a National Pact for hedgerows and agroforestry, which provides subsidies to farms that plant or replant trees or hedgerows.



It will only be successful if the ecosystem services provided by these plantations such as carbon sequestration by trees, their role in water retention or the protection of biodiversity, are truly monetised. This ecological remuneration is a major challenge that will require further research, in particular, to measure the exact amount of carbon sequestered by different tree species. Jacques concluded by stressing the importance of feedback for the GID.

At the end of the session, Yasmine asked the panellists to make one final recommendation. **Ivan** highlighted the importance of cooperation in the region. Starting the transdisciplinary dialogue between researchers, policymakers, civil society, and, of course, how to incorporate traditional and new agroforestry practices into new agricultural policies. This should be initiated, and knowledge transfer must occur between researchers and practitioners. He also explained that innovative financial instruments and policies based on payments for ecosystem services provided by agroforestry systems need to be developed to overcome the main barriers to agroforestry adoption in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

Martin recommended that politicians and decision-makers come to see how agroforestry systems work on the farm, which could improve cooperation. Rico stressed the importance for farmers not to be constrained by some outdated regulations and for politicians to see the willingness of the people. Thierry emphasised diversity and cooperation to find the best solutions for farmers involved in agroforestry. Jacques is looking forward to working together for the COP30 in Brazil, which will have a special focus on forests and trees. Michèle stressed the importance of introducing agroforestry in all public environmental programmes in universities.

The recording of this session can be found below on the EMEA YouTube channel.

[Link to Video Recording](#)



Speaker Biographies:



Yasmine is Administrator at CIHEAM General Secretariat, specifically in the Women and Youth Empowerment department.

She also has experience in policy and communications on various agricultural themes in the Mediterranean region.

Moderated by: Yasmine
Seghirate, El Guerrab,
Administrator at CIHEAM



Ivan Hajdukovic is an economist with a strong background in quantitative methods and data analysis. His main areas of interest are macroeconomic policies, international economics, environmental economics, humanitarian and sustainable development. He obtained his PhD in Economics (Summa Cum Laude) at the University of Barcelona in July 2021. He holds a Master's degree in Economics from the University of Lausanne and a Bachelor's degree in Economics from the University of Geneva.

Ivan Hajdukovic, Researcher,
EMEA

From May 2020 to July 2022, he worked as a data analyst and consultant at the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. He has previous experience with a research internship at the World Trade Organization and as a research assistant at the Institute for New Economic Thinking of the University of Oxford.



He has produced academic research and policy work, both independently and in conjunction with research teams, on issues ranging from macroeconomic policies, international trade to energy resources and environmental quality, and has worked on operational and data collection exercises in a humanitarian context.

He joined EMEA as a researcher and will support the implementation of EMEA projects and activities by carrying out data collection, data analysis and economic policy research on sustainability and environment.



Martin Lukac, Professor in Ecosystem Science, University of Reading and The Czech University of Life Sciences, Prague, Coordinator of the ReForest project

Martin Lukac is a Professor of Ecosystem Science, with more than 15 years of experience in research on plant physiology, ecology of forest and agricultural ecosystems, agroforestry and soil science.

His main area of expertise is terrestrial ecosystem productivity and functioning, role of diversity in ecosystem stability, carbon cycling and storage in ecosystems, mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

Currently he is involved in a number of UK and EU research and science communication projects, as well as under - and postgraduate teaching and outreach. He has a strong track record of publishing research outcomes, with more than 90 academic papers in peer-reviewed journals, two books on soil ecology and numerous book chapters. He has supervised 13 PhD students to completion and currently supervises 3 PhD students as the main or second supervisor. He is a fellow of the Higher Education Academy and of the Institute of Professional Soil Scientists.



Martin Heibel, Communication manager. Interreg NEXT MED Programme

A French and Italian national, Martin Heibel has over 15 years of experience in the fields of communication and public relations of EU-funded cooperation programmes and projects, especially those implemented across the Mediterranean area. Martin Heibel holds a B.A in Political Sciences and an M.A. in European Affairs from Sciences-Po Strasbourg as well as a M.Sc. in Space Studies from the International Space University.

