



Life in the Mediterranean

A list of LIFE projects relevant to the Mediterranean environment is now available. For facility, they are divided into sections concerning:

- **Land-Based Sources & Pollution Monitoring at Sea**
- **Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control & Clean Technologies**
- **Pollution from ships: Prevention & Response to Spills at Sea- Port reception facilities**
- **Protected Areas & Biodiversity Projects (Marine & Coastal)**
- **Integrated Coastal Zone Management & the Urban Environment**

The list is available at

<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/projectsbythemes.htm>.

It contains links to allow you to access directly a summary of each project (with contact information) and the project's web site.

What is LIFE?

LIFE is the EU's financial instrument supporting environmental and nature conservation projects throughout the EU, as well as in certain candidate, acceding and neighbouring countries. Since 1992, LIFE has co-financed some 2,750 projects, contributing approximately 1.35 billion euros to the protection of the environment. LIFE has three components:

- **LIFE-Environment** co-finances innovative pilot and demonstration projects
- **LIFE-Nature** focus on nature conservation
- **LIFE-Third Countries** promotes environmental capacity building in countries bordering the Mediterranean and the Baltic Sea.

For all information on LIFE see <http://ec.europa.eu/life>





LIFE in the Mediterranean

At the 10th Anniversary Summit of the Euro-Mediterranean Process held in Barcelona in November 2005 the partners made protecting the Mediterranean environment a key a priority for cooperation in the years to come. In response the European Commission has launched the Horizon 2020 initiative to reduce pollution in the Mediterranean Sea and outlined its strategy for environmental cooperation in the region. The transfer of EU experience in addressing environmental problems is one of the pillars of that strategy.

The EU has built up a wealth of experience in tackling the same environmental pressures that face its partner countries across the Mediterranean Region. Tapping into this reservoir of knowledge is a simple and effective way of helping partner countries to learn from the experience of others - copying the best practices - avoiding the errors.

Learning from LIFE

One of the richest sources of experience has been the **LIFE** programme that has co-financed many different environmental projects during its 15 year duration. Below you can find a short selection of projects that have been picked for their relevance to the Mediterranean.

But many more can be found in the **database of LIFE projects** maintained by the European Commission. Many of the successful projects provide useful experience in tackling issues linked to industrial emissions, municipal waste and Urban Waste Water - the priority sectors of Horizon 2020. The Life project database is available at <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm>

Best practises and technologies for the protection and improvement of the Mediterranean environment

While there are many ideas about how to protect and improve the **Mediterranean environment**, decision makers need to have access to a range of tried and tested techniques and technologies. **LIFE demonstration projects** provide just that.

Ref: LIFE99 TCY/CY/041

Kick start for recycling

When Cyprus was preparing to join the EU, LIFE co-financed a public-private waste recycling scheme that was coupled with a successful awareness raising campaign. A pilot scheme was set up focussing on the collection of paper, glass, aluminium and plastic for recycling.



At the end of the project two of the municipalities involved expanded the scheme by buying additional disposal bins and continuing the separate collection of waste. In parallel awareness raising and education efforts achieved the participation of school children and parents. This project gave



valuable data and experience that fed into the planning of the National Strategic Programme on recycling as Cyprus prepared to align with EU environmental norms and standards.

Ref: LIFE02 ENV/E/00216

New wastewater treatment process for the tanning industry

Around 40% of Spanish leather production is concentrated at the La Serrata industrial estate in Lorca, Murcia. The effluent from the tanning process has a high level of salinity and is difficult to treat in an environmentally responsible and economic way so in the past it was simply diluted and



discharged into the river with all of the accompanying pollution and smells. This project developed a new method of treatment that

lowers salinity levels in the wastewater to a point where the water can be re-used in agriculture and industry and produced over 7,000 m³ of recycled water per day. The technology developed in this pilot project sets an example that could benefit others facing the same problems in the tanning industry.



Ref: LIFE99 ENV/GR/00567

Magnetic cleaning of oil spills

The Mediterranean Sea lies at the crossroads of oil transport routes and the risk of oil spills is high. As experience has shown oil spills can damage both the environment and the tourism dependant economies of the countries that border this sea. Greece, a country particularly vulnerable to these threats, benefited from a LIFE project that took a new cleaning technique based on magnetic separation and demonstrated its large scale application to the open sea. The project was able to demonstrate that the technique could fully recover accidentally spilt oils with no residual pollution left behind and that the technology is environmentally benign using non-toxic materials that can be recycled. This method provides an alternative to the use of potentially harmful



chemical dispersants. Since the project was completed the CleanMag technology has been further developed for commercial exploitation and a number of countries have expressed interest in acquiring it.

Ref: LIFE00 NAT/GR/007248, LIFE05 NAT/GR/000083

Protecting the Monk Seal

The Mediterranean monk seal is one of the six most threatened marine mammals in the world. In the course of successive LIFE projects in the Aegean and Ionian Seas, the Hellenic Society for the Study and Protection of the Monk Seal (MOM) has helped put in place protected areas, monitor and study the populations, develop a management plan and carry out a very successful communication strategy aimed in particular at local inhabitants and tourists. Currently they are working to mitigate



conflicts between fishermen and the seals.

