

# Bridges

UNESCO Regional Bureau  
for Science and Culture in Europe

Issue 1 • 2017

**In focus** pages 2-3

**News and Highlights from Science & Culture** pages 4-8

**Interdisciplinary stories** pages 9-11

**Oceans** pages 12-14

**Events** page 15

**Backstory** page 16



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

Regional Bureau  
for Science and Culture  
in Europe

Pioneering the future!

# 2017 MAB YOUTH FORUM

Committed to  
Sustainable  
Development

Today, more than ever, young women and men are change-makers, building new realities for themselves and their communities. All over the world, youth are driving social change and innovation, claiming respect for their fundamental human rights and freedoms and seeking new opportunities to learn and work together for a better future.

Announced for the first time during the 4th World Congress of Biosphere Reserves in Lima, Peru, the 2017 MAB Youth Forum will take place on 18-23 September 2017 in the Po Delta Biosphere Reserve. The forum is organized by the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe, in cooperation with the Secretariat of the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme of UNESCO.

Following a large-scale online consultation, the forum will evolve around 3 thematic areas: The contribution of young people to the life of Biosphere Reserves; Research and studies into the sustainable development of Biosphere Reserves; and, A sustainable future for the youth of Biosphere Reserves. The forum is addressed to youth aged between 18 and 35 who live or work in Biosphere Reserves, or who study or conduct research in these areas. Participants will be nominated by their respective biosphere reserve managers/coordinators and supported by their MAB National Committees.

With around 300 young people representing over 100 countries and many more biosphere reserves, the forum aims to bring together future

generations to define challenges and objectives towards a sustainable development in tune with nature. For the very first time, the forum will give the floor to youth to give them a voice in shaping the future of their territories and defining their engagement in the MAB Programme.

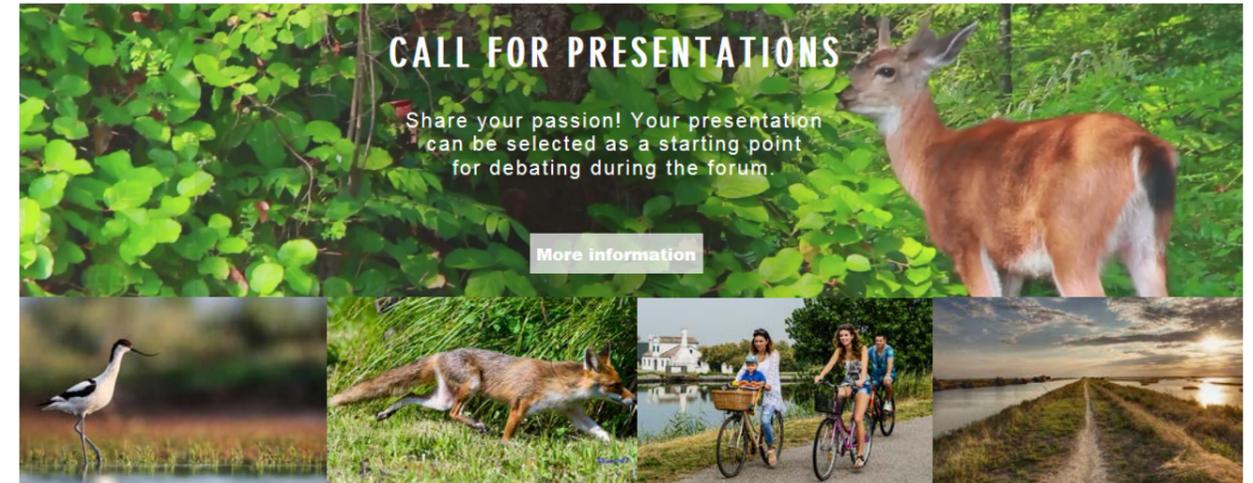
Through workshops and various activities, participants will learn about best practices and the promotion of biosphere reserves as tools for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Understanding the potential and the value of this recently designated biosphere reserve, UNESCO selected the Po Delta for such challenging task. The forum would not be possible without the vision, commitment and logistic support of all the local communities and the governance of the regions involved.



The precious financial support provided by the Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Padova e Rovigo, the Veneto and Emilia Romagna regional governments, municipalities and private partners ensures that the event is organised with the subsidy of 250 participants, particularly those from low- and middle-income countries. >>full story

The Lima Action Plan, adopted in March 2016 at the IV World Congress of Biosphere Reserves, to implement the 2015-2025 Strategy of the MAB Programme, provides a sound basis on which to build initiatives such as the 2017 MAB Youth Forum. We refer, in particular, to the desire to establish strong partnerships with universities and research institutions to support essential capacity-building processes, and the need to strengthen and support a participatory and inclusive network of all stakeholders within the MAB Programme and biosphere reserves, to ensure the better involvement of youth in governance. The exchange of best practices and the promotion of biosphere reserves as tools for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be an important focus of the Forum since they should be models of sustainability across the board, from the good management of natural resources to the green economy, from sustainable tourism to education.



## SDGs and Lima Action Plan

Biosphere reserves are territories where models of sustainable development, ideally in all its dimensions, can be developed and strengthened and from which members states can take inspiration to meet the SDGs, explore and test policies, technologies and innovations for the sustainable management of biodiversity and natural resources, as well as the mitigation and adaptation to climate change. The 2017 MAB Youth Forum contributes to the implementation of the Lima Action Plan and fulfils in particular the goal of strengthening and supporting a participatory and inclusive network of all stakeholders within the MAB and biosphere reserves by ensuring a better involvement of youth in the programme and in Biosphere Reserves' governance.

## Contributing to UNESCO Operational Youth Strategy

The forum is conceived as an event that will provide young people with a unique opportunity to meet, debate and share their vision and commitment to sustainable development. The forum is fully aligned with the UNESCO's Operational Strategy on Youth (2014-2021), which aims "to ensure that young women and men are engaged in policies and programmes affecting them, and lead action to promote peace and sustainable development in their countries and communities". Youth are agents of change, social transformation, peace and sustainable development. With about 1.8 billion young people between the ages of 10 and 24, accounting for nearly 25% of the world's population, our planet has the

largest generation of young people in history. Despite narratives that point to young women and men as a challenge, a risk or a burden, this is an opportunity. As such, young women and men are concerned and affected by UNESCO's work, not only as beneficiaries of services and activities but also as actors ready to engage within its initiatives.

## How will the forum pioneer innovation?

Apart from the goals related to the MAB programme, another goal of this forum is to build together with the Social and Human Sciences sector of UNESCO an example of best practice in engaging with Youth, adopting a truly bottom-up approach in listening to them, letting them express their needs and requests and collecting their proposals. In line with the approach adopted for the organisation of the 10th UNESCO Youth Forum (October 2017), the primary aim is to build sustainable relationships with young change-makers that are leading or co-shaping impactful initiatives in a UNESCO field of competence. To discuss things that really matter to young people, the forum has been built around themes to be discussed chosen directly by the participants as a result of online consultations and surveys. The participants are already active in voicing that they want more space in governance, more space and cooperation in research and more occupational opportunities. Young participants will openly discuss with one other to reach a final declaration that should have a real impact on the programme and their lives in the biosphere reserves.

# Bridges



▲ © Airpano - Aerial view of Siena, Italy

## Walled Cities, Open Societies: Managing Historic Walls in urban World Heritage properties

On 26-27 January 2017, the workshop was hosted by the City of Siena and organized by the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe, in cooperation with UNESCO World Heritage Centre. The workshop was structured along diverse thematic panels: Integrating historic walls within management systems; Sustainable use and conservation of historic walls; and, Communicating heritage: New symbolic values for historic walls.

The workshop in Siena, Italy, aimed at promoting the sharing of relevant experience among city managers, scholars/researchers and other relevant practitioners, and at developing their capacities to manage this heritage for the benefit of local communities. Special attention was paid to exploring the links between culture and sustainable development, highlighting how heritage-based innovative approaches can serve urban development and regeneration.

The workshop explored the integration of walled historic cities'

specific built heritage in their urban and socio-economic environment, including the relevant planning and institutional frameworks. It further looked into how modern needs are addressed in a historic setting, through a series of thematic panels and case studies focusing on different links between development issues and heritage values, with special focus on World Heritage walled cities in Europe.

The meeting was an opportunity to strengthen cooperation among participating cities, universities, and other relevant actors, with a view to develop partnerships for promotion, research and innovation, and resource mobilization.

Participants in the workshop were mayors and other representatives of the managing authorities from selected World Heritage cities in Europe, notably city planners; scholars and researchers; World Heritage focal points at country level; together with UNESCO staff and other international resource persons. Participating cities from European and **South-East European countries** included: **Albania;**

The world's urban population represented around 10% of humanity in the beginning of the 20th century, and 50% in the beginning of the 21st century. By 2050, it is expected to nearly double, making urbanization one of the 21st century's most transformative trends. Cultural heritage, in all its forms, either tangible or intangible, is increasingly "urban".