Martin Heibel is currently the communication manager of ENI CBC Med programme. the largest EU-funded cross-border cooperation in the Mediterranean region.



*Dr. agr. Rico Hübner
Research Consultant, Head
of International Cooperation
Department
Deutscher Fachverband für
Agroforstwirtschaft (DeFAF)*

Dr agr. Rico Hübner's background as agricultural economist is scientific work at the Technical University of Munich on sustainability indicators in agriculture, renewable energies, and programme development in agricultural policy.

At the German Agroforestry Association (DeFAF) e.V. he is the scientific advisor for governance aspects of traditional and modern agroforestry systems in Europe.

He is responsible for accompanying research on agroforestry agri-environmental and climate measures, is a lecturer at the Agroforestry Academy, teaches at universities, heads the International Cooperation Department and is involved in the European Agroforestry Federation (EURAF).



*Thierry Dupeuble, Director,
CIHEAM Montpellier*

Thierry Dupeuble is a doctor in economics. He is a specialist in public policies in favor of sustainable agriculture and rural development. He has supported development projects in the fields of organic farming and sustainable agriculture, on-farm transformation and selling, and rural tourism.

Most of his experiences have been in various positions within the ministry for agriculture in France.

As such, he recently worked on the declination of the French national food policy at the regional level. Since 2021, he is the director of CIHEAM Montpellier.



*Michèle Gendreau-Massaloux,
Vice-President of the GID
(Group Interacadémique pour le
Développement)*

Michèle Gendreau-Massaloux took her degrees at the École Normale Supérieure and the Sorbonne. A specialist of early Spanish literature, she wrote her PhD dissertation on "Seneca in the Spanish literature of the Golden Age". She has since published many books and articles on Mediterranean cultures and civilizations. A Professor at the University of Limoges, she has chaired the Department of Spanish and Latin-American Literature and Civilization at this University.

In 1981, she was appointed as Head of the Public Education system (Recteur) for the Academy of Orleans-Tours. Others appointments followed : Presidential adviser for education (1984-85) ; Deputy General-Secretary of the Presidency and spokesperson for the President of the Republic (1985-1988); member of the French National commission for communication and freedoms - CNCL - (1988-89); Recteur of the Academy of Paris and Chancellor of the Universities (1989-1998).



Appointed as a State Councilor in 1998, she was elected as Recteur of the Agence universitaire de la francophonie (AUF), a multilateral agency cooperating with more than 1 000 universities around the world. After heading the AUF from 1999 to 2007, she was put in charge of training, higher education, research, health and culture within the French Mission for the Mediterranean (2008-2012), then the Interministerial Delegation for the Mediterranean -Délégation interministérielle à la Méditerranée, aka. DiMed (2012-2015).

She is presently the Vice-President in charge of institutional relations of the Inter-Academic Group for Development (GID). Commandeur de l'Ordre national de la Légion d'honneur, Grand Officier de l'Ordre national du Mérite, Commandeur des Palmes Académiques.



*Jacques Brulhet, Vice-President
of the GID*

Veterinary doctor (Alfort 68), graduate in biological oceanography and economics, Jacques Brulhet began his career in Asia (Cambodia) then in Africa (Mauritania, Ivory Coast), between 1969 and 1986 as advisor to different governments for development livestock (including poultry), fishing and aquaculture.

Between 1987 and 1998, he then ensured the development of the private group Pêche et Froid, a European leader in seafood, building and operating fishing equipment and fish canneries: Boulogne-sur-Mer, Étrel, Abidjan, Dakar , Diego-Suarez...

From 1998 to 2005, he returned to the Ministry of Agriculture in Paris, where he first contributed to the management of health crises (mad cow disease), and where he assumed several responsibilities in the interprofessions of breeding (Ofival, Normabev).





Appointed Head of the Corps of Veterinary Public Health Inspectors in 2005, he then led from 2009 to 2012 the General Council for Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas, a structure under the direct authority of the Ministers of agriculture (Michel Barnier, Bruno Le Maire, Stéphane Le Foll), including nearly 200 inspectors and general engineers.

He was Chairman of the Board of Directors of the National Veterinary School of Alfort where he initiated the modernization of the site. Retired from the administration, he remains a member of several boards of directors, in the agri-food industries and in the global development of sustainable fisheries.

