



European Union
Civil Protection and
Humanitarian Aid



TUNISIAN CIVIL PROTECTION OFFICE

OFFICE NATIONAL DE LA PROTECTION CIVILE

الديوان الوطني للحماية المدنية



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط

**National Office of Civil Protection of Tunisia, Union for the
Mediterranean & Directorate-General ECHO**

1st EUROMED Pilot Workshop on Responding to Wildfires and Natural Areas in the Southern Mediterranean

REPORT



**Tunis, Tunisie,
April 23-25, 2024**





European Union
Civil Protection and
Humanitarian Aid



TUNISIAN CIVIL PROTECTION OFFICE

OFFICE NATIONAL DE LA PROTECTION CIVILE

الديوان الوطني للحماية المدنية



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط

UNION CIVIL PROTECTION MECHANISM

The Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) is a unique initiative established in 2001 by the European Union (EU) to facilitate cooperation among EU Member States and participating non-EU countries in the field of civil protection. The UCPM serves as a platform for sharing resources, expertise, and best practices across borders, fostering a more effective and unified approach to disaster management. The Mechanism pools response capacities from all 27 EU countries and 10 Participating States: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia, Türkiye and Ukraine.

Web: [The Union Civil Protection Mechanism](https://ucpm.europa.eu/)

UNION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN

15 years ago, the Union for the Mediterranean was created on the basis of the Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean, which builds on the Barcelona Process initiated in 1995, aimed at transforming the Mediterranean into an area of peace, democracy, cooperation and prosperity. Civil protection contributes to the objectives of peace, stability and security. October 4th, the Senior Officials of the UfM accepted the principle of a Mediterranean Framework on Civil Protection, which aims to encompass all the actions and activities of the regional dialogue platform which will act as an incubator of the Framework. The latter will cover all the needs for efficient mutual cooperation, and bridge the gap with the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, facilitating its development and implementation in the Mediterranean.

Web: <https://ufmsecretariat.org/>





European Union
Civil Protection and
Humanitarian Aid



TUNISIAN CIVIL PROTECTION OFFICE

OFFICE NATIONAL DE LA PROTECTION CIVILE

الديوان الوطني للحماية المدنية



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط

INTRODUCTION

The 2023 summer season was marked by an unprecedented drought and numerous forest fires that affected the entire Mediterranean basin, putting a strain on the region's national civil protection systems, with an important factor of simultaneity. The climate change situation will intensify the number and scale of forest fires in the Mediterranean basin.

In anticipation of the 2024 summer fire season, this EUROMED pilot workshop co-organised by the Tunisian ONPC, DG ECHO and the UfM was designed to launch a discussion on possible cross-border, sub-regional and regional response measures to fight wildfires and natural area. It is part of the Mediterranean Framework on Civil Protection (MFCP). This MFCP is an initiative of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) supported by the European Commission aimed at strengthening collaboration between countries in the Euro-Mediterranean region in the prevention, preparedness and response to natural and man-made disasters. It is part of a common desire to anchor itself in the Union Civil Protection Mechanism.





European Union
Civil Protection and
Humanitarian Aid



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط



OPENING

The inaugural speeches, successively, by General Abessamad BENJEDDOU, Director General of the ONPC; Mr. Kamel FEKI, Minister of the Interior; Mr. Abdelmonem BELATI, Minister of Agriculture, Water Resources and Maritime Fisheries; Mr Andreas PAPACONSTANTOU, Director DG ECHO/C and His Excellency Ambassador John Paul GRECH, Deputy Secretary General of the UfM;





European Union
Civil Protection and
Humanitarian Aid



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط

Each of them stressed the interest of the initiative in working together, pooling our efforts and resources in order to make the countries of the Mediterranean basin more resilient to wildfires and natural areas.

The intersectoral dimension was mentioned as a success factor, as well as the sharing of knowledge and experiences, thus welcoming the initiative of the Tunisian authorities of this first workshop bringing together countries, civil society organizations and the private sector.





European Union
Civil Protection and
Humanitarian Aid



TUNISIAN CIVIL PROTECTION OFFICE

OFFICE NATIONAL DE LA PROTECTION CIVILE

الديوان الوطني للحماية المدنية



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط

1- A Common Information Base



The main objective of the workshop, which took place at the National School of Civil Protection of the ONPC, was to address the technical and operational aspects related to regional and cross-border assistance to respond to major wildfires on the southern shore of the Mediterranean; and with the expected result being the development of recommendations on cooperation, pooling of capability resources and harmonized operational procedures in the event of request/offer of international assistance.