The challenge is presently to build a new development culture and practice, harnessing the digital revolution, based on the regeneration and sustainable use of heritage and cultural assets as part of a new socio-economic, environmental and cultural balance for tomorrow's cities, while addressing social change and transformations. Urban ensembles or cultural heritage within an urban context are one of the most represented categories of properties on the World Heritage List. In many of them, especially in Europe, historic walls either coincide with the inscribed property's boundaries or are included therein.

Historic walls are a meaningful legacy representing the multifaceted relations of towns and cities with the surrounding environment, as well as their layered history, sometimes keeping people in and sometimes out.



▲ © Siena historic walls - family photo, MarkusMark, Sailko, UNESCO, Ligadue

**Croatia;** Estonia; France; **Greece;** **Montenegro;** **Republic of Malta;** **Romania;** Spain; **Turkey** and United Kingdom of Great Britain.

The workshop's concept, programme and background documents were developed with the kind support and cooperation of the Mediterranean Network of UNESCO Chairs, and more specifically: UNESCO Chair in Urban and Regional Planning for Sustainable Local Development (University of Ferrara, Italy); UNESCO Chair in Urban Design and Conservation Studies (Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design, Israel); UNESCO Chair in Heritage and Urban regeneration

(IUAV, Venice, Italy); UNESCO Chair in Management and Promotion of World Heritage Sites: New Media and Community Involvement (Kadir Has University, Istanbul, Turkey); UNESCO Chair in Architectural Preservation and Planning in Heritage Cities (Polytechnic of Milan, Italy).

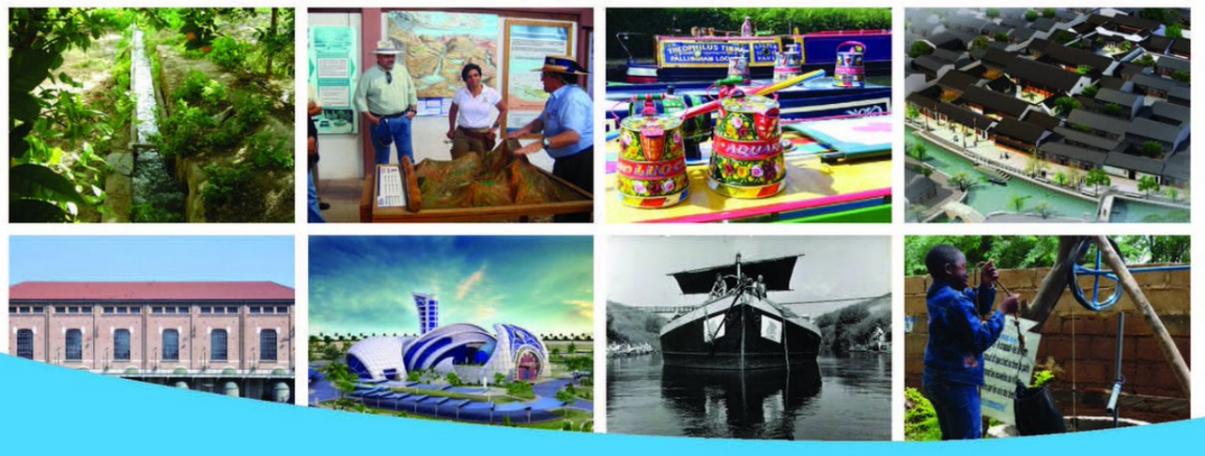
The organization of the meeting was made possible thanks to the generous support of the City of Siena, as well as to the annual contribution of the Government of Italy to the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe. >>full story



▲ © UNESCO - Walled cities, Open Societies

# Towards a Global Network of Water Museums

## A Common Heritage for a Sustainable Future



## Water, a precious and irreplaceable source of life! Towards a Global Network of Water Museums

The International Workshop, "Towards a Global Network of Water Museums: A Common Heritage for a Sustainable Future", took place on 2-4 May 2017 with the aim to strengthen existing Water Museums at a global level. The workshop facilitated the establishment of a formal network among them and increased their communication potential and impact on policy-makers, stakeholders, researchers, educators, and the public at large.

Despite unprecedented technological progress - or perhaps, rather, because of this - water today is increasingly imperiled by climate change, pollution, waste, quality degradation, and even indifference. Within such a context, the Global Network of Water Museums is an initiative addressed to authorities and citizens who believe wholeheartedly in preserving water - whether surface or underground - together with its cultural and historical dimensions, which still

evocatively narrate the special and unique relationship of humanity with this most precious source of life. The need to reinterpret our inherited and multiple "water worlds" is extremely challenging.

The creation of a Global Network of Water Museums gives a valuable impetus to the emergence of new perspectives concerning water sustainability, connecting past and present water uses and management practices with future needs; that is, paving the way for a paradigm change in water management, in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

The workshop was organised in Venice, Italy, by the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe, jointly with the International Hydrological Programme (IHP) and in cooperation with Civiltà dell'Acqua, with the participation of the Water Museum of Venice. The event was also endorsed by the Ca' Foscari University of Venice and The Club

of Rome. On 2 May, the workshop opened most successfully with the participation of the Water Tribunal of Valencia with a public reading of the preamble in 5 languages of the Global Network of Water Museums declaration. The water judges dressed in their black robes on an exceptional basis, as they almost never wear them out of their weekly public audiences before the Apostles' Gate of the Valencia Cathedral. They agreed to wear them on this occasion because they are fully cognizant that their black robes have also become a symbol for traditional irrigators worldwide, in coherence with the significance of the Water Tribunal of Valencia being inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity since 2009.

The workshop revolved around 3 main issues, moving from a description of their possible basic contribution to the network (in terms of communication and educational

The main challenge for the Global Network of Water Museums is to tackle a new sense of water civilization. It is an initiative aimed at calling to authorities and citizens who believe wholeheartedly in preserving all waters, together with their cultural and historical dimensions: those dimensions which still may narrate evocatively the special and unique relationship of humanity with this most precious source of life.

Water Museums represent a unique repository of the different Water Civilizations that have developed around the world historically. Indeed, every civilization has transmitted through generations an invaluable knowledge related to water, including management techniques but also perceptions, attitudes and behaviours. Today Water Museums exhibit and interpret an outstanding water heritage, both tangible and intangible, made of artefacts, techniques, and oral knowledge passed down from generation to generation.

Such a common heritage of humanity is in danger of disappearing under the homogenizing effects of globalization and technocratic approaches, led by the

dominant simplistic perceptions of what "water" is and means: from terraced fields and oases, to waterways and traditional boats for inland navigation; from ancient aqueducts, fountains and rain harvesting artefacts, to water mills, and other proto-industrial and archaeological sites.

The need to reinterpret our inherited and multiple "water worlds" for a new vision concerning water management

is extremely challenging. In this frame, the creation of a Global Network of Water Museums could give a valuable impetus to the emergence of truly new perspectives concerning water sustainability, connecting past and present water uses and management practices with future needs; that is, paving the way for a paradigm change in water management which is in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. [...]

Preamble



Towards a Global Network of Water Museums - Public reading of the preamble

potential) towards a discussion and further elaboration of ideas on how to build the network among the participating Water Museums and, finally, on which activities could be jointly promoted in the near future. As a source of inspiration for such elaborations, the participants explored the new itineraries of the Water Museum of Venice via field visits.

The workshop facilitated an exchange of experiences and good practices among water museums having common features and/or issues to address such as water resources management for civil, industrial and agricultural uses, climate change, education, etc. Skills, management abilities and knowledge of Water Museums will be similarly strengthened with a

view to enhancing their managerial and communication capacities and addressing the current emerging challenges for more sustainable water uses. Participants formalized the commitment to provide the network with the necessary coordinating mechanism and tools, particularly through a worldwide online platform. >>full story



Towards a Global Network of Water Museums - field trips



UNESCO Global Geoparks - Canada

## Strengthening regional cooperation through first meeting of UNESCO Global Geoparks in South-East Europe

Under the auspices of the UNESCO Global Geoparks programme, the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe and the Idrija Global Geopark jointly convened the workshop of UNESCO Global Geoparks in South-East Europe. The event was held on 19-21 April 2017 in Idrija, Slovenia, and organized with the support of the Slovenian National Commission for UNESCO to share experiences and present best practices and lessons learnt of UNESCO Global Geoparks in the region.

UNESCO Global Geoparks are geological heritage areas internationally recognized for implementing sustainable development strategies where the local population cooperates to protect the natural surroundings and care for rural development. They include geological heritage sites of international importance, having significant aesthetic value and educational importance.

UNESCO Global Geoparks also encompass other natural, cultural and intangible heritage values including archaeological, historical, technical and other cultural assets. Through the UNESCO Global Geoparks network, areas of global

value and rich geodiversity gain worldwide recognition and benefit from the exchange of knowledge for the protection and promotion of geological heritage.