Until 2023, he was President of the French Union of Canned Fish Companies. A member of the French Academy of Agriculture (livestock breeding section), he became its President in 2021, and became vice-president of the Interacademic Group for Development where he contributed to several programs for Africa and the Mediterranean. Locally in Normandy, he founded the APPAT association which is organizing a major traveling exhibition on Food in 2022, with the support of the National Museum of Natural History. Jacques Brulhet is a Knight of the Legion of Honor and Commander of Agricultural Merit.





EMEA Participation:

Day 1 - 30th November 2023

“Finance, Sustainability and Climate Change”, co-organised by IPCC, World Meteorological Organization, Philanthropy Cortés Solari, MERI Foundation, Centre Scientifique de Monaco, and Foundation Prince Albert II de Monaco

Prof. Ayadi first spoke at the event “Finance, Sustainability and Climate Change” which was co-organised by [IPCC](#), [World Meteorological Organization](#), [Philanthropy Cortés Solari](#), [MERI Foundation](#), [Centre Scientifique de Monaco](#), and [Fondation Prince Albert II de Monaco](#) on the 30th November.

In her speech, Prof. Ayadi highlighted that “Finance must become the engine that can drive us towards a sustainable future. By carefully allocating resources into green innovation, clean energy, and sustainable practices, it has the power to not only mitigate the impacts of climate change but also pave the way for a resilient, environmentally-conscious economy. In harnessing the potential of finance, we unlock the doors to a greener world”. Linking finance, sustainability, and climate change is crucial for addressing the challenges posed by climate change and ensuring a sustainable and prosperous future. The panel discussed how we can work towards building a more resilient and sustainable global economy that is better equipped to address the challenges posed by climate change and promote long-term environmental stewardship.

The panel included [Nathalie Hilmi](#), Section Head of Environmental Economics, [Centre Scientifique de Monaco](#), EMEA Advisor, [Ekkehard Ernst](#) - GemLabs and Chief Macroeconomist at the [International Labour Organization](#), EMEA Advisor, [Patricia Morales Errázuriz](#) CEO [Philanthropy Cortés Solari](#), [Torsten Thiele](#), Global Ocean Trust, EMEA Advisor, and it was moderated by [Agustina Lo Bianco](#), [Philanthropy Cortés Solari](#).



Day 2 - 1st December - Finance and Circular Action

On the second day, Prof. Ayadi intervened as a panellist in the event ***Circular Thinking for Climate Action: The Synergy of Circular Economy and Climate Change Mitigation***, organised by EMEA partner MedWaves, Generalitat de Catalunya and UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention. The event, moderated by Alessandro Miraglia, Medwaves Team Leader, highlighted how shifting towards circular, low-carbon and climate targets-compatible business models can have a far-reaching impact, if properly integrated in current climate policies.

Prof. Ayadi underlined that “Finance can become a catalyst in scaling up circular and regenerative economy practices. By providing the necessary capital, developing innovative financial products, and fostering public-private partnerships, the financial sector can significantly accelerate the transition towards a global circular and regenerative economy, contributing to the achievement of climate goals.”



Following that, the focus switched back to finance in the event organised by Centre Scientifique de Monaco in the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) pavilion: ***“Is finance the point of convergence of the scientific and socio-economic aspects of marine nature-based solutions?”***

From Prof. Ayadi’s intervention, it became clear that “Finance should become a bridge to convert scientific insights and sociological viewpoints into actionable, financially sound strategies for the preservation and rejuvenation of marine habitats to halt the loss of biodiversity. This can harness the strength of natural capital, acknowledging and appreciating the essential part played by marine ecosystems in upholding our economic and social prosperity.”



Day 3 - 2nd December - Healthy Cities and Urban Resilience

Moving to Day 3, Prof Ayadi participated in the event **“Healthy Cities, Climate Finance & Resilience”** with Dr. Harris Eyre, EMEA Advisor, which took place in the Women’s Pavilion GGWoA, moderated by Gareth Presch, CEO, World Health Innovation Summit CIC Summit. The panel discussed on how we can address climate action and, at the same time, improve our health and wellbeing, strengthen health systems, create new and meaningful jobs while implementing the sustainable development goals.

