



Webinar - Concept and programme

« Can local democracy meet environmental challenges? »

Thursday 8 April 2021 (15:00-17:30 [TUNIS time, GMT+1]) - ZOOM

Working languages **EN-ARA**

Concept :

According to Tunisia's 2014 Constitution and the 2018 Code of Local Authorities, the Tunisian state and decentralised structures embarked on the path of sustainable development to ensure a ¹²healthy and balanced environment. As the Mediterranean region warms up 20% faster than the rest of the world, environmental protection is a particularly sensitive topic for Tunisia and its municipalities.

Environmental issues are everywhere at the local level: management of green and natural spaces, management of waste and its recovery, preservation of biodiversity, organisation of transport, development of renewable energies and green jobs. Municipalities have the best knowledge of their territory and its needs, but their environmental skills are often underutilised.

Between a lack of a clear definition of competence and de facto actions, can we talk about local environmental democracy in Tunisia?

The aim of this webinar will be to present the state of the legal situation and to present inspiring municipal initiatives in this area, in Tunisia as elsewhere in the southern Mediterranean, in Europe and beyond.

This event is organised by the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and the National Federal of Tunisian Communities as part of the 9th edition of the Council of [Europe's World Forum for Democracy](#) on the issue "12 months to answer 1 question: Can democracy save the environment?". Each month, a particular angle will be addressed, including, in April 2021, " environmental action at the local level."

The project "Promoting Local Governance" is implemented under the Neighbourhood Partnership with Tunisia (2018-2021) with financial support of Liechtenstein, Norway, and Spain.

¹ Article 12 "the state aims to achieve sustainable development"; Article 14 "the state is committed to supporting decentralisation"; Article 45 "The state guarantees the right to a healthy and balanced environment and participation in climate security. The state must provide the necessary means to eliminate environmental pollution"

²From the explanatory statement, he states that "decentralisation also postulates an organisation that gives local communities a development function that must take into account the new imperatives dictated by the constitution. These imperatives include: ...the protection of the environment and intergenerational and inter-regional solidarity. All this with the participation of civil society. ». Section 210 of the Code also provides for "Art. 210 - The City Council forms, as soon as it takes office, an adequate number of standing commissions, which cannot be less than four for the consideration of the issues before it and necessarily covering the following areas [...] cleanliness, health and the environment."

PROGRAMME

Introduction

Andreas KIEFER, Secretary General of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities: Presentation of the Congress and "Promoting Local Governance in Tunisia" project

FNCT representative (tbc)

Lana COP, World Forum for Democracy, Council of Europe

1. Roundtable: What is environmental action at the local level? Does it exist in Tunisia?

Moderation: Leila BEN GACEM, President of the Finance and Administration Commission of the Beni-Khalled commune

Belinda GOTTARDI, Congress member, CEMR's climate spokesperson and political representative in the Covenant of Mayors for climate and energy - What is environmental action at the local level?

Mohamed BOUDRA, President of UCLG WORLD and of the Moroccan Association of Presidents of Communal Councils AMPCC, Vice-President of the Moroccan delegation to the Congress - Why do local and regional authorities have a key role in the protection of environment

"Municipalities and environment in Tunisian decentralisation law: opportunities and challenges"

Afef MARRAKCHI, Lecturer in public law at the University of Sfax

2. On the ground: tools and concrete examples of municipal initiatives

Moderation: Emna SOHLOBJI, legal expert

Hatem HADDAD, Chair of the Finance Committee, municipality of Kalaat al-Andalus: "Smart Climate City": framing local environmental action

Ahmed GHEDIRA, deputy Mayor in charge of the environment and sustainable development, municipality of Monastir: preserving the ecosystem: the first municipal initiative to protect sea turtles and to protect biodiversity, which sets a fine to the illegal trafficking of sea turtles

Fadhel MOUSSA, Mayor of the Municipality of Ariana, member of the Tunisian delegation to the Congress: acting on soft mobility: project to develop bike paths in partnership with the Tunisian association Velorution

Mohamed MENSI, Mayor of Municipality of Testour: example of decentralised cooperation in the field of waste collection and management

Amel MEDDEB, Head of the municipal district of the Medina, Municipality of Tunis: experience of the group of local elected representatives for the environment

Conclusions and invitation to the Congress webinar on this subject on 26 April 2021