

ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT FOR 2017



Mediterranean Information Office for
Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development
The Mediterranean NGO Federation



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Foreword by the Chairman of MIO-ECSDE

The importance of global, regional and national non-governmental organizations as a distinct organizational form of civil society has been repeatedly recognized in international conventions and fora, while the strengthening and facilitation of their role and operation could be found in a very large number of recommendations.



The Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE) was established in 1991 in view of the preparations of the environmental NGOs of the Mediterranean for their coordinated contribution to the 1992 Summit in Rio and was formally founded as an NGO Federation with two “pillar” founding members, Federations/Networks themselves: the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) bringing together the European coast of the Mediterranean and the Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED) bringing together the NGOs of the Arab world. For an umbrella Federation-NGO acting on the North-South Interface, with such a synthesis of diverse NGO members operating under different regimes and conditions, it was of paramount importance from the beginning to follow democratic, transparent procedures and be accountable not only to its members but also to all intergovernmental organizations, conventions and various other regional and national stakeholders with which it worked, including national governments, supporters and donors.

The driving principle and “moto” followed by both the Management Board (Executive Bureau) and the staff was the simultaneous “doing the right things” and “doing things right”. MIO-ECSDE was fortunate to inherit the internal management experiences of the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) and the “Elliniki Etairia” and enjoy support from, and close collaboration with, universities and regional researchers.

This allowed the organization throughout this long period to successfully pass a very long list of controls, external (and internal) audits by the UN, EU, governments, donors and other competent bodies. It is obvious that the good reputation and efficiency of MIO-ECSDE are its great assets that need to be safeguarded and promoted together with its achievements on specific environmental and sustainable development issues.

Despite the fact that MIO-ECSDE is a partner organization of all intergovernmental organizations of the Mediterranean region and many UN bodies, and a welcome contributor to a series of environmental issues at national level, many of our members have difficulties of acceptance and accountability for advocacy work in their own countries. Their membership with MIO-ECSDE frequently helps them to a certain degree to overcome the accountability issue and our access to the Accountable Now may help them even more.

The organization is every year awarded the ISO 19001 certification, but I am very pleased in my capacity as Chairman of MIO-ECSDE to submit our first report to Accountable Now because this connection will allow us to further reflect and celebrate our work, analyzed through an

accountability perspective. It is also an opportunity to welcome independent scrutiny and feedback, helping us to improve.

We do not underestimate the challenges of applying the principles of the Charter on transparency, participation and compliance throughout our Federation since many success factors are beyond our ability to monitor and control. However, our objective is to encourage our Membership to follow, as much as possible, the same path and we are ready to help them in doing so, hopefully in close cooperation with Accountable Now.



Prof. Michael Scoullos

Chairman of MIO-ECSDE

Indicative links to Accountable Now Reporting Questions

Commitment 1 - Justice and equality: [Page 18](#)

Commitment 2 - Women's rights and gender equality: [Page 14](#), [Page 18](#), [Page 28](#)

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Introduction to the report

MIO-ECSDE, as a Federation of over 120 NGOs working on Environment and Sustainable Development in the Euro-Mediterranean area, applied in 2015 for membership to the, at the time, “INGO Accountability Charter”. In January 2016 MIO-ECSDE was welcomed as a member with the status of Affiliate Member till the submission and approval by the Independent Review Panel of its first report. This is the first Accountability report of the Secretariat of the Federation following the development the new “Accountable Now” reporting framework and its 12 Accountability Commitments of the Global Standard for CSO Accountability. It addresses the year 2017.



With this report we aim to:

- demonstrate MIO-ECSDE's genuine commitment to enhance its accountability
- assess its achievements in fulfilling these commitments and strengthen or further develop procedures and actions in areas of weakness
- become full member of “Accountable Now”.

It will cover the function and activities of the MIO-ECSDE Secretariat, and not of its members. The drafting of the report was coordinated by the Quality Assurance Officer under the guidance of the Chairman, shared with the Secretariat's staff for review and contributions and submitted for approval to Executive Bureau.

- This report, alongside the review by the independent review panel, will be published on the website of the charter and of MIO. And an executive summary will be communicated with the members via e-mails and e-news.
- The feedback of the review panel will be discussed with MIO staff and the chairman; the required corrective actions will be approved by the executive board, and communicated with all the partners and members.

About MIO-ECSDE

The Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE), is a non-profit Federation of 127 Mediterranean Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working in the fields of Environment and Development in 28 countries of the Euro-Mediterranean area. The Federation's Secretariat is based in Athens, in the old and historic district of Plaka

Our mission is to protect the Natural Environment and Cultural Heritage and promote Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean by bringing together the efforts of environmental and developmental NGOs. The ultimate goal of MIO-ECSDE is to promote Sustainable Development in a peaceful Mediterranean.

To achieve this we act as a technical and political platform for the intervention of NGOs in the Euro-Mediterranean scene. The main lines of action are:

- Monitoring and influencing EU and regional Mediterranean policies and bodies (Barcelona Convention, Union for the Mediterranean)
- Drafting, promoting and presenting common NGO positions
- Raising public awareness, promoting participation and building consensus
- Promoting Education for Sustainable Development
- Capacity building of specific audiences (NGO staff, policy makers, educators, etc.)
- Networking, International Collaborations & Partnerships
- Facilitating Mediterranean stakeholder networks

The thematic focus is always shifting to address new and emerging issues, but can be summed up as follows: marine and coastal environment, biodiversity and nature, resource management, climate change, health and environment, cultural diversity.

OUR STORY

MIO-ECSDE was established in 1990 initially as a network of environmental NGOs, under a joint project of the European Environment Bureau (EEB) and Elliniki Etairia (Society for the Environment and Cultural Heritage) and in close collaboration with the Arab Network of Environment and Development (RAED). The demand for institutional support from more and more Mediterranean NGOs and the increasing need for structured and constructive NGO views in regional/international fora, led to the establishment (1996) of MIO-ECSDE in its present form as an NGO Federation.

The major challenges the Federation faces are addressed through the evaluation of critical issues that affect MIO-ECSDE operation, the management of these issues and the preparation and continuous updating of the Operational Environment Analysis Report (OEAR). Guiding principles are "doing the right thing" and "doing things right":

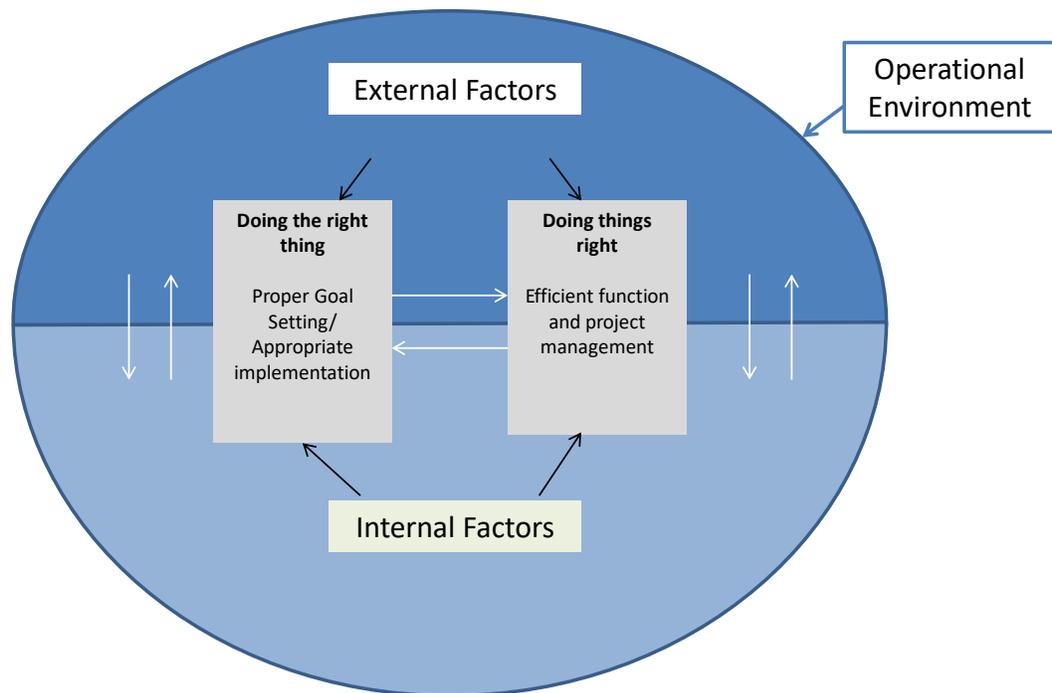


Figure 1: Operational Environment Analysis Report (OEAR).

MIO-ECSDE uses the well-known DPSIR methodology (see figure 2) whereby the impact is the manifestation / outcome of external or internal pressures and situations behind which deeper root causes are often identified. Similarly, the improvement measures proposed / implemented include measures to reduce / mitigate the symptoms of impacts (usually in the short term) or measures aimed at improving the situation in the medium or long term by lifting the pressure or addressing the underlying causes.