In locations where UNESCO Global Geoparks have been set up, there are excellent examples of best practices which are reflected in the preservation of priceless geological and other natural heritage and economic development areas.

There are many areas of the world without an established UNESCO Global Geopark or areas where only a small number has been established. This is the case of **South-East Europe**, Africa, North and South America, where awareness of the importance of preserving and promoting geological heritage is often found to be lacking.

As a result, UNESCO is working hard to promote and further develop the UNESCO Global Geoparks concept in these areas and the upcoming SEE regional workshop is aimed at precisely that. It intends to serve as a forum for sharing experiences, presenting best practices/lessons learnt and outlining a common strategy for implementing the proposed International Geoscience

and Geoparks Programme (IGGP) in South-East Europe. It also anticipates helping to strengthen the concept of UNESCO Global Geoparks Network and, as far as SEE is concerned, the European Geoparks Network (EGN) and its joint activities in this region.

The workshop took the form of an open platform in which pre-determined issues were debated. Some of these topics for discussion included the contribution of Geoparks to local community development; what are the various designations of UNESCO (World Heritage sites, Biosphere Reserves, UNESCO Global Geoparks) and possible strategies to bring those designations to work better together, in particular when they overlap, the promotion of new Global Geoparks designations, and the development and launching of a platform for sharing/exchange of best practices and lessons learnt.

The workshop brought together representatives from ministries, research institutions, local development agencies and national/natural park authorities from **Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Montenegro, Republic of Moldova,**



▲ © Geopark Idrija - On the third day, the participants went on a field trip to the Idrija Geopark to learn about the geology of the area and the Idrija Fault in the Oblakov Vrh village. The local people of Kanomlja presented the Šturmajce homestead and the activities of the locals within the Idrija Geopark and beyond its borders.

**Romania, Serbia, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey.**

Participants have identified a strong interest in sharing and discussing

best practices developed by UNESCO Global Geoparks in South-East Europe, concerning mainly the preservation and promotion of their geological and related natural / cultural heritage, in a sustainable

regional development perspective; or, establishing new UNESCO Global Geoparks in their territories. [>>full story](#)

## Open conference: UNESCO MAB Programme for Protected Areas. Benefits and Perspectives

The PAFOS 2017 Open conference: UNESCO MAB Programme for Protected Areas. Benefits and Perspectives Humans and Nature Together for Sustainable Development took place on 24 February 2017 in Droushia, Cyprus. The event, with the participation of the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe, had a European dimension in terms of participation and hosted a large number of people from the Akamas' local communities and other stakeholders.



© PAFOS 2017

The conference in **Cyprus** introduced the benefits and the perspectives for the regions that are designated as UNESCO Biosphere Reserves, highlighting the dynamic relationship between people and nature in the biosphere reserves and how it contributes to the sustainable development of communities. Representatives from the UNESCO Biosphere Reserves in **Greece**, also participated in the conference presenting their biosphere reserves, the management and good practices, aiming to conserve the natural and human environment and to support the local sustainable development.

Two important contributions to the conference were made by **Italy**, the one from the relatively new biosphere reserve, Collina Po (2016), near Torino, which includes 85 municipalities and 1.5 million inhabitants and the new biosphere reserve "Tepilora, Posada and Montalbo" in Sardinia. The Italian experts highlighted the philosophy of modern UNESCO Biosphere Reserves, that is all about the cooperation between human and nature for the sustainable development of the areas, through a well-organized action plan, which aims at preserving the natural and human environment and also the

economic growth and prosperity of the people of the areas designated as MAB and included in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The conference was organized under the auspices of the Cyprus National Commission for UNESCO and supported by the Department of Environment, the Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development MIO-ECSDE and the EEC of Salamiou – Network of Environmental Education Centres - Pedagogical Institute, Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture. [>>full story](#)



▲ © PAFOS 2017 - MAB Programme for Protected Areas. Benefits and Perspectives



© Ilyndayr - Skanderbeg Square, Tirana

## Promoting culture in South-East Europe, a shared driver for integration and sustainable development

**The Council of Ministers of Culture of South-East Europe ‘Enhancing Culture for Sustainable Development’ (CoMoCoSEE) held its annual meeting on 21-22 February 2017 in Tirana, Albania. Ministers and heads of delegations fully confirmed their commitment to regional cooperation in the field of culture according to the priorities and action lines defined by the Ohrid Regional Strategy for Cultural cooperation and approved a declaration supporting its further implementation.**

Convened within the framework of the Albanian presidency of the CoMoCoSEE, the meeting was opened by the Minister of Culture of **Albania**, Mirela Kumbaro Furxhi. In representation of UNESCO, Ana Luiza Thompson-Flores, Director of the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and in Culture in Europe addressed the participants, following a video message sent by Irina Bokova, UNESCO Director-General.

*“Thankfully, the time when culture was sidelined in strategies for development has ended. We see a complete change of perspective today, recognising culture and creativity as enablers and drivers of jobs, and skills, and green growth. Together, we worked hard - raising awareness, providing evidence - to integrate this power at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable*

*Development - and this was taken further in the New Urban Agenda, adopted at the Habitat III Conference in Quito last October.”* In her message, Irina Bokova conveyed that the countries of South-East Europe have been on the frontline of such transformation. UNESCO is deeply grateful for the leadership and commitment of this region, and it will continue supporting the efforts of CoMoCoSEE.

The Prime Minister of Albania, Edi Rama, made an intervention in the opening session. In his address, he stressed that *“beauty is necessary for establishing a correct relation with the law and it has a positive impact on sustainable development”*. He highlighted the importance of investing in cultural heritage, as cultural heritage is not only a driver for sustainable economic growth but also an enabler for responsible civil behavior. Evidence in this sense is provided by the impact of the

government’s programme on urban renaissance in Albania. The EU Ambassador to Albania, Romana Vlahutin, echoed in underlining the chief role of culture and cultural heritage for development, especially with regard to tourism promotion and the improvement of the country image.

*“Cultural heritage should be preserved as a testimony of cultural identity. Heritage can drive sustainable tourism and local economic growth”,* said ambassador Vlahutin. She further stressed that the European Union has already provided substantial support for heritage rehabilitation in the region and will continue to do so. A plenary session followed with speeches by the Ministers and heads of delegations of the CoMoCoSEE Member States: **Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Montenegro, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia,**



▲ © CoMoCoSEE - Speech of the Director of UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe

**Slovenia, and Turkey.** Representatives of Observers - among which UNESCO, the European Union and the Council of Europe also attended the meeting as well as guests Italy and BSEC ( Black Sea Economic Cooperation).

The third ministerial conference in Tirana aimed mainly at strengthening regional cooperation in the field of culture and development, boosting cultural heritage and creativity as drivers for sustainable development and regional integration. On the agenda was the need to pursue the efforts in reinforcing coordination at all levels between cultural and other sectorial policies, in order to achieve the Goals of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. All ministers and heads of delegation of the CoMoCoSEE Member States confirmed their commitment priorities and action lines indicated in the Ohrid Strategy (approved in 2014 by CoMoCoSEE) and declared in writing support to its implementation.



© CoMoCoSEE

The fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property - in, from and through the region – was indicated as a top priority for the protection of cultural heritage, and the need for a reinforced coordination, capacity building and awareness raising was confirmed. Other priority topics included the enhancement of the

role of culture for development and the importance of the Culture for Development Indicators (CDIS) to this end, education through and for the arts and, the necessity to develop intersectoral cooperation between culture and other policy areas. [>>full story](#)

## Process of management plan development and of its application to preserve the Old City of Dubrovnik



▲ © Joanne Goldby - Dubrovnik

The workshop titled *“The process of management plan development and application”* was held in Dubrovnik on 3-5 February 2017 by the Institute for Restoration of Dubrovnik, under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture of Croatia and the Croatian Commission for UNESCO, with the support of the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe. As a direct follow up to the joint 2015 UNESCO/ICOMOS Reactive

**Monitoring mission to the Old City of Dubrovnik, it aimed to support the country’s efforts to implement the recommendations made and to ensure longstanding preservation and management of the World Heritage property.**

Inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1979, the Old City of Dubrovnik in **Croatia** is known as the ‘Pearl of the Adriatic’. The property was inscribed

on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 1991 and then removed from that list in 1998. In 1994, it was extended to include areas outside the city walls. The 2015 mission report issued recommendations to the State Party and the World Heritage Committee on development proposals and on ways to further improve the conservation and management of the property.

In attendance were a number of experts from other World Heritage properties - Edinburgh, Graz, Bruges, Bordeaux and Berlin - who shared their international experience and high expertise about processes and execution of management and action plans. Participants recognized the importance of recent proposals for the modification of the boundaries of the buffer zone, with particular reference to the Historic Urban Landscape Recommendation. Principles and key points further underlined the necessity to elaborate the Management and Action Plans for the Old City of Dubrovnik. [>>full story](#)



© Museum of Republic of Spaka - Zmijanje embroidery

## Experts network discussed funding for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in South-East Europe

On 27-28 June 2017, experts in representation of the ministries of Culture of 13 countries in the region, altogether with UNESCO specialists, met in Sarajevo to share experiences on the implementation of the 2003 Convention. While this year the focus of the meeting of the South-East European Experts Network on Intangible Cultural Heritage was resource mobilization, fund raising and partnerships for the sustainability of safeguarding efforts, it continued to deepen the network's longstanding commitment towards regional cooperation on intangible cultural heritage.