“Investing in urban health, particularly brain health and creativity” Prof. Ayadi highlighted, “is not just a societal imperative but an economic strategy. When we nurture the mental well-being and creative capacities of our urban populations, we are not only enhancing individual lives and flourishing but are also fueling the engines of economic resilience and innovation. Such investment, especially when supported by strategic financing from sectors like insurance and pension funds, lays the foundation for a more robust, vibrant, and prosperous society.”



Day 4 - 3rd December - the Circular Economy in Construction

EMEA Researcher, [Sara Ronco](#) participated at the side event ***“The Circular Economy and the Example of How the Construction Sector Entered Into Green Era by Applying the Principles of Circular Economy”*** organised by the Interreg NEXT MED Programme. The objective of the event, moderated by [Vincent Ernoux](#), was to disseminate the results of the RE-MED project on circular economy applied to the construction sector.

In her intervention, Sara discussed the opportunities and challenges of the circular economy and how going beyond circularity is needed. We must think about regenerative models where circularity is one key element to integrate the environmental and social dimensions whilst focusing on biodiversity protection and empowering vulnerable populations. “It is time to go from weak sustainability to strong sustainability”, she highlighted.



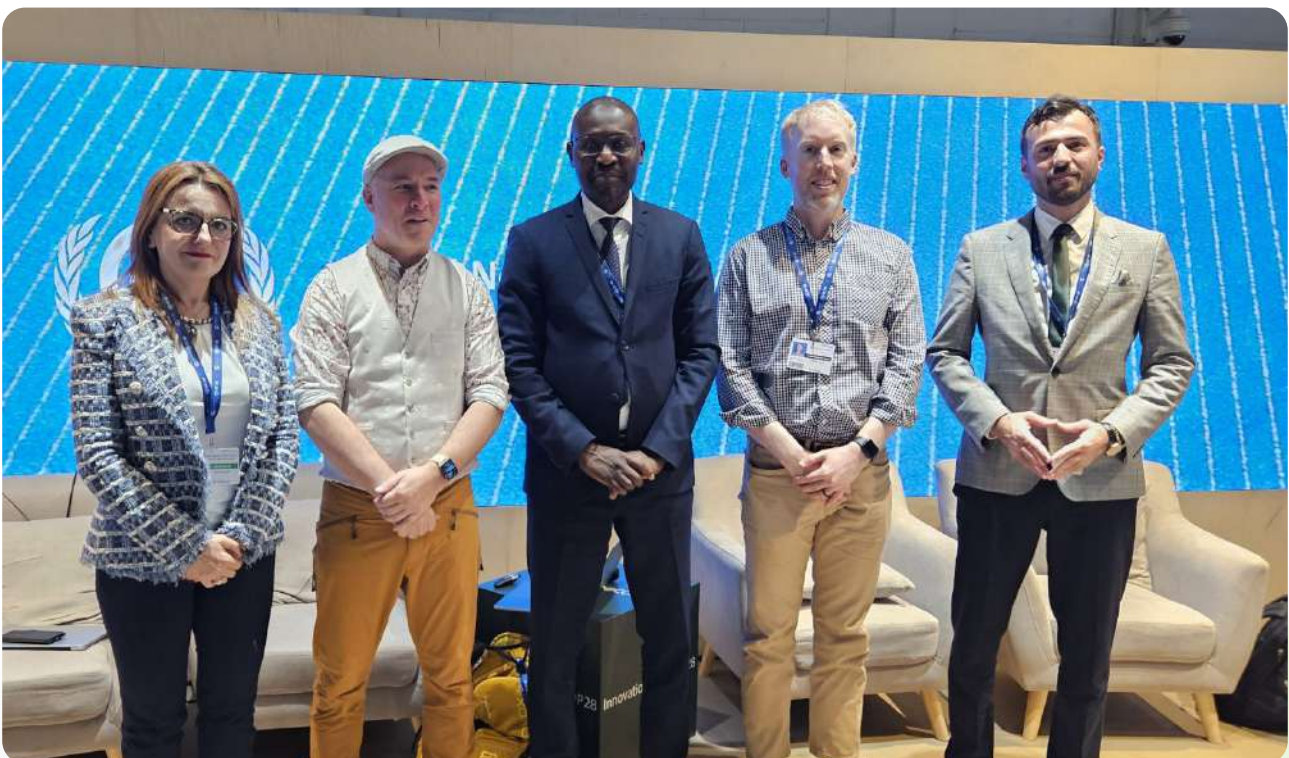
Also on the 3rd, EMEA President Prof Rym Ayadi and EMEA Advisors Harris Eyre Rice University's Baker Institute for Public Policy and Paweł Świeboda, NeuroCentury, participated in the COP28 side event ***“Brain and Mind Science: A fundamental part for a future where 11 billion people can live flourishing lives”*** which took place in the UN Climate Change Global Innovation Hub Pavilion and it was moderated by Dennis Pamlin, Executive Director, The Net-Zero Compatibility Initiative.