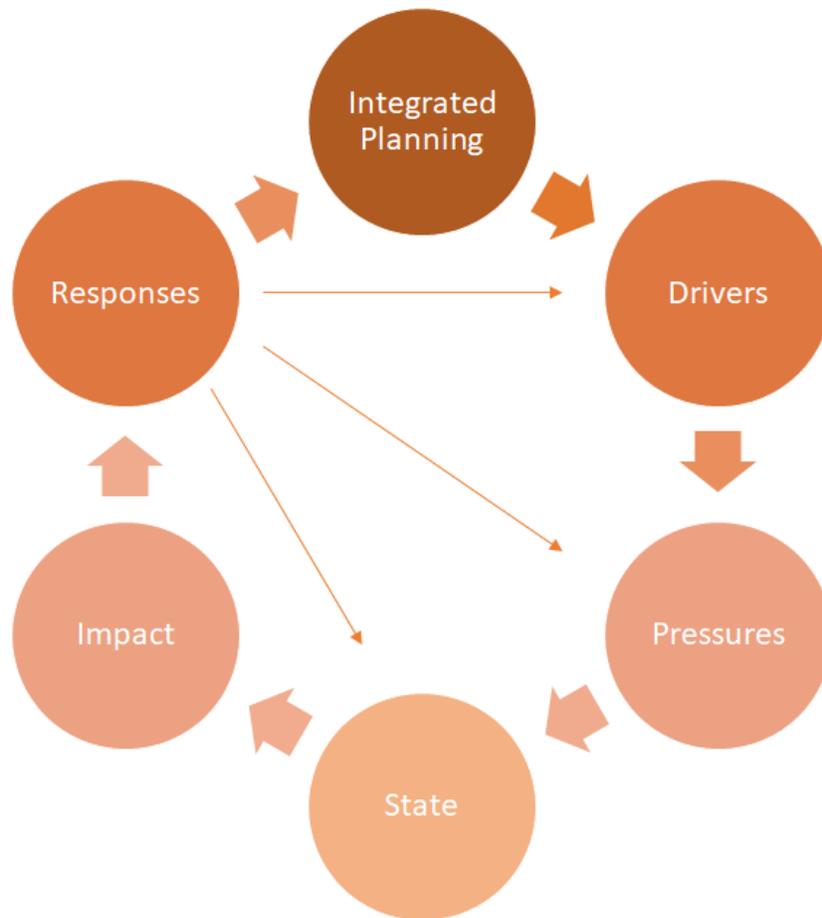


Figure 2: DPSIR methodology

Impact achieved by MIO-ECSDE's activities

For a Federation such as MIO-ECSDE impact is measured on output as well as outcomes.

Output concerns measuring performance (e.g. number of position papers, media outputs, events held, co-organisers mobilized, resources produced, target audiences/persons reached, complaints received, survey results, budget planning and implementation, etc.). Qualitative aspects are factored in with the measurable indicators, and are set globally (included in the MIO-ECSDE ISO 2009:2015 procedures) and at activity level. They are relatively easy to monitor, get feedback on, learn the lessons, revisit, etc.

As for outcome, the evaluation should attempt to identify whether MIO-ECSDE activities have resulted in contributing to a cleaner and more sustainable Mediterranean region. It would seem almost impossible to assess exactly what the impact of MIO-ECSDE, one of the many actors in the region working toward the same goal, could be. However, the following monitoring efforts help deduce a measure of impact:

The long-term vision of MIO-ECSDE is to be the leading, active, democratic NGO network (Federation), a platform for Environment and Sustainable development in the Mediterranean Region, with the ability and competences to contribute effectively to EU policy formulation and implementation in the critical part of the EU South and the Mediterranean EU Neighborhood.

The objectives for the coming biennium in view of evolving in the direction of its long-term vision are to:

- improve the efficiency and sustainability of MIO-ECSDE.
- reinforce MIO-ECSDE's collective vision as a Federation and work towards making it a collective reality via an enhanced MIO-ECSDE identity and stronger communications approach.
- strengthen the sense of community within the MIO-ECSDE network by enhancing cooperation among and between the MIO-ECSDE secretariat and its member organizations.

On overall **membership strengthening**: most active Member NGOs that proactively benefit from the opportunities, visibility, partnerships, tools and resources offered by MIO-ECSDE (Secretariat and wider network), which in fact have been co-created, have considerably advanced since they first became members, openly acknowledging the role that MIO-ECSDE has played over the years. Of course the advancement cannot be not exclusively attributed to MIO-ECSDE support.

For **capacity building**: through a number of projects MIO-ECSDE has conducted capacity building activities to more than 6000 stakeholders at regional and national level in the Mediterranean with ensuing environmental policy development and reforms directly improving environmental quality. Many member organizations as well as non-members of the region have benefited from these trainings, study visits, webinars.

For **Education for Sustainable Development**: survey results have shown that more than 5000 education professionals are implementing new enriched curricula and learning activities because they are members of MEdIES, regularly informed, trained and equipped with the necessary skills and tools. As a result, opinions, behaviors and consumer choices are greener and more conducive to a sustainable future.

For **filling the knowledge gap**: MIO-ECSDE, jointly with key stakeholders and several of its members, has indisputably addressed some of the key knowledge gaps in the Mediterranean. Examples are:

- **marine litter**: although marine litter has received increasing attention in recent years there are serious knowledge gaps. MIO-ECSDE has systematically contributed to addressing these gaps by developing jointly with others committed to tackling marine litter, important tools such as:

- Regional survey on abandoned, lost or discarded fishing gear & ghost nets in the Mediterranean Sea
- Marine litter assessment in the Adriatic and Ionian Seas.
- Understanding the socio-economic implications of marine litter in the Adriatic-Ionian microregion (the first of its kind marine litter related study in the Mediterranean).
- A video tutorial on how to monitor marine litter on beaches
- “Know, Feel, Act! to Stop Marine Litter: Lesson plans and activities for middle school learners”

- **contribution to building the evidence base for the transition to a Green and Fair Economy in Europe and the Mediterranean**: A MIO-ECSDE study funded by the MAVA Foundation (<http://www.medgreeneconomy.org/assets/downloads/greeneconomy-med-web.pdf>) done in collaboration with member NGO eco-union, and the Green Economy Coalition (GEC) shows that the large majority of Mediterranean EU countries have out-dated or incomplete national GE/SD strategies. Often they are vague, not giving clear definitions or indicators. Only France, Italy, and Portugal and Tunisia can claim to have good, up-to-date and detailed strategies with clear indicators, or – in the case of Italy – supporting legislation in place. Cyprus, Slovenia and Spain have outdated GE/SD strategies or none at all. Croatia, Greece and Malta are somewhere in between these two groups of countries.

Regional assessments on the State of the Environment in the Mediterranean are carried out (e.g. by the UN Environment Mediterranean Action Plan of the Barcelona Convention, the European Environment Agency, etc.) every three to five years. Generic and more specific references to the contribution and importance of NGOs such as MIO-ECSDE are made in respect to progress achieved.

Some of the donor agencies that have been recently approached as well as the Accountable Now affiliation have indicated that MIO-ECSDE could establish a more comprehensive approach to measuring impact and directly linking to strategic indicators of success.

The MIO-ECSDE Secretariat facilitates the **MEDIES Secretariat which is the major educational and training tool of MIO-ECSDE. It is an international initiative on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)**, launched in Johannesburg during the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD, 2002). It is in line with the principles of the 2010 Conclusions of the Council of the European Union on Education for Sustainable Development (which invites Member States to take appropriate measures at the relevant level of responsibility - local, regional or national – in order to encourage the further development and implementation of ESD and its integration into the education and training system at all levels, in non-formal and informal learning just as in formal learning), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (17 with 169 associated targets), and the UN Decade on ESD (2005-2014) and its post 2014 phase (Global Action Programme on ESD) which was decided in 2014 at Nagoya, Japan at the UN Global Conference on ESD, and is being implemented through various innovative educational activities in the EuroMediterranean space.

It is accredited by the Hellenic Education Ministry (2006-today); selected in a pan-European inventory of innovative ESD practices (DG EAC, 2008); and included in the UN Decade on ESD Report (UNESCO, 2014) while several of its projects like HYDRIA, and Alter Aqua (Cyprus, Greece, Italy and Malta) have been awarded for their impressive results.

MEDIES objectives and activities directly contribute to the **EU partnership with UNESCO** on education, culture, science and human rights, a relatively new agreement that will boost cooperation and dialogue and will help to share information and best practice between the EU and UNESCO. It was signed between the Director-General of UNESCO, Irina Bokova, the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs Catherine Ashton, and the former Development Commissioner, Andris Piebalgs.

The educational programmes developed by MEDIES so far are based on cross-cutting themes in the existing school-curricula of the countries. Such themes include freshwater, solid waste, resource-efficiency, consumption behavior, diet/food (biodiversity), climate change, marine litter, etc. giving emphasis on the methods applied within ESD. ESD ultimately equips people with knowledge and skills in sustainable development, making them more competent and confident and increasing their opportunities for acting for a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature and with concern for social values, gender equity and cultural diversity.