The first day of the workshop was devoted to a series of presentations giving a complete overview of national doctrines, lessons learned and innovative solutions.



- Tunisia and Algeria: Presentations of their respective strategies and doctrines for preventing and fighting wildfires
- DG ECHO: Presentation of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism and the role of the ERCC (Emergency Response Coordination Centre)





European Union
Civil Protection and
Humanitarian Aid



TUNISIAN CIVIL PROTECTION OFFICE

OFFICE NATIONAL DE LA PROTECTION CIVILE

الديوان الوطني للحماية المدنية



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط



- NîmesMétropole: Presentation of HuB.46, Euro-Mediterranean Centre on wildfires
- Morocco: Presentation on Palm Fire Management in Oases
- Lebanon: Presentation of the National Early Warning System Platform
- PPRD MED: Presentation on the use of space technologies

- Valabre Agreement: Presentation of PANOPTES, Preparation for the deployment of a system for the early detection and monitoring of forest fires and natural areas on a national scale
- CIMA Foundation: Forecasting and Early Warning System for wildfires
- Vallfirest: Presentation of a new generation of equipment for forest fires
- Iturri: Presentation on the safety and protection of firefighters at the Wildland Urban interfaces



- Aria Firefighting: Introducing an Innovative, Multi-Domain Approach to Aerial Wildfire Fighting
- Pau Costa Foundation :Presentation on Wildfires, Fire Ecology and Crisis Management





European Union
Civil Protection and
Humanitarian Aid



TUNISIAN CIVIL PROTECTION OFFICE

OFFICE NATIONAL DE LA PROTECTION CIVILE

الديوان الوطني للحماية المدنية



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط

Similarly, a morning at the GDA (Groupement de Développement Agricole) Sidi Amor was devoted to role-plays, demonstrations and meetings with professionals: Vallfirest, Iturri, Aria, CS Group Crimson, Keplair and Midgard.





European Union
Civil Protection and
Humanitarian Aid



TUNISIAN CIVIL PROTECTION OFFICE

OFFICE NATIONAL DE LA PROTECTION CIVILE

الديوان الوطني للحماية المدنية



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط

Participation of Private Companies



As part of strengthening cooperation with private companies, we organized workshops to showcase the projects and materials that these companies can provide.





European Union
Civil Protection and
Humanitarian Aid



TUNISIAN CIVIL PROTECTION OFFICE

OFFICE NATIONAL DE LA PROTECTION CIVILE

الديوان الوطني للحماية المدنية



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط

2– Working sessions to shape efficient regional cooperation

The four working groups, in addition to the presentations, worked and reflected on proposals and recommendations that would aim to develop the Mediterranean civil protection framework in its dimension of governance, organization of the operational response, and facilitation of the offer/reception of international assistance in the concept of Host Nation Support.



The various items discussed focused on:

- The need to promote cooperation and coordination at regional and cross-border levels
- Sharing data and information to strengthen community resilience and risk management, including capacity resources
- The organisation of exchange missions between the countries of the South and DG ECHO to familiarise themselves with the UCPM





European Union
Civil Protection and
Humanitarian Aid



TUNISIAN CIVIL PROTECTION OFFICE

OFFICE NATIONAL DE LA PROTECTION CIVILE

الديوان الوطني للحماية المدنية



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط



1. The establishment of a real exchange process between the ERCC and the Southern countries in the anticipation/early warning phase, beyond the activation phase of the UCPM
2. Permanent and coordinated contact between Southern countries and the ERCC
3. Work on the development of interoperability criteria for the deployment of ground and aerial assets
4. Provision and pooling of identified resources for international assistance
5. The establishment of a guide containing procedures for receiving and offering international assistance in preparation and operational phase
6. The creation of a working group that will reflect on the implementation of the recommendations of the workshop





European Union
Civil Protection and
Humanitarian Aid



TUNISIAN CIVIL PROTECTION OFFICE

OFFICE NATIONAL DE LA PROTECTION CIVILE

الديوان الوطني للحماية المدنية



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط

3- Bilateral Meetings



Organization of Bilateral Meetings: This workshop was an opportunity to strengthen the relations between the ONPC and the civil protection mechanisms of the participating countries. This event not only allowed for the sharing of successes and challenges encountered in the context of civil protection missions, but also inspired ideas for future collaborations between the ONPC and the attending civil protection organizations.