Prof Ayadi underlined “Brain capital, with its dual emphasis on enhancing brain health and fostering brain skills, stands as a foundational pillar for a well-being economy. By nurturing mental wellness and cognitive abilities, we cultivate a society that thrives on innovation, resilience, and inclusivity, propelling economic growth, social harmony, and flourishing.

This holistic approach not only elevates individual potential but also ensures a sustainable and equitable future for all.”

Massamba Thioye, Project Executive UNFCCC Global Innovation Hub at UN Climate Change Secretariat opened and closed the event.

The event is available to watch back [here](#).



Day 5 - 4th December - Food Sovereignty and Green Entrepreneurship

On day 5, President and Founder of EMEA, Prof. [Rym Ayadi](#) participated in the side event ***“Climate Finance and Food Sovereignty in the Mediterranean Basin”*** which was organised by the [Positive Agenda Advisory](#) (EMEA Partner) in collaboration with the [Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association - EMEA](#) and the [AAA Initiative](#) in the Morocco Pavilion, COP28 UAE. Prof. Ayadi participated at the panel *“How to design innovative financial strategies to strengthen food sovereignty in the Mediterranean region”*, moderated by [Hafsa EL Bekri, PhD](#) - PPA.

Discussing the need for a multifaceted approach when addressing food sovereignty, Prof. Ayadi underlined three key strategies: “Develop innovative solutions like parametric insurance, which provides rapid financial relief to farmers affected by extreme weather, with sustainable practices and technologies, set up public disaster and extreme events funds to manage the socio economic consequences of extreme environmental events that became more frequent, and emphasize public-private partnerships and community-supported agriculture also plays a vital role in normal and extreme conditions. These strategies, combined with targeted government subsidies and microfinance options, may create a resilient agricultural framework to help face the challenges.”



Sara Ronco, EMEA Researcher, participated in the panel **“Empowering Young Innovators: Catalyzing Climate-Friendly Businesses”** organised by the Interreg NEXT MED Programme in the Mediterranean Coalition Office. The event not only presented the results of several projects funded by the [ENI CBC Med Programme](#) (predecessor of Interreg NEXT MED) but also gave some insights into the new programme. It was moderated by [Alejandro Lafarga Martinez](#) - Programme Officer INTERREG NEXT MED Programme.

In her intervention, Sara stated that “Young entrepreneurs with innovative ideas and solutions can be the catalyst in many regions to accelerate the green transition working in sectors such as the reduction of plastic pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. Their influence can also extend to the social sphere, advancing just transition goals such as closing the gender pay gap and promoting decent work. The promotion of MSMEs with such goals is crucial, but education and upskilling is also a key issue in the Southern Mediterranean, to ensure aspiring entrepreneurs have the capacity and tools they need to launch their businesses and contribute to a greener, more socially just business ecosystem. Moreover, there is a need to create enabling regulatory frameworks and educational technologies and products that favour inclusive socioeconomic-environmental sustainability to ensure young entrepreneurs can access finance and markets.”



Day 8 - 8th December - the Just Transition, and MSMEs

On Day 8, EMEA President Prof. [Rym Ayadi](#) participated in the workshop **“Blue Carbon - Developing Solutions for a Just Transition”** in the Just Transition Pavilion. The event was co-organised by [International Labour Organization](#), [Centre Scientifique de Monaco](#), [Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association - EMEA](#), [Blue-Green Futures](#), and [King Abdulallah University](#).