Special emphasis is given to the role of students/learners as "messengers for sustainability" to their families and local communities. The exchange and close collaboration of EU countries and non-EU countries of the Mediterranean allows the development of a methodological framework that could be further implemented in other regions of the world.

MIO-ECSDE's Governance and decision making process

In order to deliver its work in the most efficient and transparent way MIO-ECSDE has a governance structure of 4 collaborating organs/bodies:

- the Executive Bureau (EB)
- the Chairperson and Co-Chairperson
- the Annual General Meeting (AGM)
- the Secretariat

If deemed appropriate a Mediterranean Advisory Council may become functional as was foreseen in the 1993 statutes. Furthermore, *ad hoc* working groups can be established in order to carry out specific tasks as per decision of the Executive Bureau. These bodies however do not have an institutional role.

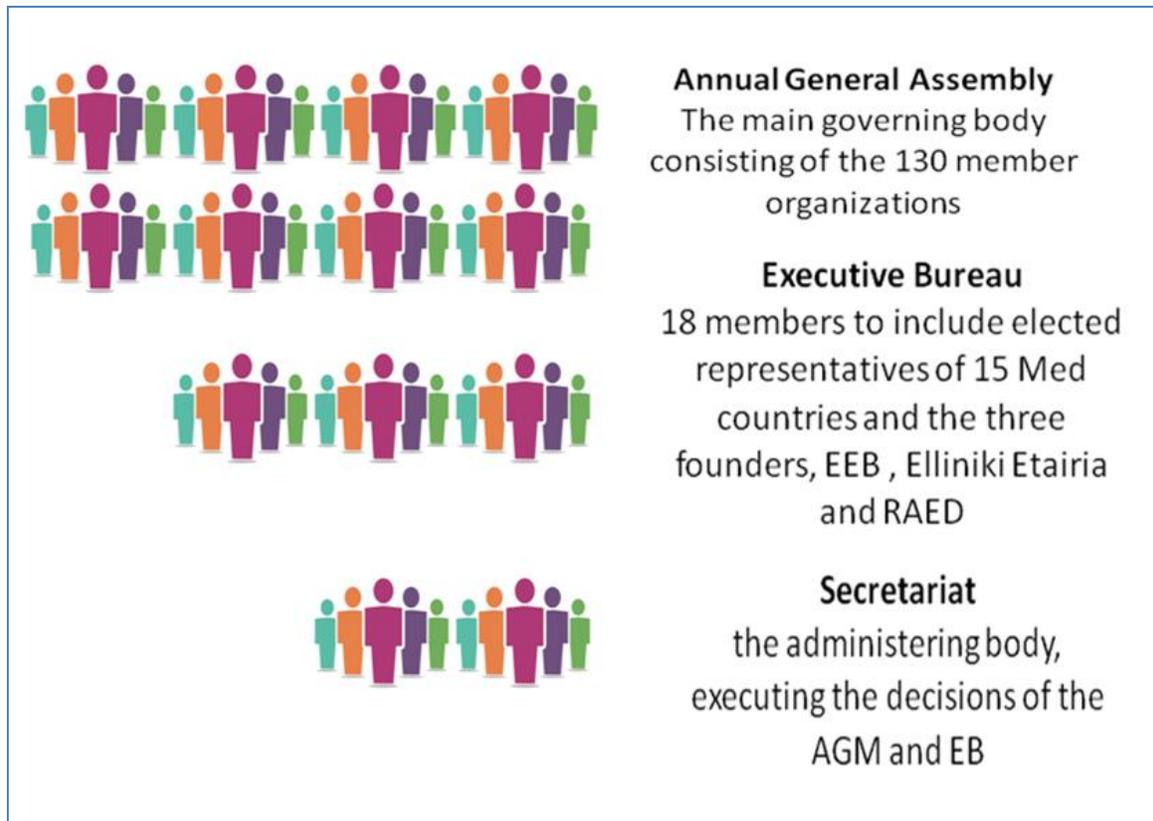


Figure 3: Our Structure & Decision making Process: Participatory and Democratic

The Executive Bureau

The Members of the Executive Bureau (EB) are elected amongst its *full* members for a term of two years according to the following composition:

- one member per EU Mediterranean Member State (including Portugal), representing the member NGOs of that country
- an equal number of members from non EU Mediterranean States (including Jordan), representing the member NGOs of a country or sub-region
- up to three members representing international Environmental and/or Development NGOs active in the Mediterranean
- three are *ex officio* members representing the founders EEB (European Environmental Bureau), Elliniki Etairia and RAED (Arab Network for Environment and Development).

Half of the Members are renewed every year with a two-year term of office each. This increases the transparency of the organization and allows different members from different NGOs to engage in the decision-making process of the Federation. **During 2017 only 22% of the EB was female, a reality that has been acknowledged and targeted for adjustment over the two following AGMs (4-year period).**

Board Members (including alternates)			
<u>Gender</u>		<u>Nationalities</u>	
	79% (18)	Algeria → 1	Italy → 2
	21% (5)	Belgium → 1	Jordan → 1
<u>Age</u>		Cyprus → 1	Lebanon → 1
Under 30 = 0		Egypt → 1	Malta → 1
30-50 = 35% (8)		France → 2	Morocco → 1
50+ = 65% (15)		Greece → 4	Palestine → 1
			Portugal → 1
			Slovenia → 1
			Spain → 2
			Tunisia → 1
			Turkey → 1

Figure 4: Gender distribution of MIO-ECSDE’s Board Members

The EB or the Chairman could designate specific roles or tasks to particular members of the EB (e.g. the role of Treasurer, or EB member responsible for Environmental Education, or the Membership, etc.) and/or to the MIO-ECSDE staff in the case of e.g. submission, signing and supervision of specific projects and contracts.

The Member NGOs of a given country or of a sub-region decide amongst themselves on who will be nominated to represent them in the EB. This helps the voting procedure of the AGM as a balloting election process may not be necessary. When this is not possible the AGM has to take a vote. Nominations can be made by any full Member Organisation.

The statutes specify that the EB should meet at least once a year. However, since its establishment the MIO-ECSDE EB has made a point of trying to meet at least three times a year. In recent years, most meetings are held on-line in a genuine effort to decrease the MIO-ECSDE carbon footprint. The meetings are conducted in English. A quorum of the meetings is designated as one half of the members, present or represented, plus one. Decisions are taken on a majority of votes of the members present or represented. Detailed minutes are kept with an annexed summary table of decisions taken and tasks to be done.

The Chairman and the Treasurer at a first step and the Executive Bureau and Annual General Meeting at a next one, supervise all expenditures. The Executive Bureau is regularly informed and controls the finances.

The Members of the EB are not remunerated for their function.

At each EB meeting progress on activities and actions is reported to the EB Members by the Secretariat and further decisions are taken, if necessary. Reporting and discussion on the progress of the activities and initiatives of the organization per annum take place during the AGM, which also debates and approves the plans for the immediate and longer term future.

The Chairperson and Co-Chairperson

The Annual General Meeting elects directly one Chairperson and one Co-Chairperson every two years among the Members of the EB, securing the regional balance.

The Chairperson of MIO-ECSDE:

- represents MIO-ECSDE in front of all authorities and other organisations;
- coordinates, manages and supervises the activities of the organisation according to the decisions of the Executive Bureau and AGM;
- proposes the draft agenda, convenes and chairs the EBMs and AGM;
- reports to the EB and AGM on all major developments and events in which she/he participates;
- provides general policy guidance to the Secretariat;
- leads fundraising efforts.

The Chairperson is not paid for his/her role in the Federation. The same rule applies for the Co-Chairperson who replaces the Chairperson on missions and commitments requested by the latter. Although gender balance is always among the criteria in electing the Chair and Co-Chair, geographical balance and competences are priorities.

The Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The highest decision making body of the MIO-ECSDE Federation is the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Only full members with duly paid fees have the right to vote and be voted.

The Chairperson and Co-Chairperson, assisted by the Secretariat are responsible for preparing the AGM which must cover:

1. Approval of the Agenda
2. Report of Activities by the Chairperson
3. Financial report of the previous year (audited), provisional financial report of the running year
4. Proposed future activities
5. Proposed budget for the next year
6. New Members

7. Elections for the Executive Bureau
8. Any other business

A quorum of the meeting is designated as one half of the members (with voting rights), present or represented by proxy. Although all efforts should be made for decisions to be taken on a consensus basis, a simple majority suffices in the case of voting, except for the membership issues where a 2/3 majority is needed.

Observers are welcome to participate in the AGM which is almost always organized back-to-back with other major activities of the Federation (conference, capacity building activity, etc.).

Although EB and staff members are encouraged to contribute to a more interesting and motivational AGM, the Secretariat is exploring ideas based on example to transform the MIO-ECSDE AGM into a more dynamic and compelling.

Since the beginning of the recent financial crisis in Southern Europe combined with the overall global trend of fewer and fewer resources being accessible to civil society and specifically environmental NGOs, MIO-ECSDE has been holding on-line AGMs. Albeit a positive overall experience at least once every two-three years, there is a need for direct physical interaction of the Membership, otherwise collaborative spirit wanes.