European Union
Civil Protection and
Humanitarian Aid



TUNISIAN CIVIL PROTECTION OFFICE

OFFICE NATIONAL DE LA PROTECTION CIVILE

الديوان الوطني للحماية المدنية



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط

CONCLUSIONS & OUTCOMES

The conclusions were set out by the Director General of the ONPC, General Abessamad BENJEDDOU, and Commander Laurent Alfonso of the UfM, and highlighted the success of this pilot workshop at the initiative of the ONPC of Tunisia with the support of DG ECHO and the UfM, and the unprecedented support of the French structural cooperation and the Pau Costa Foundation, as well as the contribution of Iturri, Vallfrest and Arias, and the participation of Midgard, CS Group and Keplair, companies that innovate in the field of forest firefighting.

The participants representing the 9 countries, international organizations UNDRR, Leagues of Arab Countries and ARLEM, civil society with CNRS Lebanon, CIMA Foundation, Entente Valabre and NîmesMétropole were warmly thanked for having actively participated in this workshop.

In total, nearly 100 experts of some twenty different nationalities will possibly be the architects of writing a new page in Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in the prevention and fight against forest fires.





European Union
Civil Protection and
Humanitarian Aid



TUNISIAN CIVIL PROTECTION OFFICE

OFFICE NATIONAL DE LA PROTECTION CIVILE

الديوان الوطني للحماية المدنية



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط

The European Union Civil Protection Mechanism is a powerful tool for assistance and solidarity between European Member States and participating countries, and should be able to inspire the Southern countries. They have common areas of risk, and we need to work together on cross-border agreements, such as Algeria and Tunisia. Beyond that, there are specific resources, skills and know-how that must be pooled and thus ensure strong collaboration with the MPCU.

The Union for the Mediterranean launched an interesting initiative last October at the meeting of the Directors-General in Valencia, Spain, of a Mediterranean Framework on Civil Protection on which we still need to work together.

The work carried out during this workshop highlighted the need to clarify and streamline cooperation processes within a timeframe compatible with the urgency of disasters.

We need to work on agreements and partnerships in the field of civil protection, in the early stages of disasters, by sharing available information and data, and we need to set up privileged channels of communication between our countries.





European Union
Civil Protection and
Humanitarian Aid



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط

In summary and the key points made in the conclusions, the following can be noted:

- As a first step, we need to identify updated contact points per country and draw inspiration from the UCPM with a digital platform (in preparation as part of the PPRD MED project with the UfM)
- It is important to be able to envisage regional or sub-regional coordination of activation between the countries of the South, which is quickly operational, but also graduated over time, on the basis of standard modules and with procedures for the exchange of information and common operational management methods, exercises, training and feedback. The need for the establishment of a regional centre or two sub-regional coordination centres for the management of these pooled resources was also highlighted.
- A Mediterranean HNS to facilitate the deployment of resources is desired.
- We must also consider partnerships with the scientific world, Copernicus, EFFIS and integrate universities and institutes from our countries of the South into ARISTOTLE (e.g. CNRS-L), and partners such as CIMA and the Pau Costa Foundation or the Hub 46 initiative, the Euro-Mediterranean centre on forest fires based in Nîmes and with the need for decentralised relays.
- This initiative of this first Euromed workshop deserves to be renewed annually in a country of the southern Mediterranean in anticipation of the preparation of the summer season; It would be desirable for a country to be able to position itself in the coming months.
- The implementation of all these recommendations will have to be accompanied by funding that has yet to be defined.





European Union
Civil Protection and
Humanitarian Aid



TUNISIAN CIVIL PROTECTION OFFICE

OFFICE NATIONAL DE LA PROTECTION CIVILE

الديوان الوطني للحماية المدنية



Union for the Mediterranean
Union pour la Méditerranée
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط

In addition to these conclusions, the Director General of the ONPC, General Abessamad Benjeddou wished to make the following statement

· Establishment of a regional centre in Tunisia: It would be appropriate to consider the establishment of a regional centre in Tunisia for crisis management, particularly in the field of wildfires. The centre could play a key role in coordinating efforts to prevent and respond to natural disasters in the region.

· Valuation of Tunisian experience in the field of volunteering for civil protection: Tunisia has a rich and diversified experience in volunteering for civil protection. It would be relevant to highlight this experience and encourage the exchange of good practices between the countries of the region.

