



## UfM – S4D4C Workshop

### What Role for the Science Diplomacy in the Mediterranean: The COVID19 as a case study

15-16 December 2020

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#### CONCEPT NOTE

The size and scope of global challenges need to be addressed through global and multidimensional approaches, such as in the case of joint actions on climate and environment, sustainable economic growth, or global health. This holds true also for the Euro-Mediterranean region, an area where cultures and science met and mingled for millennia. In this context, regional multistakeholder cooperation through science is fundamental in order to achieve sustained systematic efforts leading to the creation of innovative and inclusive solutions. The creation of such opportunities requires the establishment of appropriate partnerships among key stakeholders, including scientists, policymakers and diplomats.

Historically, science diplomacy has been a powerful tool for understanding and achieving regional objectives while fostering a positive sense of belonging to a cross-border community based on skills, openness and win-win solutions.

Science and research cooperation are an established tool of any diplomatic policy, including at a regional level in the Mediterranean region. This applies in particular to many areas where science-based cooperation is required in order to achieve common goals, for instance on fields of sustainable development where research and innovation have a significant role, such as climate action, sustainable agriculture and water, blue economy, and the deep roots of migration. This cooperation model offers opportunities to create stronger human and knowledge links binding together the Mediterranean shores, creating a knowledge bridge for scientists and researchers to come together and tackle issues of common interest, resulting in an outcome great than the sum of individual or national efforts.

The interconnections and synergies created as a by-product of scientific programmes and exchanges facilitate the spreading of best practices, foster innovations among enterprises and research centres, and encourage scientists in up-taking international development agendas.

The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) has highly regarded the role of science diplomacy since many years, as it has promoted through its multistakeholder platforms informed dialogue between experts, governments and diplomats on its six priority areas.

Science diplomacy can take different forms, such as in the case of big-scale regional research programmes, networks of research centres, academic mobility programmes, joint access to large research infrastructure, setting up of innovative research centres, dedicated conferences and so forth.

In the belief that the positive effects of strengthening Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in research and innovation are a way forward for fully tapping into the potential of economic growth and sustainable



development of the Mediterranean, UfM Ministers of Research held a EuroMed Conference on Research and Innovation (R&I) in Valletta in 2017.

Through the resulting Ministerial Declaration, they reconfirmed their “commitment to knowledge creation”, wishing to “achieve sustainable growth and decent job creation for the region, by capitalizing on achieved results and best practices including through removing barriers, promoting brain circulation, avoiding duplication, reducing fragmentation and promoting integration, while fostering gender equality and research ethics.”

In order to showcase and reinforce the state of science and innovation diplomacy in the Euro-Mediterranean region, UfM is organizing a virtual workshop to be held on **15 and 16 of December** that will be hosted digitally from its headquarters in Barcelona, Spain. This meeting will also mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary since the Barcelona Declaration, which stated that “science and technology have a significant influence on socioeconomic development” of the EuroMed region.

During this event, the main ongoing programmes and initiatives related to science diplomacy will be presented, discussions will touch upon the main issues to be tackled and high-level speakers will advance ideas for further action.

The event is organized in the framework of the UfM Regional Platform in Research and Innovation and in partnership with the Horizon 2020 project S4D4C (Using Science Diplomacy for Addressing Global Challenges). S4D4C has undertaken research on science diplomacy, fostered networking between scientists, diplomats, policymakers and other key practitioners, and provided training opportunities in science diplomacy. Particularly, S4D4C published the policy report “[Calling for a Systemic Change: Towards a European Union Science Diplomacy for Addressing Global Challenges](#)” in May 2020. This report identifies the set of stoppers, warnings, and drivers for the systems of science, diplomacy, and science diplomacy to fully stir global collective action and successfully address global challenges. This joint event between UfM and S4D4C will allow fostering a reflection for the future of Science Diplomacy in the Mediterranean region.



## PROVISIONAL PROGRAM

**Dates: 15-16 December**

### Day 1 - 15 December 2020 (Open to the general public)

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An interactive session showing how we tackle global challenges in the world post Covid-19 and bring foresight into R&I policy, supported by a panel of experts from industry, academia, national administrations and civil society stakeholders.

#### 11h00 Institutional Opening

- **Itaf Ben Abdallah**, Senior Advisor for Higher Education and Research, UfM Secretariat
- **Elke Dall**, Project Coordinator, S4D4C

#### 11h15 Presentation of the topic and ice-breaker

#### 11h30 High Level Virtual Panel on Science and Innovation Diplomacy in the Mediterranean

- **Placido Plaza**, CIHEAM Secretary General
- **Jamie Morison**, Assistant Director, FAO
- **Olfa Zeribi** Agence universitaire de la Francophonie
- **Octavi Quintana**, Director, PRIMA
- **Gihan Kamel**, SESAME

Moderator: **Giuseppe Provenzano**, Advisor for Research and Innovation, UfM Secretariat

#### Q&A from the audience (via Chat)

#### 13h00 Closure



## Day 2 - 16 December (Close sessions to the general public)

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### Training/Webinar on Science Diplomacy

Science Diplomacy Multi-stakeholder Conversation: The COVID-19 pandemic added a massive shock to a system already strained by geopolitical, societal, economic and environmental tensions. UfM is hosting a Mediterranean online workshop on the future of science and diplomacy to tackle global challenges.

### 11h00 Science and Innovation Diplomacy: State of Art (Joint Session)

#### Opening:

- **Giuseppe Provenzano**, Advisor for Research and Innovation, UfM Secretariat
- **Ana Elorza**, Science Advice and Diplomacy Coordinator, S4D4C

13h30 *Lunch break*

### 14h30 Breakout sessions

#### Session 1: Research cooperation in the Mediterranean towards Global Challenges

Moderator: **Lorenzo Melchor**, FECYT

**Jerneja Penca**, Euro-Mediterranean University (EMUNI)

**Mitchell Young**, Charles University in Prague

#### Session 2: Reinforcing the Mediterranean scientific and diplomatic communities to have an impact on regional challenges

Moderator: **Ana Elorza**, FECYT

**Pierre Bruno Ruffini**, University of Le Havre

**Mounir Ghribi**, Istituto Nazionale di Oceanografia e di Geofisica Sperimentale (OGS)

#### Session 3: Science and Society in the Mediterranean

Moderator: **Izaskun Lacunza**, FECYT

**Lila Chabaane Zohra**, Professor and head of GREEN-TEAM laboratory in INAT-Tunisia/University of Carthage (UCAR)



**16h00 Conclusions and joint policy recommendations (Joint Session)**

**16h30 Closure**