The Secretariat

The Secretariat is the body that administers and executes the decisions of the AGM and EB. In addition, it manages the finances of MIO-ECSDE and reports accordingly to the Chairperson, the Executive Bureau and the AGM. The Secretariat is supervised and directed by the Chairperson of the EB, with the support of the Co-Chairperson and any other members of the EB according to the decision of the EB.

The Secretariat and any other entities it hosts follow specific procedures in its daily functions (staff monitoring, travel regulations, reporting procedure, performance evaluation, etc.).

Employment process of the Secretariat

The selection of staff is made following the announcement and advertisement of the specific post in the press, the internet, etc. The announcement should include the following: terms of employment, responsibilities to be undertaken, qualifications and experience required and an indicative salary to be adjusted according to qualifications. The selection is made after the collection and evaluation of the submitted CVs by an ad-hoc committee appointed by the Chairman (and/or Ex. Secretary). The selection of the most suitable candidate should be based on the qualification set in the announcement. The final decision for the recruitment lies with the Chairman (and/or Ex. Secretary).

The successful candidate signs a Service Contract for the period foreseen for the specific post and can be employed either with a work Contract or a labor-based Contract with a specific

duration. In both cases the foreseen by the Greek legislation social security charges and tax regulations apply, and the relevant invoices are issued when necessary.

MIO-ECSDE can hire additional supportive or specialized personnel to cover ad-hoc needs for a specific period and projects. In these cases, a public announcement of the post is not necessary. The provisions set by the Greek labor legislation apply also to ad-hoc, short-term employments.

A trial period of three months precedes actual employment, especially in the case of a junior-inexperienced new member of the staff. Upon completion of the trial period, the Chairman (and/or Ex. Secretary), in consultation with the Head of Department, decides on whether the employee will remain with the organization.

All MIO-ECSDE staff fill in e-timesheets on SoftOne to record their daily working hours and their allocation to the various sub-projects they are involved with.

The employment of new employees, under the current legislation, is not subject to discrimination (gender, race, nationality, religion) and any ethnic and racial characteristics of the employees are not taken into consideration.

Key employment principles are:

- The working conditions comply with the national labor legislation and the existing relevant international regulations.
- The wages and social security coverage are related to the level of experience and knowledge of staff for the realization of the MIO-ECSDE's projects.
- The employment conditions abide by, as far as possible, the best practices concerning the rights of employees and volunteers, as well as the practices related to workplace safety and sanitation.
- The employee performance is evaluated regularly, at least on an annual basis.
- It is unacceptable for employees or volunteers to commit graft or bribery or any other corruption acts on behalf of the NGO or for personal gain through its activities.

Dealing with potential corruption and complaints in the Secretariat

For their part, the employees should follow the following practices:

- Employees who perceive
 - acts of graft, bribery or corruption in general,
 - acts of sexual harassment or abuse,
 - acts of any kind of discrimination,

- acts that do not comply with the principles, values, policies, procedures and legal operating requirements of the NGO,

should immediately inform, anonymously if preferred, directly the Chairman. The Chairman is responsible of investigating and assessing the incident in cooperation with the Heads of the Departments and of taking the corresponding actions.

- Employees inform Senior Management of any links or relationships they have with current or potential providers of goods or services, grant recipients or organization with which the NGO has a competitive relationship or conflicting objectives.
- Employees do not publicly express an opinion and abstain from discussions and elections and do not participate in decisions on any issue for which there is a conflict of interests with the NGO.

A more embellished Anti-Fraud policy will be developed in 2018 and signed annually by the staff.

A specific MIO-ECSDE procedure describes the way in which failures and complaints are identified, documented and evaluated. Client complaints can be expressed in different ways, such as through oral or written communication or by filling in performance questionnaires. It is the responsibility of every member of staff to report potential client complaints to the Quality Assurance Officer. The Quality Assurance Officer should register clients' complaints in the Quality Management System's software (eQual Suite) and inform the Chairman. **In 2018, an on-line complaint form will be accessible via the MIO-ECSDE website.**

Statistical processing of complaints takes place and indicators are extracted such as:

- Complaints per project
- Complaints per year/ month
- Complaints per total number of projects
- Percentage of complaints that have been resolved
- Average time to resolve the complaint
- Percentage of unfounded/ founded complaints
- Causes and incidence of complaints

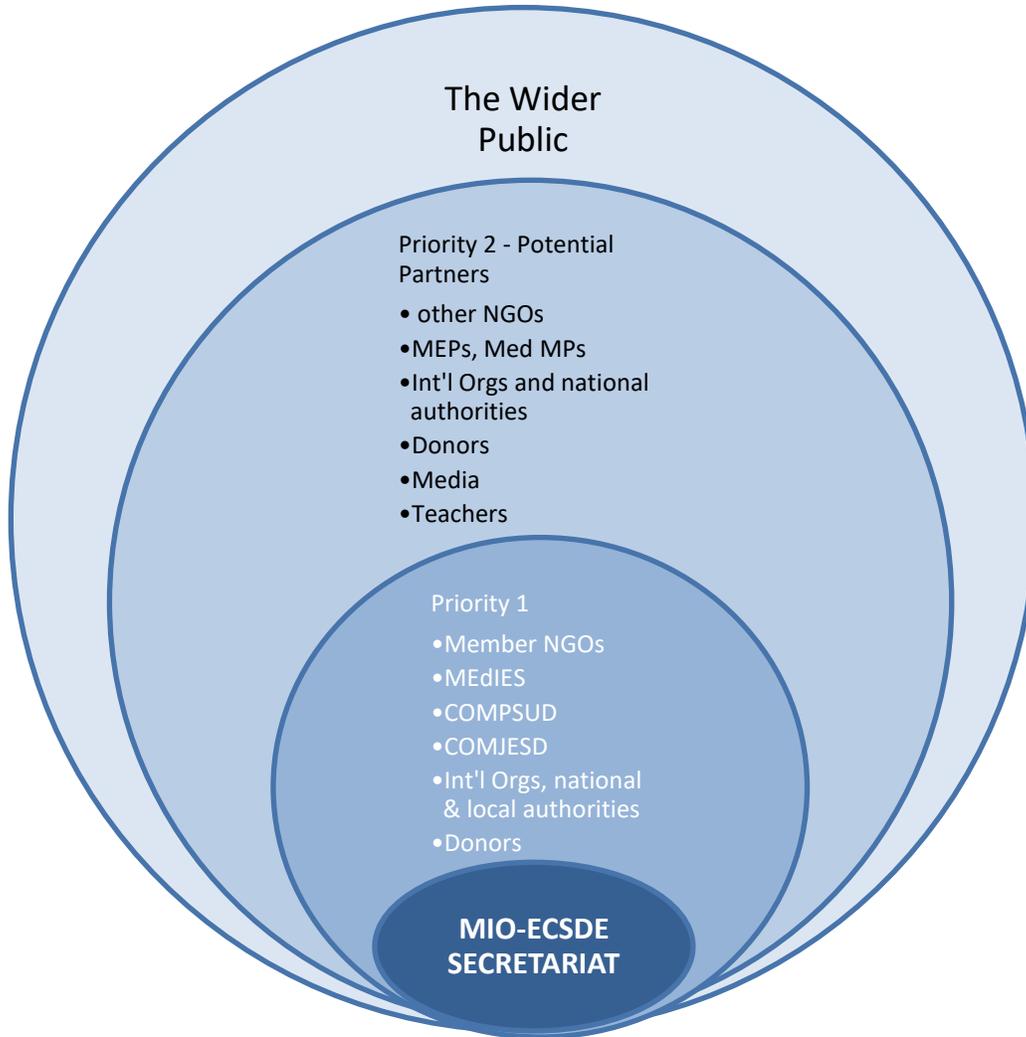


Figure 5: Visualization of levels of cooperation with stakeholders which also guide the level of cooperation and information sharing

MIO-ECSDE’s Member NGOs

The Federation consists of 127 Full and Corresponding Members who share the same benefits and rights, except for the right to vote at the Annual General Meeting (AGM), which is reserved only for Full Members.

The criteria for MIO-ECSDE membership nomination were very specific since the Federation’s creation and are as follows:

1. Any international, regional and national **non-governmental, non-profit** organization of a riparian Mediterranean country **of no political, religious or commercial affiliation** could become a full member.
2. All others (local, governmental, profit-making, non-Mediterranean, etc.) could be accepted as corresponding members.
3. Very new organizations (with less than 2 years of operation) are also placed normally in the category of corresponding members.
4. Every corresponding member could apply for upgrading to full membership after at least serving as correspondent for one year and providing the additional appropriate justification and supporting evidence.

All members retain their rights and privileges as long as they pay their annual membership fees which are decided by the AGM upon proposal by the Executive Bureau (EB). Since 2004 they are maintained at a low level due to the real economic challenges of the region: 100 Euro for full membership and 75 Euro for corresponding membership.