The South-East European Experts Network on Intangible Cultural Heritage was established in 2007 with the support of UNESCO, in order to support the implementation of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) in South-East Europe. Meetings of the network took place on an annual basis in Arbanasi, **Bulgaria** (June 2007); Safranbolu, **Turkey**

(May 2008); Zagreb, **Croatia**, April 2009, Râmnicu-Vâlcea, **Romania** (May 2010); Belgrade, **Serbia** (May 2011); Athens, **Greece** (May 2012); Sofia, **Bulgaria** (May 2013); Limassol, **Cyprus** (May 2014); Venice, **Italy** (June 2015); and, Supetar, **Croatia** (June 2016).

Since its establishment, upon the initiative of UNESCO, the Experts Network is the main forum on intangible cultural heritage in South-East Europe. Over the years, it has greatly contributed to the promotion of intangible cultural heritage within the region and to the development of capacities for its safeguarding, with an emphasis on sharing experiences, good practices and lessons learned on the implementation of the 2003 Convention. The South-East European Experts Network on Intangible Cultural Heritage aims also at fostering regional cooperation among participating countries, including on the identification and safeguarding of shared intangible cultural heritage elements.

This new edition of the Experts Network meeting was organized

in **Bosnia and Herzegovina** by the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe in cooperation with the State Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the National Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina for UNESCO, with the support of the Regional Centre for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in South-Eastern Europe under the auspices of UNESCO, based in Sofia (Bulgaria).

The first day of the meeting was devoted to an update on the developments in the implementation of the 2003 Convention at both international and country levels. The second day funnelled the discussion into funding, resource mobilization and financial sustainability of intangible cultural heritage safeguarding.

Invited to participate in the meeting were experts representing the ministries of Culture and/or other relevant authorities of the Member States of the Council of Ministers of Culture of South-East Europe - Enhancing Culture for Sustainable Development (CoMoCoSEE), namely:

**Albania; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Bulgaria, Croatia; Greece; Republic of Moldova; Romania; Serbia; Slovenia;**

**The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; and, Turkey.** Experts representing relevant authorities

from Austria, Cyprus, Hungary, Italy and Malta were also invited as observers. >>full story



© UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage - Traditional wall-carpet craftsmanship in Romania and the Republic of Moldova

## Needs-assessment completed to strengthen the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in the Republic of Moldova

**The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage was ratified in the Republic of Moldova in 2006. What is the status of its implementation now? How effective are the policies and infrastructure in place for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage? How could the country further benefit from the provisions of the Convention and existing opportunities at the national and international levels?**

A needs assessment conducted in November 2016 by UNESCO, in close cooperation with the Ministry of Culture, addressed these and many other questions. The survey was implemented by the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe, within the framework of the workplan for the annual Italian government's contribution to the bureau.

The needs assessment provided an in-depth analysis of legislative and policy frameworks in the field of intangible cultural heritage, institutional infrastructure, past and current inventorying efforts, as well as how effectively intangible cultural heritage safeguarding is integrated into education in the Republic of Moldova.

The final report highlighted a number of challenges encountered

by the country at the national and local levels in implementing the Convention and formulated the main needs for the efficient safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage.

The assessment proposed a tentative multi-year action plan focusing on capacity building, community-based inventorying, preparing safeguarding plans and strengthening the role of intangible cultural heritage in education. In the light of the Republic of Moldova's National Strategy for Cultural Development,

"Culture-2020", which is part of the National Development Strategy "Moldova 2020", the action plan recommends revising the national policies linked to intangible cultural heritage, particularly in the domain of traditional crafts.

This report will allow national counterparts in the Republic of Moldova to improve upon the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and consider different funding opportunities to implement the action plan.

>>full story



© UNESCO - traditional wall-carpet craftsmanship in Romania and the Republic of Moldova





© G7 2017 Italia - Culture as dialogue



© G7 2017 Italia - Culture as dialogue - Family photo

## G7 highlighted the power of heritage for peace in meeting on culture

UNESCO Director-General, Irina Bokova, participated in the G7 Culture Ministers' meeting held on 30-31 March 2017 in Florence. G7 Members adopted a common "Florence Declaration" recognizing the distinctive role of culture as an instrument for dialogue, reconciliation and response to emergency situations. Members of the G7 underlined here the importance of a common and coordinated action to strengthen the safeguarding of cultural heritage.

The G7 Meeting came less than a week after the historic adoption of the UN Security Council 2347/2017 on the Protection of Cultural Heritage in the event of Armed Conflict. An initiative by France and Italy that marked a major new step, reflecting a new bold vision of the links between peace and heritage. "In the times we live in, we need to drastically strengthen international coordination in the field of culture," said Dario Franceschini, Italian Minister of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism at the opening of the ministerial session, highlighting the role of creative industries to foster economic growth and the importance of intercultural understanding to combat mistrust, hatred and prevent conflicts.

"I would like to thank Italy for its tireless efforts to raise awareness on the destruction of cultural heritage among the international community," said the Director-General of UNESCO. "The deliberate

destruction of heritage is a war crime - it has become a tactic of war, to undermine societies, to paralyze communities, to spread hatred, to fuel revenge, in a global strategy of cultural cleansing," she declared. "This is unacceptable and it calls for stronger and appropriate responses. Defending cultural heritage is more than a cultural issue -- it is a security imperative, inseparable from that of defending human lives."

The Florence Declaration, adopted by the G7 Culture Ministers, expresses strong support for UNESCO's role in promoting the protection and preservation of cultural heritage and welcomed measures already taken to counter violent extremism and raise awareness, such as the #Unite4Heritage campaign. It also affirmed the leadership role of UNESCO in coordination of international efforts within its mandate to protect cultural heritage, working closely with

Member States and relevant international organizations.

UNESCO experts also joined the G7 technical sessions, focused on international regulations, procedures and education models aimed at the protection of cultural heritage. UNESCO stressed the legal and

practical framework of UNESCO's Culture Conventions in the context of public and private law, as well as the role of national and international courts, underscoring the 2016 ruling by the International Criminal Court against Al-Mahdi for the destruction of mausoleums in Timbuktu. He said it was imperative to unify

the international legal framework and increase the ratifications of the international treaties. Legal, security and museum experts reviewed preventive measures including databases and information sharing, as well as the effectiveness of specialized police forces in the context of organized crime. >>full story

## UNESCO Director-General showcased UNITE4HERITAGE at G7 Culture

On 30-31 March 2017, UNESCO Director-General, Irina Bokova, was in Florence, Italy, for the Meeting of the Ministers of Culture of the Members of the G7 Countries (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and the United States), held under the theme "Culture as a Tool for Dialogue among Peoples"

defending culture is inseparable from the protection of human lives.

Dedicated to the protection of cultural heritage, and the prevention of illicit trafficking, this meeting also aims at bringing to the global attention the power of culture as a driver for integration, peace building and sustainable development.

#Unite4Heritage campaign in 2015 in Baghdad, in response to the unprecedented attacks on heritage.

UNESCO and Italy then launched the "Task Force Unite4heritage" to intervene in emergency situations to secure cultural heritage and counter illegal trafficking. Created as a movement to protect and safeguard



Held in the wake of the historic adoption of the UN Security Council Resolution 2347/2017 on the Protection of Cultural Heritage in the event of Armed Conflict, this meeting was an opportunity to reiterate that

The G7 meeting also showcased the campaign #Unite4Heritage, UNESCO's global movement that aims to celebrate and safeguard cultural heritage and diversity around the world. The Director-General first launched

heritage under threat, the initiative has turned into a global call to reclaim the importance of heritage as a platform to promote mutual understanding and as a tool to fight violent extremism. >>full story

© UNESCO - UNITE4HERITAGE



© SDG Conference in Sarajevo

## Towards creating a world with equal rights and opportunities for all

The Dialogue Platform Conference on Sustainable Development Goals held in Sarajevo on 3 April 2017 was the fourth in a series of events organised as part of the Dialogue for the Future Programme, under the auspices of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The conference dedicated to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals in **Bosnia and Herzegovina** was organized by the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the United Nations in the country. The implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the importance of the commitment by a country to fully assume the responsibility for the goals were on focus. The conference was attended by the Special Representative of the European Union in Bosnia and Herzegovina, ambassadors of Germany, Switzerland, Sweden, the Special Envoy for the Sustainable Development Goals, the Minister of Defense, as well as the representatives from all levels of government, local entrepreneurs and representatives of civil society organizations.

Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mladen Ivanić, stressed that issues of sustainable development must animate all the spheres of society - the public and private sectors, as well as the non-governmental organizations and civil society. "The Presidency of Bosnia and

*Herzegovina obliged the Council of Ministers at the beginning of the year, together with the entity governments, to create a proposal of the strategy for sustainable development within Bosnia and Herzegovina, but these things still do not attract sufficient attention and obviously a lot more effort is devoted to other things, rather than actually substantive issues. It (the strategy) should be an example and a guiding principle for a community or a country to follow and a way to come closer to generally acceptable standards in the rest of the world.*" he said. Mladen Ivanić underlined that "this document should be a concept for the country and the direction it is taking and how to achieve the generally accepted standards in the world and that this is a global agenda that every country should follow in order to develop". He expressed his satisfaction with the fact that the United Nations in Bosnia and Herzegovina organized the conference and thus put pressure on the authorities to carry out this process.

UN Resident Coordinator in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sezin Sinanoglu,



reminded that in 2015 the member states of the UN adopted the 2030 Agenda, which was formulated through 17 goals of sustainable development as a new global framework in which economic, social and environmental elements are integrated in a comprehensive development strategy. Bosnia and Herzegovina has accepted all of these goals in 2015, thus becoming a party to this agenda.

*"2030 Agenda and its 17 targets represent the Agenda of Hope, which should contribute to eradicating poverty, reducing*

*hunger in the world, better environmental protection, addressing climate change, and should lead to significant partnerships for achieving these goals throughout the world",* Sezin Sinanoglu said.

UN Resident Coordinator explained that these 17 goals should contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in the country, as the people must be informed and familiar about the Sustainable Development Goals, while initiating action throughout the sectors of society, governmental and non-governmental organizations, civil

and private sector, so that all work together in partnership. She pointed out that these goals are not important only for underdeveloped but also for the developed countries.

The 2030 Agenda is the most comprehensive and most diverse agenda of this kind the world has ever had. It is an agenda that deals with the economic sector, but also environmental and social challenges, and most importantly, that it integrates issues of peace, stability and good government and good governance. >>full story

## Best postcards from the future on the International Day of Happiness



**United Nations Country Team in Bosnia and Herzegovina presented awards for the best art works in the contest "Postcards from the Future", as part of the promotion of Sustainable Development Goals.**

The youngest award-winning author is 7-year-old Fatima Kadić, whose vision of the future is a world without divisions. "I wish that my friends could go to school together. We get together and we play together, until we have to go to school where we are separated in class", said Fatima, accepting her award. The award ceremony

at the National Museum marked the end of competition, during which more than 200 visions of the future were sent to the UN Team by authors from all over **Bosnia and Herzegovina**. The authors of the awarded art works are Fatima Kadić from Jablanica, Ermina Resić (Sarajevo), Darija Malešević (Banja Luka) and Dino Vejzović (Mostar). The award grants were presented to the winners by the UNESCO Antenna in Sarajevo, the World Health Organization, UNICEF in BiH, and the General Association of Artists and Applied Arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina. >>full story

© UN in Bosnia and Herzegovina

## Albania launched SDG4-Education 2030 and Education Policy Review

# Education 2030



© UN in Albania

On 12 April 2017, the Ministry of Education and Sport and the Institute of Educational Development (IED), in cooperation with UNESCO and UNICEF launched Sustainable Development Goal 4-Education 2030 and the Education Policy Review report. The event aimed to promote awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In particular, the event focused on SDG4-Education 2030, which aims to 'ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all'.

During the event, the report of an Education Policy Review conducted by UNESCO team, at the request of the Ministry of Education and Sport, was presented. The report identifies major policy issues and makes recommendations based on the analysis of 3 key policy domains: curriculum development and reform; information and communication technologies in education; and teacher and school leadership policies.

The report recommends further professional development of teachers for the implementation of the curriculum reform in areas such as student assessment, meeting the needs of disadvantaged learners, and ICTs for educational purposes. The report advises increasing Internet connectivity, especially in rural areas, and improving online safety for children. Measures to raise the status of the teaching profession and to

attract high quality applicants to initial teacher education are also suggested. Overall, cross-cutting recommendations in the report include improving communication, promoting inclusive education, strengthening institutions, and enhancing monitoring and evaluation.

UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Education, Qian Tang, commended Albania for holding the event: 'Today's event is about fostering a shared, long-term vision for quality education and lifelong learning in Albania that leaves no one behind. The Education Policy Review is intended to support Albania through an evidence-based and analytical approach to education sector development that refers to international experience. Governments have the primary responsibility to deliver on SDG 4. UNESCO, in its role of leading and coordinating the Education 2030 agenda, is committed to supporting them.'

"UNICEF calls on the Government to boost progress towards the SDG

on education. SDG 4 recognizes that learning should begin early. Critically, the targets appeal for accessible and quality education for all children – whether girl, boy, child with disability, Roma child or any children living in a vulnerable situation." - said UNICEF Representative, Antonella Scolamiero.

Minister of Education and Sport, Lindita Nikolla, expressed her gratitude to UNESCO and UNICEF for their continuous and substantive support to Education in Albania regarding the review of education policies and the meeting of its Strategic Goals. There are many problems and challenges, as well as a lot of demands that our society places on education in Albania. In response to them, the ministry of education, in the last four years, is carrying out a deep, bold and multidimensional reform that includes all aspects and levels of pre-university education, starting from early childhood to high education.

The objectives and approach of this reform is in line with SDG4-Education 2030. Being aware of the



work to be done, Minister Nikolla expresses the commitment of the Government of Albania to education as an absolute priority, as well as her personal commitment as a minister of education to do her best, in order to create the needed synergy of all actors in this direction.

The Minister said to be confident that this activity will contribute to the improvement of policy dialogue between all actors in Albania, as an expression of the responsibility

of everyone for the prosperity of education and for harmonizing all energies for this purpose.

The UN Resident Coordinator in Albania, Brian Williams, congratulated the government of Albania for its focus on Sustainable Development Goal 4 to achieve inclusive and equitable education as well as for launching the drafting a SDG baseline report for Albania, critical for deterring gaps and priorities. >>full story



## Serbia Country Development Partnership Framework 2016-2020

On behalf of the Government of Serbia, First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ivica Dacic and the UN Resident Coordinator in Serbia Karla Robin Hershey signed the Development Partnership Framework between Serbia and the United Nations Country Team for the period 2016 to 2020.



©Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of Serbia

The document is a comprehensive basis for the cooperation and assistance of the UN system, including 19 UN agencies, funds and programmes, aimed at encouraging and improving the overall economic, social and environmental development of Serbia. The Development Partnership Framework is fully aligned with the national development priorities, with the process of accession negotiations of Serbia and the European Union and the UN Agenda for sustainable development by 2030. With its 5 pillars and 9 outcomes to be achieved by 2020, the Development Partnership Framework is a of

road map for further promotion of good governance and the rule of law, development of social and human resources, economic development, growth and employment, environmental protection, fight against climate change and building resilient communities, and integrating culture into the overall process of sustainable development. At the signing ceremony, both sides expressed expectations that the framework will give a new impetus to the joint efforts to further promote cooperation between Serbia with the UN system. >>full story

## Ark of Inquiry webinar on inquiry learning in science classrooms

A webinar on Inquiry Based Science Education and Responsible Research and Innovation is scheduled to take place in September 2017 as part of the Ark of Inquiry project. The UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe has invited participants from South-East Europe to register.



©University College Leuven - Secondary school students

With the support of the UNESCO ASPnet Programme, the webinar mostly targets to engage teachers of pupils aged 7-18 years.

Besides Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) and Inquiry Based Science Education (IBSE), the webinar will cover the project's inquiry learning model, access to the portal which has over 700 vetted inquiry activities, and resources and training that allow participants to customise these inquiry activities to address diverse learning needs.

The webinar is mostly suited to primary and secondary school

science educators; yet it is also an opportunity for other interested education professionals from the region. To accommodate teachers' schedules at the beginning of the school year, the webinar will be offered live over 2 consecutive days: Day 1. 6 September 2017 and Day 2. 21 September 2017 with a duration each of 2 hours.

Interested science teachers may also partner with English-language teachers at their school for the training, too. Each webinar has a capacity of 100 participants only. >>full story

## Extension of FLOODIS system to deliver alerts and interactive maps on flooding risk/events on mobile devices



UNESCO, through its Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe, is contributing to strengthening the resilience of member states in South-East Europe by increasing their disaster risk reduction capacity. This is in line with the UN Sendai framework for action and in synergy with related UNESCO and UN programmes along with main European Union initiatives and projects in the region.