The panel included EMEA advisors [Ralph Chami](#) - CEO & Co-Founder Blue Green Future, [Nathalie Hilmi](#) Centre Scientifique de Monaco and [Ekkehard Ernst](#), International Labour Organization. In her intervention, Prof. Ayadi underlined “Parametric insurance emerges as a pivotal instrument in accelerating the financing of natural capital, integral to a just transition.

By swiftly mobilizing funds post-disaster based on predetermined criteria, it ensures the immediate availability of resources essential for restoring and preserving ecosystems for insured small economic players. This rapid response capability is vital for maintaining the integrity of natural capital, which is crucial for communities disproportionately impacted by climate change. Moreover, parametric insurance incentivizes sustainable practices and risk mitigation, aligning financial flows with conservation goals. In essence, it acts not just as a safety net, but as a catalyst for resilient, equitable development where the protection of natural capital is paramount in the transition towards a sustainable future.”



Also on the 8th, fortifying relationships and connections in the Mediterranean, particularly for women, EMEA President Prof. [Rym Ayadi](#) participated at the [MEDCOP Climate](#) Partners' Roundtable on the ***"The MedCOP Process: Consultation with partners on network governance and Objectives on the establishment of the women's climate mediterranean network"***.



Finally, turning the focus back to entrepreneurship and MSMEs as drivers of the green transition, EMEA President Prof. [Rym Ayadi](#) intervened in the event ***"SMEs, Gamechangers in a Just Transition to circular and low carbon economies"***, hosted by the [International Labour Organization](#) and the [European Commission](#) at the Just Transition Pavilion.

In her intervention Prof. Ayadi highlighted "MSMEs, with their innate agility and community integration, are uniquely positioned to drive the just transition towards a regenerative economy. Through integrating innovative regenerative business models that prioritize sustainable value creation, restoration, regeneration, local engagement, and resource efficiency, they can lead the way in creating an economic system that not only preserves but enhances environmental and social capital for future generations."

You can catch up on the event here: <https://live.ilo.org/events/ilo-cop-28-events-just-transition-pavilion-day-7-afternoon-2023-12-08>



Day 9 - 9th December - the Bioeconomy

Moving into the Spanish Pavilion, Prof. Ayadi moderated the discussion ***“Bioeconomy for a sustainable inclusive and innovative economy: dream or reality?”*** The objectives of this session were to examine the role of government policies and regulations in promoting the bioeconomy and aligning with climate goals, understand what the key sectors are fostered in different regional strategies, and understand regional and national specificities to set the basis for a global regulation considering local communities (and indigenous communities), and explore the use of biological resources and sustainable production and the role of innovative applications of biotechnology in the production of food, medicines, energy, and sustainable materials.

Prof. Ayadi closed the session by highlighting: “The bioeconomy is a novel concept, it holds immense potential for sustainable growth, leveraging renewable biological resources to meet our needs for food, materials, and energy. However, navigating this path demands careful attention to definition, processes and interaction with other concepts such as circularity and regeneration. Our challenge is not just in harnessing biological processes, but in doing so responsibly, sustainably while addressing human interactions ensuring that today’s solutions do not become tomorrow’s problems.”



The event is available to watch here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yfhz-T7yKxE>

Connecting Creativity and Climate Change

EMEA finally put the spotlight on the interconnection between creativity and climate change at COP28, a seldom commented yet crucial theme in solutions to combat climate change. Following from the prelaunch in its offices, EMEA officially launched the short film ***“Whispers of the Earth: A symphony of change - a short film on creativity and science in climate preservation”*** at the Mediterranean Coalition Office on the 9th December.

The film has been produced by EMEA and delves into the overlooked intersection of creativity and science in climate preservation, underscoring the crucial need to reestablish a connection between society and its natural surroundings. It re-inforces the notion that our home extends beyond mere concrete walls, emphasizing the responsibility to safeguard a more expansive environment. The narrative explores the importance of passing down knowledge and serves as a poignant reminder that addressing climate change necessitates a collaborative, multigenerational effort, where shared humanity and connections bring us together.