Membership applications are presented to the Executive Bureau (EB). The EB appoints two scrutiny organizations: one from the applicant country and one from the same area of competence (e.g. wildlife protection, etc.). The Executive Bureau Member of the same country also has the right provide additional information. The report and recommendation are then reviewed and evaluated in the next MIO-ECSDE Executive Bureau Meeting. The decision is taken with 2/3 majority and is forwarded for confirmation by the AGM. The applicant is then informed of the decision and is accordingly integrated into the MIO-ECSDE structure.

Following prior notification, members can be removed if they do not participate actively and regularly in the work of the Federation for three years, or for actions that are not compatible with its objectives. Removal of members requires a consensus decision of the Executive Bureau.

The 10 C's

For Strengthening our Membership

1. enhance **C**omprehension through awareness raising and information for proper understanding, particularly of new notions
2. building **C**ompetences and...
3. **C**apacities for NGOs to act accordingly
4. facilitating **C**ollaboration and...
5. **C**oordination among NGOs and other stakeholders
6. creating **C**onsensus and...
7. **C**oherence in formulating policies
8. proposing and presenting **C**oncrete and...
9. **C**onvincing arguments to influence policies
10. **C**onstructive participation and dialogue with governments and other stakeholders

Figure 6: The 10 C's For Strengthening our membership

Cooperation with stakeholders

Co-operation with governments, international organisations, other socio-economic partners and networks is at the core of MIO-ECSDE's strategic and operational planning in order to further synergies and strengthen public participation in the Mediterranean Region and its countries.

MIO-ECSDE has as its guiding operational philosophy and strategy to be actively involved and contribute in the formulation of environmental and environment friendly policies within the framework of sustainable development for the Mediterranean with emphasis on the relevant EU policies. Apart from being internationally recognized as being the most significant Mediterranean Network of Environmental, Cultural and Development NGOs, MIO-ECSDE has also been recognized as a key international player in skillfully bringing together Mediterranean stakeholders (other than NGOs) on issues crucial for the sustainable future of the region and beyond.

The uniqueness of MIO-ECSDE is its irreplaceable role in the formulation of policies and promotion of EU priorities under the Barcelona Convention and the Union for the Mediterranean.

The major role of MIO-ECSDE in these fora is repeatedly acknowledged and respected by the EU, the Secretariats of both of these bodies and by all of the participating countries. In the case of the latter, they recognize their countries' civil society within the MIO-ECSDE structure and also register that their NGOs because of MIO-ECSDE, are aware and understand EU positions and priorities and act in an 'informed' way.

Gender mainstreaming is considered at all levels and steps of the MIO-ECSDE engagement process by, e.g.:

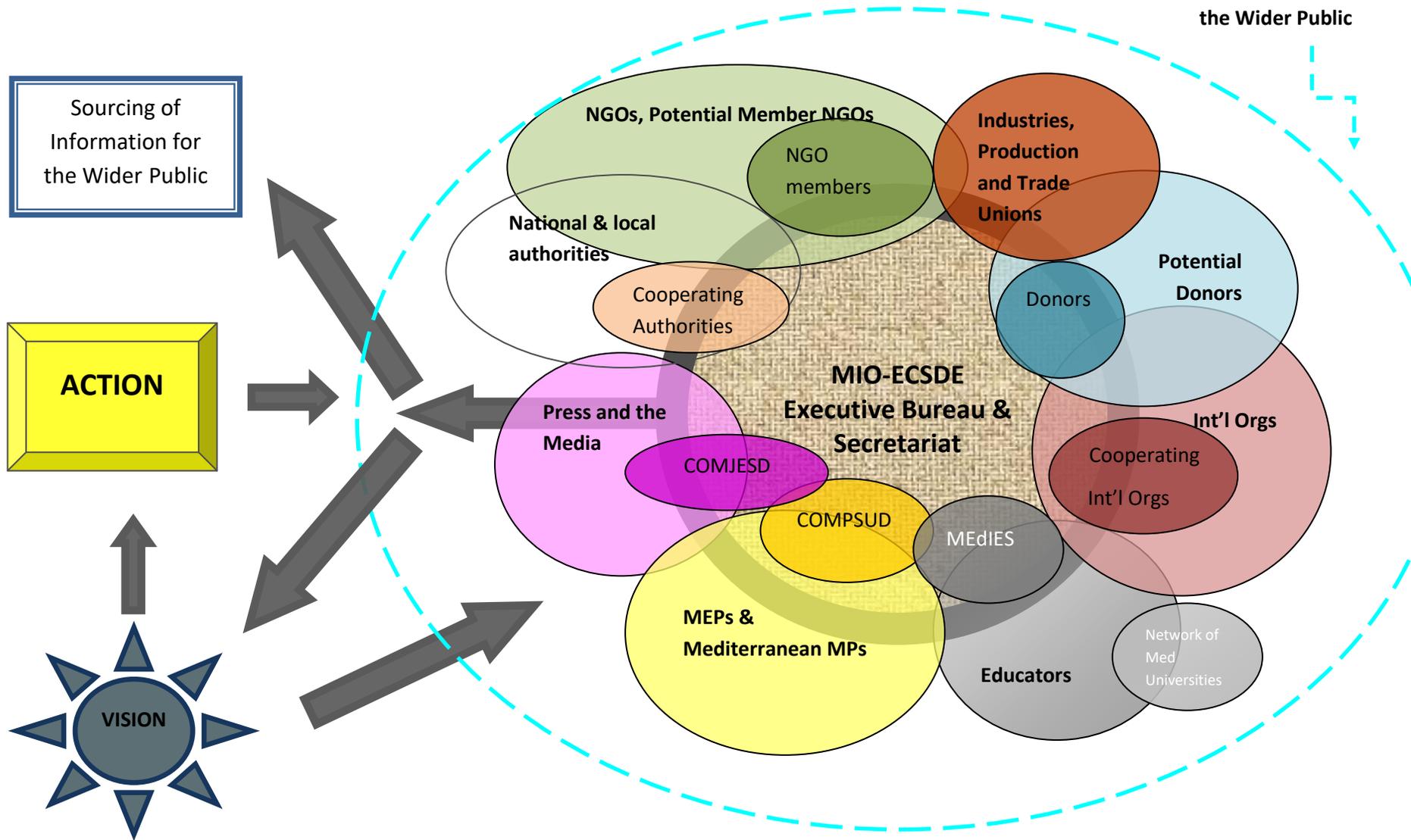
- aiming for gender-balanced composition of project teams, decision making bodies, etc.;
- facilitating women's continued and meaningful engagement in activities as experts, as trainees, as stakeholders, etc.
- ensuring the participation of gender experts in projects.
- applying participatory methodologies which take into account the gender dimension by directly involving a fair share of women in the process and by looking at how gender inequalities/differences are structuring the contexts of the policy/activity areas.

Other Networks supported by MIO-ECSDE

Early in its operations, MIO-ECSDE discovered that there are some stakeholder groups with which cooperation needs to be systematic in order to have real impact on the state of the Environment in the Mediterranean. Therefore, since the early '00s it facilitates four other networks of major Mediterranean stakeholders who play a key role in addressing the region's environmental and sustainable development challenges:



Figure 7: MIO-ECSDE Audience and Target Groups with combined flow of information



Advocating for fundamental change

The standard MIO-ECSDE procedure for the elaboration of any policy related product follows these specific steps, in an effort to have a 'closed policy loop':

- continual monitoring of on-going relevant EU, regional and global policy developments;
- continual monitoring of on-going relevant research;
- development of a draft MIO-ECSDE position (policy brief, position paper, framework document, NGO statement, letter, etc.) depending on the specific occasion/overarching activity;
- running of a consultation process for the finalisation of the MIO-ECSDE position with experts/partners in the field, the MIO-ECSDE membership, the other networks that MIO-ECSDE facilitates, etc. This could be on-line or through the organisation of a workshop or both; ad hoc working groups are occasionally also set up; in the case of a meeting of sorts, invitees selection is a carefully organised process;
- finalise the document and widely diffuse it. This could be from a simple e-dissemination, to a presentation of the MIO-ECSDE position in political and/or technical fora (expert groups, parliaments and EU Parliament, Ministerial meetings, conventions, etc.);
- support the MIO-ECSDE members in their efforts to do the same in their countries;
- continually feed into the information being sent to the MIO-ECSDE members organisations and the MIO-ECSDE database of contacts;
- monitor effectiveness (and impact where possible); At activity level evaluation takes place in various forms: during the activity via questionnaire/survey inputs, before and after a training via a quiz to see if the scores have improved, a long time after an activity to see e.g. personal or institutional capacity development that could be attributed to a specific MIO-ECSDE activity. Often, external evaluators are integrated in policy and activity design. Corrective measures are taken accordingly.
- report to the Secretariat and EB and close the loop for the design of the next steps in the activity/policy area, including corrections, adjustments.

In order to enhance its capacity to act as a more effective sensor of emerging issues and emerging policy priorities, MIO-ECSDE has identified the need to develop an on-line survey to collect its Membership inputs and insights in a more systematic way.