Within this overarching scope, UNESCO seized the opportunity, offered by the "Government of Albania-UN Programme of Cooperation 2012-2016", provided by the Delivering Results Together Fund (DRTF), to design and implement - in close cooperation with the GDCE (General Directorate for Civil Emergencies) of Albania, CIMA Research Foundation and Istituto Superiore Mario Boella (ISMB) - a set of activities for flood risk reduction based upon innovative solutions developed under the

EU-funded project FLOODIS. Addressing the implementation of the EU Floods Directive 2007/60/EC in Albania, FLOODIS encouraged the development of policies and provided technical assistance necessary to strengthen early warning and flood monitoring systems promoting the national framework for disaster risk reduction.

The FLOODIS project, implemented with UNESCO as a partner, was developed to provide disaster alert and information system, leveraging on existing mobile communication assets for emergency response teams and affected citizens.

In particular, the promising outcomes generated in the aftermath of the testing/evaluation phase both in Italy and in Albania, at the close of the project, encouraged all stakeholders involved to devise a second phase, under the appellation FLOODIS II, with the aim of interfacing the DEWETRA platform - a real-time integrated system for hydro-meteorological and wildfire risk forecasting, monitoring

and prevention in use in Albania - with FLOODIS-derived application. The proposed solution was successfully designed and tested against the untackled challenge of closing critical gaps in the local management of hydrogeological extreme events. In particular, attention was paid to interconnect stakeholders allowing a swift information exchange during emergencies, increasing coordination and communication capacities of National, Prefectural and Municipal levels.

The main results of FLOODIS II enable the accessibility and dissemination of environmental and risk related information, thanks to a location-based application (FLOODIS) and a WebGIS platform (DEWETRA) which provide: a) an open source location-based smartphone application for the public and for local flood-assessment teams. This increases the capacity of the Civil Protection System to identify and monitor the extent of floods, thus, allowing

individuals and institutions to take precautionary actions reducing the likelihood of human and economic loss; b) specific provisions at the disaster risk reduction policy level, to leverage to its fullest potential the above-mentioned technical components.

This is particularly relevant when revising local governance settings, in the form of local emergency plans. Those should recollect operative standards and procedures in an

ordered and easy-to-use way. To this end, FLOODIS II proposed practical solutions adoptable by the Albanian Civil Protection system which could strengthen the real time alerting and situational awareness components.

The latter point includes Standard Operative Procedures (SOPs) for the engagement and deployment of trained municipal assessment teams, either official staff or professional volunteers, assigned with field reporting tasks. The

human factor here becomes again crucial, since trained and registered operators are required to feed the Emergency Operation Centre with highly valuable information on the unfolding of the event. This information may be used to organize preventive measures at Municipal, Prefectural and National level. The whole DEWETRA/FLOODIS system is, then, able to monitor and support decision makers, mitigating adverse effects of an emergency. >>full story

*FLOODIS (Integrating GMES Emergency Services with satellite navigation and communication for establishing a flood information service), a collaborative European Community project, led by ISMB based in Turin with the participation of UNESCO, and funded under the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7-SPACE-2013-1), ran from 2013 to 2015.*

## I-REACT teams up with International Sava River Commission and World Meteorological Organization to reduce disaster risks

Over the last 3 decades, the number of climate-related disasters around the world has reached an unprecedented level. Only in the past 10 years, extreme events caused 700,000 deaths and costed up to 1,7 trillion dollars worldwide. Climate change is estimated to increase the likelihood of events, such as floods and wild fires. I-REACT, Improving Resilience to Emergencies through advanced cyber technologies, steps up for disaster risk reduction. That is why UNESCO is supporting it, in assistance of member states, to further strengthen their capacity in identifying, monitoring and dealing with hazards as well as preparing for them via early warning systems.

On 13-15 June 2017, Slovenia hosted two meetings in Ljubljana. During the first meeting on "Improvement of joint Actions in Flood Management in the Sava River", UNESCO, ISMB (I-REACT project leader) and the International Sava River Commission discussed how to join forces in the new Early Warning system for floods funded by the World Bank. The purpose was to build a transboundary-shared regime for floods and drought risks in the entire Sava area where hydraulic models, data and methods are harmonized in a common platform at the service of the riparian member states. Different opportunities of collaboration were



explored, including the possibility to integrate modular solutions of I-REACT, in particular geolocalised crowdsourcing services into the Sava River flood forecasting and Warning System (Sava FFWS). A joint workshop will be convened with the International Sava River Basin Commission to bond early warning alerts triggered by the meteorological units with monitoring and response actions provided by emergency responders.

The second event, hosted by the World Meteorological Organization and sponsored by the US Agency for International Development (USAID),

focused on the first conclusive phase of the South-East European Multi-Hazard Early Warning Advisory System (SEE-MHEWS-A) Project. This is a large joint initiative for improving meteorological, hydrological and marine forecasting, through the enhancement of modelling, nowcasting, ICT infrastructure and data provision. I-REACT will potentially contribute with novel products and services, in particular through geolocalised crowdsourcing services. >> full story



*I-REACT (Improving Resilience to Emergencies through Advanced Cyber Technologies) is a Horizon2020 3-year project (2016-2018) involving a consortium of 20 partners. The project will integrate multiple existing systems and European assets to facilitate early planning of disaster risk reduction activities. The focus will be on natural disasters triggered by extreme weather.*

The high-level United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development was convened at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 5 to 9 June 2017, coinciding with the World Oceans Day, to support the implementation of SDG 14.



## The Ocean we need for the future we want. UNESCO at New York Conference



On 5 June 2017, the United Nations Ocean Conference opened in New York, USA, gathering stakeholders from across the world in support of the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 on the conservation and use of the oceans, seas and marine resources. It also provided the opportunity for UN-Oceans, the coordination mechanism involving all UN agencies working on ocean issues, to review its achievements and discuss future steps.

The side event “Ocean in the 2030 Agenda: UN-Oceans harbouring SDG 14” triggered an interactive discussion among representatives of UN-Oceans member organizations, Governments and other relevant actors on the role that this inter-agency mechanism could play in the implementation of SDG 14 and other ocean-related targets and indicators.

As the only organization within the UN system with an ocean science mandate, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO plays a major role within this mechanism. Ocean science is important in advancing all aspects of SDG 14, as reflected in SDG target 14.a which calls nations to “increase scientific knowledge, develop research capacity and transfer of marine technology (...)” and for which UNESCO’s IOC - the custodian agency - is expected to keep track of implementation. “We need to invest massively in science and research

immediately and this effort must be made collectively – all Governments and partners must share knowledge to craft common science-based policies. Within their own remit, UN-Oceans members would benefit from a global effort on ocean science and technology, and ultimately ensure that their Member States are equally informed by scientific knowledge,” IOC Executive Secretary said.

Participants considered the role that UN-Oceans members could play, acting as “one”. All concerned UN agencies were invited to rally behind the IOC Member States’ proposal to make 2021-2030 the International Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. “Sustained and global ocean science and observation is absolutely necessary to understand the impact of changing climate, to assess regional vulnerability, and to monitor the efficacy of adaptation and mitigation efforts,” he explained.

The debate concluded on the benefits that could derive from the adoption of the UN Ocean Conference “Call for Action” to enhance inter-agency cooperation and policy action: inventory of marine resources, knowledge-sharing and capacity-building of Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries, better quantitative knowledge of the ocean bottom and water column ecosystems, and better understanding of cumulative stressors on the ocean. >>full story



IOC29 has approved #OceanScienceDecade (2021-2030), key step toward the ocean we need for the future we want. Now to @UN General Assembly!

## UNESCO with Ocean Champions to take forward SDG 14

On 6 June 2017, UNESCO Director-General, Irina Bokova, also participated in a high-level event during the UN Ocean Conference in New York, entitled “Ocean’s 8 Celebration”, in reference to 8 key elements of ocean science, such as innovative financing, gender equality, and education and outreach in ocean science. The event opened with a ceremony honouring major national investments in each of the 8 categories.

Co-hosting the event with Iceland and Peru, with the support of Peter Thomson, President of the UN General Assembly, UNESCO Director-General recognized the 8 nations making the greatest contribution towards building the capacity in global ocean science needed to achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14. “Together we have achieved a lot



to promote and finance ocean science,” declared Irina Bokova highlighting that more needs to be done to fill the ocean science capacity gaps. “We need an action-oriented global partnership across all pillars of ocean science”. She invited all participants to join UNESCO in calling for 2021-2030 to become the International

Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and provide governments, the scientific community, civil society and all other actors with a framework for coordinating and consolidating observations and research to achieve SDG14.>>full story

## Ocean Literacy for All : sustaining SDG 14 through Ocean Science Education and Ocean Literacy

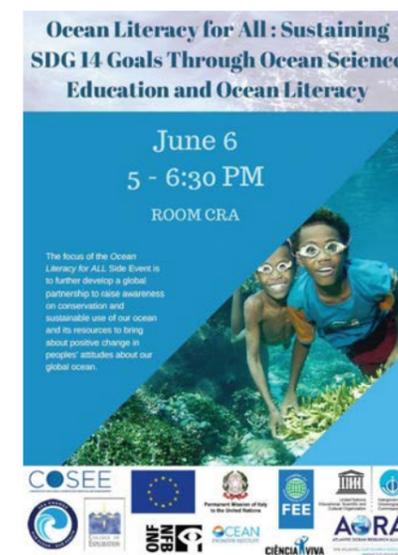
The 6 June side event to the Ocean Conference in New York fostered ocean awareness and ocean science education in all segments of society. It was organised building on existing regional, national and international ocean science education initiatives, such as those carried forward by the Sea Change project, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO, the International Consortium for Ocean Science Exploration and Engagement, the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance and the European and Asian Association of Marine Educators.

