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Towards the Wetland Contract for the Island of Gozo – MoC signed

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A Memorandum of Collaboration (MoC) – Towards the Wetland Contract for the Island of Gozo – has been signed by the Gozo Region, local mayors and private organisations.

The Gozo Region said that the MoC has been developed within the WETNET project, co-financed by the ERDF under the Interreg MED Programme.

The Gozo Region is project partner, together with other nine partners from five countries (Italy, Spain, France, Slovenia and Portugal).

The MoC consists in the first step towards a Wetland contract, as voluntary tool for participative governance of wetlands.

Wetlands provide benefits that no other ecosystem can. Some of the benefits include natural water quality improvement, flood protection, shoreline erosion control, opportunities for recreation and aesthetic appreciation, community structure and wildlife support, etc.

The Gozo Region explained that the participatory process held in Gozo in the past two years led to the definition and prioritisation of a list of sixteen actions that have been integrated into a Memorandum of Collaboration, signed by the relevant stakeholders as symbol of their agreement with the shared vision, and willingness to collaborate further.

Although the pilot areas originally included in WETNET were the three inland wetlands of Wied tal-Lunzjata, Il-Qattara and Ghadira ta' Sarraflu, the Gozo Region said that the Memorandum is a first step envisaged to pave the way towards a Wetland Contract for the entire island of Gozo.

The actions themselves address critical issues and/or opportunities specific to the Gozitan context and see the integrated collaboration between both public institutions and private organisations, it said.

The Gozo Region concluded by saying that examples include "the dire need for afforestation and irrigation, and the eradication of alien species causing damage to the habitat, but also promotion of organic farming and local stakeholders' engagement in the management of the sites."

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