This on-line survey will build upon the methodology and the results of another MIO-ECSDE/MEDIES survey carried out in 2016 with the aim to capture youth's perceptions on current issues related to sustainable development in the Mediterranean region, as well as their visions for the future. The survey was filled by 428 youths (62% were girls) from 25 countries. Its findings have been used to inform policies and have fed into the Action Plan of the Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development; the UNESCO Global Action Programme (GAP) 2015-2019; the 10-year Framework for Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (UNEP); the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (UN Environment Programme/MAP).

Already one emerging issue that has been repeatedly flagged by the Membership is the pressure exerted by increased immigration flows on natural resources. In response, the Secretariat plans within the 2018-2019 biennium to communicate this emerging issue to European, regional, national and local decision makers and define an evidence-based strategic approach on what role environmental NGOs can play, in cooperation with other stakeholders, to alleviate the problem with specific guidelines and interventions on which is already working with its members organizations from the most affected countries.

MIO-ECSDE A WELL-POSITIONED ACTOR IN THE EU AND MEDITERRANEAN FORA

- ✓ MIO-ECSDE is a member of the following EU working groups: the Working Group on Good Environmental Status (WG GES), the Marine Strategy Coordination Group (MSCG), the MSFD GES Technical Subgroup on Marine Litter.
- ✓ MIO-ECSDE is a key member of the Steering process of the Horizon 2020 Initiative for Cleaner Mediterranean which is Co-Chaired by the European Commission.
- ✓ MIO-ECSDE participates in all of the environment and climate change related processes and meetings of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM). The EU is Co-President of the UfM.
- ✓ MIO-ECSDE through its network of Parliamentarians (COMPSUD) has direct access to EuroMediterranean Parliaments. Decision makers are also directly accessed through MIO-ECSDE's frequent participation in the meetings of the UfM Parliamentary Assembly and its Committee (the President of the European Parliament is also the Co-President of this body) dedicated to Water, Energy and Environment.
- ✓ MIO-ECSDE has direct channels of communication with high level officials of EU Member States through the Barcelona Convention Contracting Parties meetings and the working/expert meetings organised by its Secretariat (UN Environment/MAP).
- ✓ MIO-ECSDE is a leading Member of the European Seas Environmental Cooperation (ESEC), an informal network between the Black Sea NGO Network (BSNN), the Coalition Clean Baltic (CCB) and Seas At Risk (SAR), which work for the protection of the marine environment in Europe's regional sea basins: the Baltic, Black and Mediterranean Seas and the North-East Atlantic Ocean. ESEC serves as a pan-European NGO hub for exchange of experiences and know-how on the above-mentioned issues and for coordinating joint NGO actions.
- ✓ MIO-ECSDE works closely with Brussels-based NGOs and other partners with access to relevant European institutions such as the European Parliament (European Environment Bureau, Seas at Risk, Health & Environment Alliance, etc.)
- ✓ MIO-ECSDE works very closely with the European Environment Agency.

Assuring quality, accountability and sound financial management

MIO-ECSDE was certified in May 2016 for meeting the ISO 9001:2015 standards (Quality Management) in the design, development, management and implementation of international and European projects on environment and sustainable development. ISO 9001 is the globally implemented standard for providing assurance about the ability of the certified organisation to satisfy quality requirements and to enhance service satisfaction. It provides a tried and tested framework for taking a systematic approach to managing the organization's processes. An on-line interface for the application of the ISO has been developed and is fully functional.

The Quality Management System of MIO-ECSDE has been developed taking account of the legal and regulatory requirements specified by Greek and European legislation.

The Quality Management System procedures that stem from and at the same time complement the MIO-ECSDE Code of Conduct have helped the Secretariat perform very well in terms of successful management of projects as it was verified in the many successful audits it has undergone, six of which, from different donors, during 2016-2017. As it is always the case with audits, every audit results in additional /new suggestions for making the internal procedures even more complete reflecting the trends of the state-of-the-art era {e.g. most recently in terms of fraud minimisation, complaints and whistle-blowing mechanism).

An ERP accounting system “Soft 1” has been fully integrated into the daily functioning of the Secretariat. The new software facilitates closer monitoring of budget planning in terms of spending/availability, per project/donor, authorisation and tracking of expenditure per project and specific budget line. It also facilitates monitoring and authorisation of payment procedures in relation to successful delivery of related work/service.

The internal control procedures of MIO-ECSDE have been assessed by external evaluators as more than sufficient, and compliance with policies, procedures, and internal controls generally evident. Sound HR policies and procedures are in place, and the level of adherence to these policies often characterized as ‘commendable’. Procedures clearly define the procurement implementation methodology, selection and evaluation of subcontractors/suppliers and ensures the compliance of tenders with the existing legal and institutional framework. Moreover, it determines how to evaluate subcontractors/suppliers during procurement.

MIO-ECSDE is a Member of Accountable Now, a cross-sectoral platform of international civil society organisations. Together, we strive to be transparent, responsive to stakeholders and focused on delivering impact. MIO-ECSDE has signed the Accountability Commitments and applies them throughout the organisation. We report according to the Accountable Now Reporting Guidelines to an Independent Review Panel.

Evaluation and reporting

Monitoring, evaluation and learning occur at different levels. The Executive Bureau closely monitors and evaluates the Work Programme and budget as delivered by the Secretariat. The progress and

development of MIO-ECSDE's main activities, projects, achievements as well as the way the budget has been implemented are presented to the meetings of the Executive Bureau and the Annual General Assembly. In addition, MIO-ECSDE produces an annual activity report for the Annual General Assembly in which it describes its responses to EU policy developments in each area of its work programme. Highlights of successful policy achievements are reported in the Report of Activities with a view to reaching wider (including non-policy) audiences. The Annual Report is submitted together with the yearly Final Financial Statement of the organisation to the Treasurer for scrutiny and comments, then to the Executive Bureau, and then both are presented for clearance and acceptance to the Annual General Assembly.

At staff level, regular meetings between each Policy/Programme Officer and the Head Officer and/or the Senior Financial Officer are used to monitor progress and make adjustments as necessary. The Chairman is informed regularly as well. In 2016 also yearly employee reviews were developed.

In addition to the aforementioned review mechanisms, **MIO-ECSDE, building upon its Accountability Commitments will seek in 2018-2019 to survey member organisations on MIO-ECSDE performance to identify areas for improvement.**

Internal communication

MIO-ECSDE's internal communication is effective and it ensures the staff's strong engagement and high-quality performance. Internal communication is achieved via internal emails to inform on the progress of the main issues; on-line tools such as on-line calendars and on-line project management tools; weekly and *ad hoc* staff meetings. **Annual team building opportunities in the form of e.g. retreats, should be explored when resources are available.**

Strengthening staff competence

MIO-ECSDE staff are characterized by very strong and complementary competences in various thematic areas such as: biodiversity protection, marine pollution including marine litter, green economy, blue growth, chemicals, nanotechnologies, water resources management in transboundary settings, waste management, public participation, ecosystem-based management approach, education for sustainable development, etc. MIO-ECSDE senior staff members have strong skills and experience in policy formulation and advocacy at European, Mediterranean and International level and in implementation of projects in the aforementioned thematic areas; supporting the establishment, function, networking and cooperation of Mediterranean NGOs working on issues relating to environmental protection and sustainable development; drafting and producing position papers, publications, newsletters, bulletins, etc.; organizing thematic conferences, collaborating with stakeholders from different sectors, etc.

Employees are evaluated annually. Apart from personal traits and skills, employees are evaluated against their services to the beneficiaries (developing good relationships, identifying the beneficiary

needs, satisfaction, etc.). Service ratings, close out letters by donors and stakeholders and third-party complaints are taken into consideration in the evaluation process.

Staff training on procedures, new software or updates, etc. are regular, while other opportunities are explored together with the staff or arranged when resources are available.

Few gaps in staff skills have been identified in terms of: (i) effectively addressing EU policy advances related to climate change and aquaculture, one of the key pillars of blue growth; (ii) successfully tapping into MIO-ECSDE’s experiences/successes and converting them into compelling stories; (iii) effectively using social media channels (Facebook and YouTube) to enhance communications impact. Also, more junior staff members need to enhance their skills in project proposal submissions and management. These gaps will be addressed during 2018-2019 with trainings or participation in knowledge strengthening events in Brussels and elsewhere in Europe.

Secretariat (Based in Greece)					
Senior Management			Other Staff		
Gender	Age	Nationality	Gender	Age	Nationality
 0	Under 30 = 0	Greek → 1	 2	Under 30 = 1	Greek → 7
 2	30-50 = 1	Other → 1 (Canadian)	 6	30-50 = 6	Other → 1 (Moldavian)
	50+ = 1			50+ = 1	

Figure 8: Gender distribution of MIO-ECSDE’s staff members.