The side event on “Ocean Literacy for All” aimed to encourage cooperation and best practice exchange related to ocean science education, resulting in improved ocean literacy; to raise awareness of the interactions between the ocean and peoples’ daily lives, and empower citizens to adjust everyday behaviour; and, to seek and apply innovative ways to make current and future generations ocean literate so

that they can make informed decisions related to ocean stewardship and the use of ocean resources that ultimately translate into ocean policy.

The event brought together representatives from Governments, the Scientific Community and NGOs, and aimed at establishing a global partnership to raise awareness on the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of our ocean and its resources and to improve the public knowledge base across the world regarding our global ocean. Irina Bokova, UNESCO Director-General, highlighted the crucial role of Education for Sustainable Development for the implementation of the SDG14 and underlined the importance of providing new skills, values and attitudes that lead to more ocean sustainable societies. “We need responsible and informed citizens to promote international ocean policies for the achievement of SDG14,” she stated.

The “Ocean Literacy for All” side event focused on providing information



and resources to Member States that enable them to better support ocean literacy initiatives in their own countries and further develop a global network that supports public understanding of the oceans in general and SDG14 goals in particular. >>full story



▲ Ocean Conference - Climate change is needed to save our

## Conoscere il Mare, Ocean Literacy Italia. Understanding how the sea impacts our life!

Under the title “Conoscere il mare, Ocean Literacy Italia”, representatives from Italian research institutions and universities, NGOs, science centres and museums, and public institutions met to discuss the creation of new partnerships, the sharing of good practices in ocean science education and communication, as well as increasing the awareness of the Italian citizens on the importance of the ocean and seas for the sustainable development of our planet.

With its 8,000 km coastline, Italy has littoral and underwater landscapes of exceptional beauty and natural interest. **Italy's** own history is linked to the sea. The sea is subject to an ever-increasing human pressure because of major impacts - such as pollution habitat degradation, the loss of biodiversity, the depletion of natural resources and the alteration of the processes underlying the ecosystem services that the ocean provides to humans. Human activity is causing unprecedented changes to the coastal regions of Italy.

An adequate knowledge of the sea, its characteristics and its functioning, its problems, as well as the development opportunities it offers is therefore essential to promote a behaviour consistent with the principle of Sustainable Development. Protecting our sea is indispensable for shaping well-being

into our present and our future.

55 representatives from research centres, universities, NGOs, private sector, public institutions and the Navy met in Venice on 3 February 2017 at Palazzo Zorzi, premises of the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe in Venice, to reinforce this message and lay the foundation for a new collaboration on ocean science education and communication in **Italy**. The initiative falls under the international umbrella of Ocean Literacy, defined as “understanding the ocean’s influence on you and your influence on the ocean”. There are 7 principles of Ocean Literacy - ideas which scientists and educators agree everyone should understand about the ocean.

We should all work to build a more ocean literate society! To this end, UNESCO, through its Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission and with the support



of its Regional Bureau in Venice, promotes ocean literacy as a way to enhance societal awareness on the importance of the ocean for our planet, and trigger positive actions. The meeting included a plenary session, to launch the network, Ocean Literacy Italia and discuss its main objectives and activities; and, a second one with debates about specific activities for formal and non-formal education, interaction with other international networks on ocean literacy. Discussion on shaping joint activities for this year’s edition of the World Oceans Day was also on the agenda. The participants



▲ Kaheea - Ocean protection/seal

“The ocean is vital for our cultures, our economies, our lives, the very survival of our planet” Irina Bokova, UNESCO Director-General

in the meeting agreed that the new network, called “Conoscere il Mare, Ocean Literacy Italia”, should be the reference entity for synergistic actions with similar international networks; be a reference body to

draw up, in co-operation with the Ministry of Education, guidelines on scientific content and students’ skills in marine sciences to be included in school curricula; and, become a point of encounter, exchange and

cooperation on the theme of the sea between subjects from education and training, scientific research, public institutions and the private. >>full story

## Under the Ocean Literacy Italia umbrella, World Oceans Day 2017 celebrated by 8 Italian cities



▲ Oligiscienza - Ocean Literacy

Every year on 8 June, countries all over the world celebrate “World Oceans Day” to raise global awareness about the benefits humankind derives from the ocean. This year, we celebrated World Oceans Day with the first UN Ocean Conference.

The new network for ocean literacy in **Italy** (OLI - Ocean Literacy Italia) comprises now almost 100 representatives from academia, NGOs, private sector, and public entities. The network is young and it is growing very quickly, each one brings his/her own expertise. A number of coordinated activities has already been organised under the same umbrella. For Italy, the sea is a fundamental resource and has always been at the center of its social and economic development, and therefore it is essential to celebrate it also considering the cultural perspective.

World Oceans Day is, of course, the best opportunity for showing the importance of a blue community made of specialists that are able to establish



a dialogue between scientists, civil society, decision makers and private sector in order to avoid the ‘lost in translation effect’ that often happens when these actors meet to discuss environmental issues such as climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.

Ocean Literacy is not only about increasing the awareness on citizens about the ocean, but it’s also about bridging the gap amongst those actors, creating common grounds and understandings. All this must lead to creating long lasting partnerships and tangible commitments to find solutions for problems that are affecting our ocean and that cannot be anymore ignored.

On 3 May 2017, a press conference was organized at the Italian National Commission for UNESCO in Rome, to present the OLI network but also the draft programme of the events carried

out, under the OLI umbrella, for the World Oceans Day on 8 June. The “OLI for WOD 2017” programme included the participation of 7 research centres, 2 natural museums, 5 cultural and scientific associations, 7 sports associations and recreational diving centres, 2 science centres, 2 private companies and 2 universities.

8 Italian cities were involved, namely Venice, La Spezia, Ferrara, Molfetta, Bologna, Gela, Napoli and Trieste, touching all the Italian seas but also some inland cities, bringing the sea closer to everyone; according to the words of Gesine Meissner (member of the EU Parliament and President of the European Parliament’s Intergroup on Seas, Rivers, Islands & Coastal Areas): “...landlocked countries and regions are also concerned by our seas and ocean”.

>>full story



### Ocean Literacy for All. The way forward after the Maltese declaration

The Seas, Rivers, Islands and Coastal Areas Intergroup of the European Parliament held the event on "Ocean Literacy for All: the way forward after the Maltese Declaration" with the presence of the Director General of DG MARE. This event organised with the support of CPMR (secretariat of the Intergroup) took place on 26 April 2017) at the European Parliament

At this event, the Intergroup presented its maritime declaration echoing the Maltese Declaration, emphasizing the importance of ocean literacy in this context. The event was also an opportunity for the participating experts to have an exchange of views on Ocean Literacy with the MEPs, UNESCO and the European Commission. UNESCO / Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission presented a keynote speech on Ocean Literacy.

Most European citizens are not aware of the full extent of the medical, economic, social, political and environmental importance of the sea to Europe and indeed to the rest of the world. Many of us are not aware of how our day-to-day actions can have a cumulative effect on the health of the ocean – a necessary resource that must be protected for all life on the planet Earth to exist. In other words, European citizens lack a sense of "Ocean Literacy" - an understanding of the ocean's influence on us and our influence on the ocean.



## Women in Oceanography, a virtual conference in honour of International Women's Day



**Although women began to join oceanographic expeditions in the 60's and female representation in academic research has increased since then, the ratio of women to men at higher ranks in ocean science still lags. New results revealed that female scientists make up for on average 38% of the researchers in ocean science, about 10 percentage points higher than the global share of female researchers.**

The objective of this initiative was to create the opportunities for young scientists interested in ocean science to get in contact with female oceanographers with an established career, to discuss ways for improving the participation of female scientists in oceanography. The virtual conference titled "Women in Oceanography: A virtual conference in honour of International Women's Day" with a panel made of 4 female

marine scientists from different fields (i.e. marine biology, physical oceanography, marine geology etc.) was organized on the occasion of the International Women's Day on 8 March 2017.