It was presented by Prof. Rym Ayadi, President and Founder, EMEA with

- Nathalie Hilmi, Section Head of Environmental Economics, Centre Scientifique de Monaco, EMEA Advisor
- Christian Clauwers, Ocean and Polar photographer
- Ines Duarte Project Manager, Energy and Climate Action, Union for the Mediterranean

The film is available to watch at the EMEA YouTube Channel here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zBbPswZdzSs>





Key External Side-Events followed by EMEA:

CVF-V20 at COP28: Transform global finance system to make it fit-for-climate

2nd December 2023, 11.30-13.30 GMT, Ghana Pavilion

The event aimed at holding a stocktake of reforms in the international financial architecture to spur development-positive climate action by the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF), the Vulnerable Twenty Group (V20) Finance Ministers.

A call resounded for a unified global voice in addressing critical issues and the necessity for differentiated responses to tackle pressing concerns faced by nations worldwide. The discussions shed light on the substantial gaps between the losses incurred due to various issues and the initial capitalization, noting that even significant financial injections would fall short of preventing significant losses.

In this regard, Barbados Prime Minister and incoming CVF Chair Mia Amor Mottley. "More than ever, we need solidarity. There are two major elephants in the room: The first is keeping warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius, and the second is finance. The world needs long-term money. We give thanks to the progress made, but it does nothing but assuage consciences. Choosing between people and the planet is false; the world has enough funds."

Indeed, amidst acknowledging commendable progress made, concerns arose about the disconnect between these advancements and the imperative actions needed to effectively address current challenges. The discussions underscored the urgency for adaptive measures and emphasised the paramount importance of long-term sustainability frameworks. Moreover, while the commitment to the Loss and Damage Fund has been welcomed as good news, there are concerns that it will not be agile and responsive enough, free from the bureaucratic hurdles that have hindered the rapid allocation of resources in other climate funds.

Particular attention was directed towards the need for a differentiated response approach, asking all players. The complexities surrounding these challenges prompted discussions on the most appropriate approaches, considering the challenging positions faced by entities such as finance companies, insurers, and those operating within the oil and gas industry.

Some speakers call for a serious conversation on tax and insurance mechanisms with some kind of guarantees from institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to share the burden taken by high-polluting companies. Indeed, the event highlighted the necessity for serious engagement with international financial institutions, contemplating collaborative solutions and burden-sharing strategies. The overarching goal was to stimulate a cohesive global approach, urging meaningful actions and strategies to address immediate global challenges while ensuring sustainable progress and resilience.

More info on the event is available [here](#).



Moderated by Dr. Eugene Owusu, Sherpa and Special Advisor to the President of Ghana on the Sustainable Development Goals

Welcome Remarks from CVF Chair, H.E. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President, Ghana
Statement from Incoming CVF/V20 Chair H.E. Mia Amor Mottley, SC, MP, Prime Minister, Barbados

Inputs from Members:

- H.E. Ranil Wickremesinghe, President, Sri Lanka, Statement from the Troika: H.E. Dr AK Abdul Momen, Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh

Other interventions:

- H.E. Ambassador Majid Al-Suwaidi, COP28 Director-General
- Mr Bo Li, Deputy Managing Director, IMF
- Mr Jorge Moreira da Silva, Executive Director UNOPS, Appointed Secretary General of the Independent CVF-V20, H.E. Mohamed Nasheed



Statement from Philanthropies:

- Ms. Kate Hampton, CEO, Children's Investment Fund Foundation
- Ms. Christie Ulman, President, Sequoia Climate Foundation

Panel Discussion on Evaluating Progress:

- Mr. Axel van Trotsenburg, Senior Managing Director, World Bank
- H.E. Njuguna Ndung'u, CBS, Minister for Finance, Kenya
- Mr. Jwala Rambarran, Task Force on Climate, Development and the IMF

Closing Remarks: H.E. Dr. Kwaku Afriyie, Minister for Environment, Ghana

The state of agri-food systems in a climate crisis and the role of IPCC-IPBES and other global assessments

9th December 2023, 11.00-12.00 GMT, Food Pavilion

The event explored some of the significant gaps in scientific knowledge of agri-food systems and the role of global scientific assessments and discussed how scientists, particularly from the Global South, can engage in these processes and bring diverse perspectives. The panellists recognised the importance of the IPCC and IPBES assessments highlighting the role of agri-food systems in the context of climate change and biodiversity loss and of publicly funded scientific organisations such as the CGIAR building a systematic knowledge base on the agri-food sector.