Maintaining a robust Federation

MIO-ECSDE Membership is remarkably stable. This is very important when you place it in the context of the economic (and socio-political) crisis of the South EU countries and the dramatic changes stimulated through the ‘Arab Spring’ in the non-EU Mediterranean countries. Both situations have affected civil society, its relationship with the authorities and their options for access to financing. Very few member organizations seem to have been affected, with most of them remaining active and in fact important ‘players’ and useful environmental components of the transforming societal web. Most of the members though, have seen their material resources reduced, and as this compounds over time, what has been achieved until now may be endangered, not only in the area of environment, climate change and sustainable development but also in the function of participatory processes and democracy with the involvement of moderate and serious voices on the part of civil

society. It seems that South EU NGOs have become less interested in regional challenges and are focusing more on national and local issues. But this correlates also to the availability of funding in a crisis situation and is not easy to accurately assess.

The Executive Bureau of MIO-ECSDE has decided to maintain a cautious approach to the many new NGOs that have mushroomed in the post Arab Spring phase. Due to lack of resources (surprisingly none of the relevant project proposal submissions were approved) it is impossible to closely monitor the situation. So, extreme care is taken by the scrutiny procedure in place for applications, both for full and corresponding member organization status, till appropriate assessment of newly emerged environmental NGOs is done (either by MIO-ECSDE itself or by another Mediterranean project or body).

The MIO-ECSDE NGO network is quite large, dynamic and changing following the evolution of issues, challenges and policies. In order to maintain and further enhance the deepened partnership that builds upon mutuality, respect, community and a good understanding of each other's situation, continuous effort needs to be invested by the Secretariat. Inactive members are monitored and after a three-year period formally requested about their willingness to remain members.

Communicating who we are and what we do

MIO-ECSDE has already a well-established networking and information communication approach guided by the MIO-ECSDE Communications Strategy and corresponding Action Plan. MIO-ECSDE enjoys quite high visibility not only in the countries of its member organizations but also in other European countries. Apart from being accredited to major relevant conventions and regional organisations, it is internationally recognised as being the most significant Mediterranean Network of Environmental, Cultural and Development NGOs. MIO-ECSDE has also been recognised as a key international player and interlocuteur in skillfully bringing together Mediterranean stakeholders (other than NGOs) on issues crucial for the sustainable future of the region and beyond.

Website: MIO-ECSDE's website (<http://www.mio-ecsde.org>) is a high quality and user-friendly website, which is regularly updated and populated. In 2016 some 30 press releases and feature stories were posted on the website, as well as some 10 publications and multimedia were uploaded on the resources sections of the website. Some website statistics for 2017 are highlighted below:

- On average, the website is visited by **9,811 unique visitors per month**;
- On average, the website has **13,682 number of visits per month**;
- On average, the website has **213,163 hits per month**;
- On average, each user visiting the website browses through **19.82 pages per visit**.

Social networks: In the second semester of 2016 MIO-ECSDE set up and runs two social media channels: Facebook and YouTube. So far the Facebook channel has 303 likes and each of the posts has an outreach of some 600 people. The videos uploaded on the YouTube channel have been watched in full **3,345 times**.

In terms of visibility the following needs have been identified: the need for a refreshed and strengthened MIO-ECSDE identity, including renewed Visual Identity Guidelines and templates

(reports, ppt, press releases); the need for an updated MIO-ECSDE leaflet; the need for a new annual report template; the need for optimizing the use of Facebook and Youtube channels to increase visibility and outreach; the need for improving the staff's storytelling skills; the need for enhanced visibility in Brussels.

Strengthening the capacities of the Membership

Serving one of the initial scopes since its establishment, MIO-ECSDE has been continuously contributing to the capacity building of Mediterranean NGOs in various priority fields of the Federation. Furthermore, MIO-ECSDE has been also strengthening co-operation and promoting the 'team-spirit' among NGOs. Each year the MIO-ECSDE membership directly benefits from a number of workshops, and trainings in a variety of themes, which significantly strengthen their capacities to better meet the drivers of environmental pressures, be they gaps in information, communication, policy or enforcement. Furthermore, the MIO-ECSDE Secretariat facilitates the participation of its membership in other initiatives, programmes and processes in the region.

In 2018-2019 MIO-ECSDE will undertake the following actions in order to maintain and further enhance the deepened partnership within the MIO-ECSDE network:

- **Recruit a Membership Officer to lead the engagement of and liaison with the MIO-ECSDE's current Membership but also work on attracting new active and competent NGOs.**
- **Setup a dedicated tool (an on-line survey) that will assist in assessing the current membership competences and needs in order to design and implement any changes needed to ensure that MIO-ECSDE delivers successfully against its strategic objectives.**
- **Attract new competent Members by launching procurement calls for the external experts needed to strengthen specific thematic areas of the work programme. These calls will include ToRs with provisions for NGO related working experience.**
- **Share more success stories of MIO-ECSDE's members on the improved 'Our Members News' feature on the MIO-ECSDE website.**

MIO-ECSDE as a Member of Accountable Now, has undertaken the commitment to apply the INGO Accountability Charter progressively to all its policies, activities and operations and plans to transfer this knowledge to its member organizations. **In combination with the 23rd AGM of MIO-ECSDE in 2018, MIO-ECSDE will organise a workshop for around 35 Member NGOs on what the value added is of following the principles and procedures of the Charter and how they too can gradually integrate these, in realistic terms, into their administration, management and activities.**

Ethical fundraising

The reputation, integrity, high caliber and independence of MIO-ECSDE, painstakingly gained and maintained over the years, are its main great capital, which needs to be maintained and if possible further strengthened. The safeguarding of this capital imposes certain criteria/constraints as regards the sources and conditions of its funding from private sources which must be transparent and free from any kind of direct or indirect influence or obligations on the policy and strategy of the

organization and must be carefully scrutinized so as not to give rise to any misinterpretation in relation to the independence and integrity of the organization. All of this is reflected in MIO-ECSDE's Code of Conduct where its fundraising principles are outlined, as well as in the Accountability Commitments which MIO-ECSDE has signed.

MIO-ECSDE although a medium-sized, multi-thematic organization, is considered to be relatively successful in its fundraising. It has been awarded the EU grant for environmental NGO networks for 20 years (1991-2010 and 2012). It has been successful in its submissions to EU thematic calls and in the last biennium it has run projects under the 7th Framework Programme, the IPA Adriatic Cross-border Cooperation Programme, the Interreg Mediterranean Programme and the European Neighbourhood Policy Fund by participating as consortium member in EU Service Contracts. It has also succeeded in proposals submitted to international calls and has run projects under the GEF's International Waters Programme, the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, UNESCO Venice Office, etc. It has also approached successfully private donors such as the MAVA Foundation, the Niarchos Foundation, the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation, Cola Cola Foundation and others, while it also has carried out service contracts with UN Environment Programme /MAP. MIO-ECSDE, is for many years now, a member and the Host Institute of the Global Water Partnership Mediterranean and apart from participating in joint projects it provides GWP-Med with accounting and administrative support at a modest overhead fee. When direct funding is not possible, MIO-ECSDE seeks to maximize the possible in-kind contribution through strategic synergies and partnerships. In this respect, MIO-ECSDE manages to secure on annual basis considerable in-kind contributions from private and public donors (e.g. local authorities, Management Bodies of Protected Areas, universities, etc.), as well as from individuals such as the Members of the Executive Board, including the Chairman.

Having described all the above we need to emphasise the great significance of a core funding in order to dedicate more time and effort in contributing and promoting policy related work (which is not eligible for funding under any of the above mentioned tools) and for sustaining a robust Secretariat and management structure and membership. Diversification of Core Funding is one of the main objectives of the 2018-2019 fundraising strategy.

In general, for its thematic project proposal submission component, MIO-ECSDE targets, in accordance with its mandate and work programme, mostly EU and UN calls and programmes (or joint initiatives thereof), without neglecting national (e.g. support for past specific activities has been secured by Sweden, Finland, Italy, Greece, Cyprus, Malta, etc.), local and private sources

For 2017 (most recently audited financial year), the total income of MIO-ECSDE (incl. hosted entities) was 3,650,477€ with 3,075,228 € coming from international funding sources, 432,462 € from private sources and 2,970 € from contributions from members (the membership fee has been kept deliberately very low due to the economic difficulties in the region).