Keynote participants included: Wendy Watson-Wright, CEO, Ocean Frontier Institute; Paola Cessi, University of California San Diego; Suchana Apple Chavanich, Deputy Director, Chula Unisearch, Thailand; and, Elva G. Escobar-Briones, Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico. After short presentations by each of the panelists on their experience as female marine scientists, on their views on how we can improve the participation of female scientists in oceanography, and what role for the IOC, the floor was given to the participants who posed questions to panelists and had the opportunity to share their own stories. >> full story



Watch : Women in Oceanography video [56:02]

## GLOBAL OCEAN SCIENCE EDUCATION

**On 23-25 May 2017, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO co-hosted the third edition of the Global Ocean Science Education workshop. Jointly organized with the Consortium for Ocean Science Exploration and Engagement and the College of Exploration, the workshop sought to develop collaborative activities and set goals for global ocean science education.**

The Global Ocean Science Education workshops are sponsored and facilitated by the international Consortium for Ocean Science Exploration and Engagement (COSEE), the UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission and the College of Exploration. It is the only platform of its kind, bringing together the ocean science, education, policy and business sectors to improve ocean science education across the globe.

In 2015, the first workshop brought together ocean scientists and education professionals from 15 nations. Panels discussed ocean science education across the K-12 pipeline, undergraduate and graduate education and public education. Working groups discussed the future of global ocean science education, opportunities and steps for building international collaborations, and establishing a global network of networks. It was clear that for a truly global ocean science education network to be effective, other stakeholders ought to be part of the conversation. A conscious effort was made in planning the following workshop including policy makers and business/industry leaders in addition to scientists and education professionals.

In 2016, at the second workshop, participants were hailed from 17 countries from Europe, North and South America, and Africa, and represented different organizations: governmental agencies, research centres, NGOs and aquaria. Within this diverse setting, there emerged shared concerns around how to prioritize educational content related to ocean and human health, how to adapt ocean science education to the requirements of the 21st century workforce, and how to better identify the role of informal education in ocean policy development.

leaders and policymakers; and, to provide a forum to discuss coastal resilience and share examples of resilient cities.

Among the discussions was how the ocean literacy community can support the implementation of international ocean policies and initiatives, especially in view of the Ocean Conference at the United Nations in New York on 5-9 June. It is essential that all global citizens are aware of the importance of the ocean and regional seas if we are to sustain and conserve the marine resources on which



© UNESCO - Global Ocean Science Report: The Current Status of Ocean Science around the World/traps for sea animals

This year, on 23-25 May, the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe hosted the workshop at its premises in Palazzo Zorzi in Venice, Italy. In this intensive, highly productive third edition, educators, researchers and professionals from 10 countries and different regions of the world focused on forging new connections within the global marine community. The goals of the workshop were to bring together the ocean science, education, policy and business sectors; to foster the work of the 5 international working groups; to initiate the development of a certificate course for business

humanity depends. On 8 June, the global day of ocean celebration and collaboration for a better future was celebrated under the motto: Our Oceans, Our Future.

In order to promote collaboration and exchange of resources and good practices, the workshop closed with the proposal to develop an online and multilingual platform. Once again, was recognised the leading role of UNESCO - the only UN agency with a mandate in education and ocean science - in pushing for ocean science education vis-à-vis governments and global policy frameworks. >> full story

## HOW WE CAN WORK TOGETHER TO FACE THE CHALLENGES OF OUR OCEANS

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### 2017

#### January

Walled Cities, open Societies: Managing Historic Walls in World Heritage properties  
26-27 January 2017. Siena, Italy

Ark of Inquiry: 5th consortium meeting  
Athens, Greece. 30-31 January 2017

#### February

Conoscere il mare, Ocean Literacy Italia (Launch of Italian network on Ocean Literacy)  
Venice, Italy. 3 February 2017

Workshop on The process of the Management plan Development and Application  
Dubrovnik, Croatia. 3-5 February 2017

5th Transboundary Platform Meeting for the safeguarding of the Lake Ohrid region  
9-10 February 2017

Third Ministerial Conference of the Council of Ministers of Culture of South-East Europe (CoMoCoSEE)  
Tirana, Albania. 22 February 2017

Open conference: UNESCO MAB Programme for Protected Areas. Benefits and Perspectives Humans and Nature Together for Sustainable Development  
Paphos, Cyprus. 24 February 2017

#### March

Virtual Conference for women oceanographers as part of the International Women's day  
Venice, Italy. 8 March 2017

Best "Postcards from the Future" - International Day of Happiness  
Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. 20 March 2017

Culture as a driver of social development  
Podgorica, Montenegro. 24 March 2017

#### April

4th Dialogue Platform Conference on Sustainable Development Goals - Implementation in Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. 3 April 2017

EuroMAB 2017 building a sustainable future together  
Dordogne Biosphere Reserve in France, Sarlat, France. 4-7 April 2017



*Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO: "A healthy ocean requires robust global knowledge of ocean science. We cannot manage what we cannot measure, and no single country is able to measure the myriad changes taking place in the ocean."*

[>> all events](#)

"A healthy ocean lies at the very heart of our ability to fight climate change, develop sustainably and simply – survive."

Inger Andersen  
IUCN Director General



National Launch of SDG4-Education 2030 Agenda and the Education Policy Review report in Albania  
Tirana, Albania. 12 April 2017

SEE UNESCO Global Geoparks Workshop  
Idrija, Slovenia. 19-21 April 2017

Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the UNECE Region  
Geneva, Switzerland. 24-25 April 2017

#### May

Towards a Global Network of Water Museums – A Common Heritage for a Sustainable Future  
Venice, Italy. 2-4 May 2017

Ocean Literacy Italia Press Conference  
Rome, Italy. 3 May 2017

KIDS University Venezia  
Venice, Italy. 8 May 2017 (Press Conference); 22-27 May 2017

Global Ocean Science Education Workshop  
Venice, Italy. 23-25 May 2017

CIAC Junior International Film Festival – XXVIII edition  
Jesolo Lido, Italy. 26-27 May 2017

#### June

Kids' Festival  
Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. 3-5 June 2017

The Ocean conference. Our oceans our future: partnering for the implementation of SDG14  
New York, United States. 5-9 June 2017

Ocean Literacy Italia events on World Oceans Day 2017  
8 June 2017

UNESCO areas: Regional Forum for an integrated management of UNESCO designated area  
Turin, Italy. 8 June 2017

Workshop W.A.V.E. 2017: Syria, the making of the future  
Venice, Italy. 26 June 2017

Annual Meeting of the Regional Network of Experts on Intangible Cultural Heritage in South-East Europe  
Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. 27-28 June 2017

International Conference "Sustainable Tourism Development in the Danube Region: New Perspectives"  
Belgrade, Serbia, 29-30 June 2017

## Backstory

### Young filmmakers receive special recognition for their short film against social exclusion: Bikes and Bullies



© CIAK Junior 2017

The 28th edition of the international youth film festival CIAK Junior took place on 26-27 May 2017 in Lido di Jesolo, Italy. The event involved the screening of 8 competing movies from 6 different countries, as well as the presentation of awards by an international jury. The UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe gave a special recognition to the Italian contribution "Bikes and Bullies" for best representing UNESCO's values.

In the adoption and promotion of UNESCO's values, youth plays a crucial role. It is upon young people's hearts and minds that any value-based approach to shaping a better future is built. Only if their concerns and viewpoints are given the necessary attention, can the young foster a proactive attitude of engagement that is aligned with current realities. Since 2001, the UNESCO Regional Bureau in Venice supports CIAK Junior. Children from around the world aged 10 to 16, turn their own movie ideas in professionally produced short films. The films are then distributed among participating television networks for public screening. Over the years, CIAK Junior has offered thousands of students a stage to tell their stories and share their creative outlook.

The many perspectives brought by its young participants give rise to films that span a wide array of topics. This year, they range from the personal immediacy of falling in love to the question of how to provide dignified employment to people of all backgrounds. These movies consistently show that students appeal to the values of respect, tolerance and friendship when looking for solutions to their concerns. Exemplifying this way of thinking is "Cake", the contribution from China that won the prize for the best movie. With a plot built around a hard-working father and his deeply grateful daughter, the film transmits a powerful message that our personal relationships can help us handle hardship.

Reflecting UNESCO's values even more poignantly was the Italian film "Bikes and Bullies", which tells the story of how a serene student sparks dramatic change in his classmates by staying true to his values. The protagonist demonstrates that the perseverance of virtue can set an inspiring example against social exclusion and hatred. "Bikes and Bullies" affirms the transformative power of good actions rooted in deeply held values. For all this, the UNESCO Regional Bureau in Venice awarded it a special recognition. [>>full story](#)



Come and discover our sustainable future



▲ Kids University - Ca Foscari University of Venice

IOC Laboratory on 26 May 2017: A unique big ocean

# Bridges

UNESCO Regional Bureau  
for Science and Culture in Europe

## Contact us :

Palazzo Zorzi, Castello 4930 - 30122 Venice - Italy  
Tel: +39.041.260.15.11 Fax: +39.041.528.99.95

[veniceoffice@unesco.org](mailto:veniceoffice@unesco.org)

For more information, please visit our website:

[www.unesco.org/venice](http://www.unesco.org/venice)



Regional Bureau  
for Science and Culture  
in Europe

United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization