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Enhancing the involvement of NGOs in the MedPartnership activities: the Drin Dialogue process

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Within the framework of the MedPartnership activities, where MIO-ECSDE is responsible for the meaningful participation of civil society in the implementation of the project and the overall strengthening of civil society in the Mediterranean, an NGO networking meeting was organized on the 4th of April 2011 in Tirana back-to-back with the [Albanian Consultation Meeting](#).

The main aim of the meeting was to provide information on the Drin Dialogue process and encourage/inspire NGOs to participate in the makings of the structured dialogue. The meeting was attended by 8 representatives of National NGOs (Albaforest, Eden Center, Institute for Nature Conservation, Instituti I politikave Mjedisore, Rainbow Environmental Association) and the main issues discussed were the following:

- main challenges in the Drin basin as well as possible responses;
- main obstacles and challenges to successful participation of NGOs and ways to strengthen the relations between the various organisations of the region;
- opportunities for NGOs to exchange experiences and/or build capacities related to their involvement in the development of river or lake basin management plans, either within the MedPartnership or the H2020 CB/MEP activities.

The outcomes of this meeting were briefly presented by MIO-ECSDE representative Ms. Thomais Vlachogianni, at the [3rd Core Group Meeting](#) together with a number of other relevant activities that have been undertaken contributing directly and/or indirectly to a coordinated involvement of civil society, and particularly NGOs, in the Drin Dialogue. These include:

- The organization of regional workshop on “Sustainable management of river and lake basins: Empowering NGOs for a coordinated effective involvement”, 4 November 2010, Ohrid, FYROM. (Read more [here](#))
- The development of a Mediterranean Environmental NGOs database within the framework of the MedPartnership project, which can facilitate the involvement of NGOs in the Drin Dialogue process. (www.mio-ecsde.org/ngos)
- Communication and awareness raising actions through circulars on the developments regarding the Drin Dialogue via its extensive contact lists; dedication of one issue of MIO-ECSDE's quarterly newsletter Sustainable Mediterranean to the Drin Dialogue; presentations at meetings, etc.
- Enhancement of synergies through MIO-ECSDE's actions by linking the Drin Dialogue with two major Mediterranean initiatives, in which MIO-ECSDE is a key partner: (a) the UNEP/MAP-GEF Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystem (the MedPartnership), where MIO-ECSDE is responsible for the meaningful participation of civil society in the implementation of the project and the overall strengthening of civil society in the Mediterranean. (www.medpartnership.org); (b) the ENPI Horizon 2020 Capacity Building/Mediterranean Environment Programme (CB/MEP) which focuses on environmental integration and capacity building and aims through targeted activities within the partner countries to increase the capacities of all stakeholders (administrations – national, sub national, local authorities – NGOs, private sector, etc.) so as to effectively contribute to the depollution of the Mediterranean Sea by 2020 (www.h2020.net).