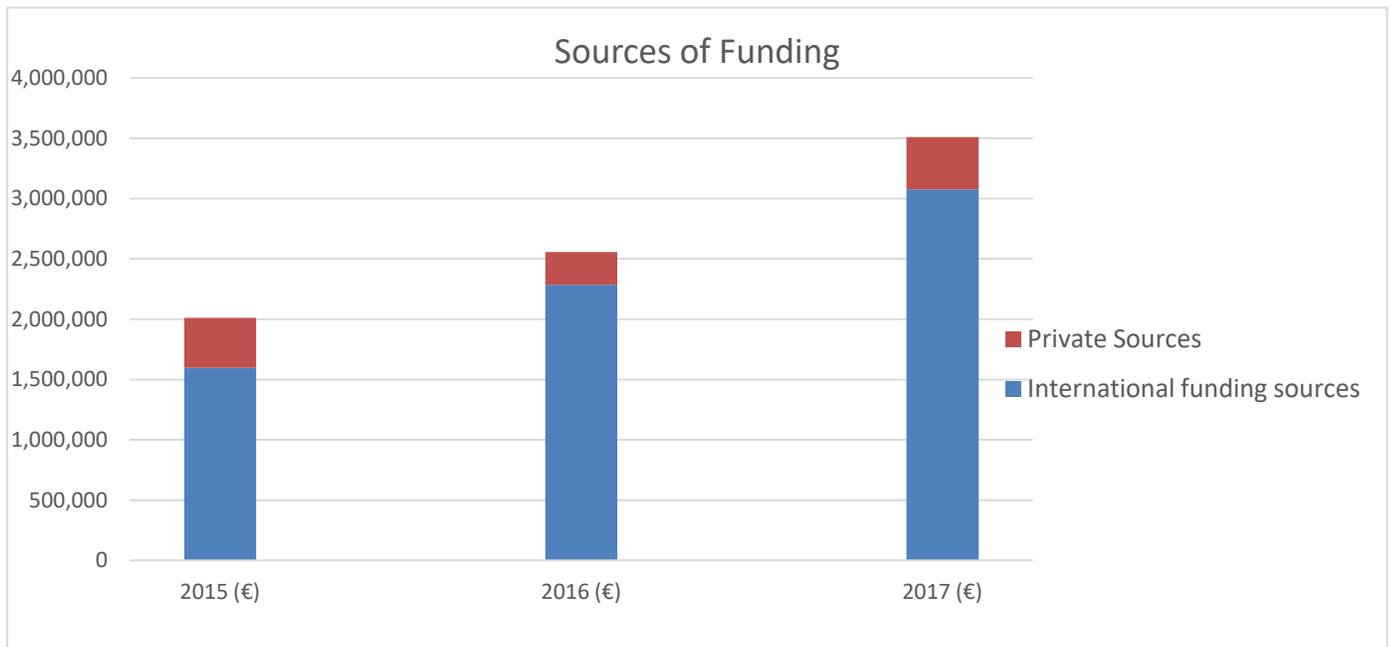


Figure 9: Sources of funding over the last 3 years

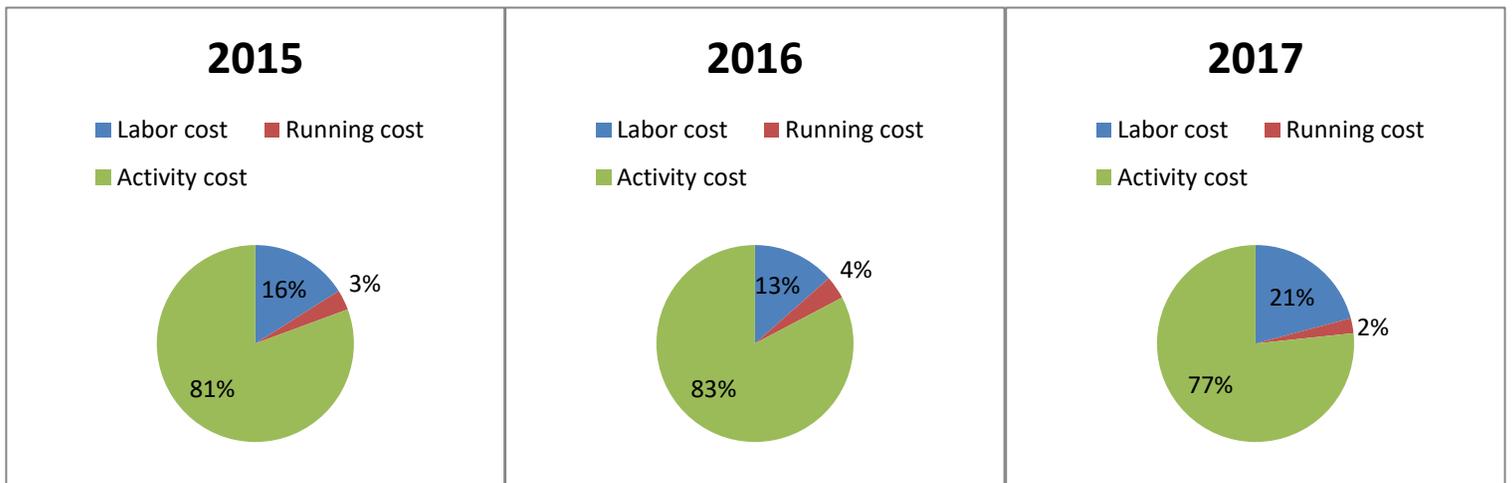


Figure 10: Distribution of the total income in the last 3 years

For the next biennium (2018-2019) financing is promising to a satisfactory degree. It should be stressed that MIO-ECSDE is based in a troubled region and in a country undergoing its worst economic crisis in its recent history. Nevertheless, it has succeeded to function without losing any of its membership, or reducing the number of its staff. This has been recognized by all actors in the region as a formidable achievement, the result of its sound management and proven fundraising capacities.

Its organization capacities in relation to fundraising are listed below:

- Clearly defined mission and vision;
- Clearly defined Strategic goals;
- A network uniquely placed to tackle the challenges faced in the region;
- Trust and credibility with existing donors, who count on the professionalism and connecting power of its staff;
- Past achievements and successful completion of programmes;
- High visibility in the region;
- Strong thematic competences and skills;
- Diversity of funding sources;
- Network's core documentation is up to date including Annual Reports;
- A detailed financial plan predicts income and expense requirements for the coming year(s);
- Exemplary financial management of projects;
- An up to-date website.

Some needs have been identified and improvements require:

- **Enhanced ability to identify and follow funding options, project announcements, including the identification of new 'creative' fundraising ideas for enhancing the core funding needs;**
- **Enhanced involvement of the Executive Bureau Members in fundraising.**

Minimising MIO-ECSDE's environmental footprint

MIO-ECSDE's mission is environmentally oriented and by default works toward a healthy planet. Admittedly however, there is not a systematic measuring and monitoring system in place. There are serious considerations taken to limit the footprint of the Secretariat in terms of energy, water, paper, etc. consumption, carbon footprint of staff transportation and the ecological footprint of its meetings and projects. When it comes to publications, most are electronic, and it is carefully assessed whether printed versions would be meaningful and exactly how many. Compared to the past, the MIO-ECSDE paper, ink and CO₂ (for shipping purposes) reduction is significant.

Waste management and paper consumption: MIO-ECSDE has a waste separation system in the kitchen; the bins are clearly labeled, and the personnel is aware of the importance of re-use and separation. The cleaning service is also aware of the recycling policy in place making use of the relevant municipal bins that are walking distance from the office. Printers are adjusted to printing on both sides and more than 99% of the paper used in the office is non-chlorinated, eco-friendly and recycled. Staff and colleagues are encouraged to have plastic-free and almost paperless meetings and when print-outs are necessary, document layouts are such that minimum double-sided printing pages are required. Most ink cartridges, toners, etc. are refilled. Electrical and electronic equipment no longer in use is either donated or recycled.

Energy consumption: electrical equipment, heating/cooling and lighting are the main energy intensive functions. Natural gas rather than oil is used for heating and for the very little hot water consumed. All the lights are turned off when not needed and after working hours. The premises benefit as much as possible from the natural aeration (due to sufficient windows and created

breezes) and air conditioners are only turned on when temperatures are over 27-28 degrees Celsius. Computers and printers are adjusted to automatically go into power saving mode and are turned off when not in use, to save energy.

Detergents usage: most of the cleansers used are eco-friendly brands, do not contain petro-chemical substances, and are rationally used. Personal hand towels provided to the staff, help minimize the use of paper towels.

Transportation: The employees of MIO-ECSDE travel daily to the work place. Located walking distance from three major metro stations makes the option of public transit easy for most of the staff and visitors. As an incentive, bikes are permitted in the building, but there are no shower facilities. Several travel missions and events requiring air travel are unavoidable for the organisation (trainings, workshops, visits to sites, etc.). However, in recent years, more and more use of video-conferencing and webinar tools (WebEx, Skype, Blue Jeans, etc.) is being used at all levels, from activities, to Executive Bureau meetings and even AGMs, thus significantly reducing GHG emissions.

Green Events policy: for many years MIO-ECSDE has been practicing, promoting and training about how to organize events in a way that their environmental impact is kept at a minimum. In fact, we dare to claim that we have contributed to the noticeable shift towards green conference tourism in the Mediterranean. Since way back, the procurement requirements and calls for offers, specifically required that hotels and meeting venues applied eco-standards and/or were awarded, and demanded plastic free catering services, as well as locally resourced food and other products.

Over 2018-2019 the MIO-ECSDE Secretariat is committed to more systematically calculate, monitor, report and limit further its environmental footprint.

Concluding remarks

This report was a learning experience for MIO-ECSDE, to thoroughly assess its procedures and performance and propose actions to address identified gaps, weaknesses and opportunities for improvement to enhance its accountability over the 2018-2019 period (highlighted in blue throughout the report).

MIO-ECSDE is committed to adhere to the 12 Accountability Now commitments and also support its member NGOs, as much as possible, to integrate them, in realistic terms, into their administration, management and activities.