In addition, most panellists stressed the need to keep food security at the centre of food system transformation and climate action. Indigenous knowledge was also highlighted as an essential element to be preserved and promoted. The inequity of scientific production calls for diverse authorship and the amplification of multiple voices in reports. While the IPCC report embraces indigenous knowledge amidst challenges, the responsibility for emissions lies with a small segment, leaving half of the impoverished and slum dwellers largely unaffected.

The global scientific establishment relies heavily on established academic excellence, sidelining voices from underrepresented communities. Integrating these voices is proving difficult, especially from the Global South.

In the case of Africa, South Africa dominates scientific authorship, overshadowing broader African representation. Efforts to incorporate more African knowledge into the IPCC through grey literature and local community insights aim to diversify perspectives. In essence, addressing inequalities in scientific representation requires including marginalised voices and enriching global understanding and discourse.

Interestingly, from the standpoint of negotiators, scientific evidence is highly valued, but several countries struggle to articulate their perspectives on climate impacts clearly. Several participants emphasised that biodiversity and ecosystem assessments are necessary to support African agricultural development. In their view, one of the biggest challenges is translating the aspirations outlined in the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) into actionable investments that can catalyse and unlock finance for implementation. The recording is available [here](#).





Moderated by Dr Aditi Mukherji, Director of the Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Impact Action Platform of the CGIAR scene

- Dr Patrick Heron Patrick CGIAR System Board Vice Chair
- Professor Jim Skea, Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and former Co-Chair of IPCC Working Group III which covers the mitigation of climate change.
- Dr. David Obura is a Founding Director of CORDIO East Africa and Chair at The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)
- Dr. Diana Urge-Vorsatz, Professor at Central European University's (CEU) Department of Environmental Sciences and Policy, and Vice-Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) for the period of its Seventh Assessment Cycle (2023 - 2030).
- Dr George Wamukoya is a team leader of African Group of Negotiators Experts Support (AGNES), and lead negotiator on agriculture.
- Dr. Ismahane Elouafi is the Executive Managing Director of CGIAR. She previously held the position of Chief Scientist at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations. Before that, she was the Director General at the International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA) based in the United Arab Emirates.
- H.R.H. Prince Jaime de Bourbon de Parme, Climate Envoy of the Netherlands

Unlocking inclusion on Nature and Bioeconomy - The role of trade

9th December 2023, 13.30-14.30 GMT, Trade House Pavilion

The event explored the need to promote sustainable business models of nature-based value chains as essential to achieving inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development and accelerating the green transition. Indeed, the event highlighted the fact that some 1.6 billion people depend on forests for their livelihoods, including some 70 million indigenous people, and that the small business sector represents 90% of the world's businesses and more than half of global employment. The panellists highlighted several issues related to trade in nature-based goods, particularly in developing countries. Cost reduction, digitalization, and certification are some key elements that should be promoted. In addition, local producers in developing countries should be given training and access to technology to add value to their products, rather than selling raw materials, as is currently the case for most cooperatives in the sector.

Overall, panellists stressed the need to link environmental and social needs to make trade work for communities. In this regard, UNCTAD developed the BioTrade Initiative in 1996 to help countries implement principles that preserve biodiversity, benefit local communities, and enable them to diversify their export base through sustainable trade.



Moderated by Fiona Shera, Director, Division of Sustainable and Inclusive Trade, International Trade Centre (ITC)

Panelists:

- Ms. Chantal Line Carpentier, Head, Trade, Environment, Climate Change, and Sustainable Development Branch, Division on International Trade and Commodities, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
- Ms. Ana Margarida Castro Euler, Business Executive Director, Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA), Brazil
- Mr. Mahmood Patel, Chief Executive Officer, Coco Hill, Barbados Agroforestry and agrotourism
- Ms. Sofia Rubio, Chief Executive Officer, Shiwi, Peru



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