

PRESS RELEASE



YOUNG PEOPLE ARE KEY FOR WATER SECURITY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, AND THEY ARE INNOVATING!

Anafora, Egypt 11 March 2018 – 45 passionate young water professionals from various Mediterranean countries and working on innovative solutions to combat water scarcity in the Mediterranean region are gathered this week in ANAFORA to attend the [World Water Day Youth Workshop](#). Among them are the four winners of the **Mediterranean Heroes Water** contest, Kholoud Al Ajarma from the Palestinian Territories, Saida Benhommia from Algeria, Stefano Basso from Italy and Lahbib Latrach from Morocco are present. They were selected out of 100 candidates from 18 different Mediterranean countries. The event's #WaterHeroes hashtag reflects youth's enthusiasm and determination in being the solution to the Mediterranean region's worsening water challenges, reaffirming the importance of youth inclusion in all fields.

During this 4-day-workshop, the four winners will present their projects to their young peers and participants will exchange ideas, research results, entrepreneurship possibilities and advocacy campaigns on Nature-based Solutions for water security in the region. The workshop will allow young participants to learn from each other's experiences and will bring in international water experts to share best practices and innovations on Nature-based Solutions for water security. The workshop will also create a stronger connection between young participants and will bring in new members and ideas to the one-year old Mediterranean Youth for Water (MedYWat) network for water advocates in the region.

Celebrating World Water Day, the workshop is organized by the [Center for Mediterranean Integration \(CMI\)](#), the [Swedish Institute Alexandria](#) and the World Bank Group with the support of the Global Water Partnership Mediterranean (GWP-Med), the International Center for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM), Switch-Med, Revolve Water

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and UN World Water Day. This water-focused Youth Workshop is an annual initiative led by the Center for Mediterranean Integration. It aims at raising awareness on key water challenges facing the Mediterranean region by bringing together young water researchers, entrepreneurs and activists and prominent regional and global water experts and practitioners. With this initiative, the CMI and its partners seek to amplify the voice of youth in the Mediterranean water agenda.

Young participants were candidates in the second edition of the CMI [Mediterranean Water Heroes](#) contest, created and organized by the Center for Mediterranean Integration. Since its first edition in 2017, the Mediterranean Water Heroes contest received over 200 applications from 18 Mediterranean countries and has connected over 100 youth participants.

Every year, World Water Day draws the world's attention to key water challenges. Mediterranean youth has a key role in working towards regional water security and better water awareness. Indeed, young people are innovating with water in the entire region, and their actions and ideas should be recognized, shared and replicated to create a more secure regional water future and further mobilize other youth, especially in the Maghreb and the Mashreq. Water innovation also constitutes a valuable economic opportunity for youth, with the potential to create numerous green jobs.

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More about the Mediterranean Water Heroes initiative [here](#)

The Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI) is a multi-partner platform where development agencies, Governments, local authorities and civil society from around the Mediterranean convene in order to exchange knowledge, discuss public policies, and identify the solutions needed to address key challenges facing the Mediterranean region. Members of the CMI include Egypt, France, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Tunisia, Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region, City of Marseille, the European Investment Bank and the World Bank Group, and the European External Action Service (EEAS) as an observer. Web: www.cmimarseille.org; Facebook: CMI Marseille; Twitter: @cmimarseille

The Swedish Institute Alexandria (SwedAlex) was established following an agreement between the governments of Sweden and Egypt in 1999. It was inaugurated, on the 3rd of October 2000 by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Sweden and Egypt, Ms. Anna Lindh, and Mr. Amre Moussa. The Swedish Institute Alexandria (SwedAlex) is an autonomous part of Sweden's Foreign Service. Its main goal is to promote dialogue between Europe and the Middle East/North Africa (MENA) in order to make Europeans and people in the region better understand each other. The Swedish Institute Alexandria focuses on the following focus areas: Transition for Democracy and Development, Culture, Religion and pluralism in political; change; Sustainability, Climate Change and investing in the future; Women Rights and Gender Equality. The overarching goal is to promote peace and pluralism through dialogue and creating mutual relationships between the people and cultures of Sweden and Egypt on the one hand and Europe and Middle East and North Africa on the other hand.

Anafora is located adjacent to the desert road of Alexandria. It was established in 1999 by Bishop Thomas (Bishop of Qussia, Assiut Governorate in Egypt). The community center is located 50 Km north of Cairo at the Cairo-Alexandria desert road junction, with a total of 504,000 square meters for its activities. In 2000, Anafora started to receive small groups of people who came to take

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advantage of the center's unique space and engage in periods of meditation, reflection, and re-balancing. Over the past 15 years, the center has burgeoned to become a makeable unique resource for who visit, and has hosted approximately 70,000 people for conferences, seminars, and spiritual retreats. Since its inception, Anaphora's mission has always been to improve the standard of living of those it interacts with. Since 2000, Anafora has executed and participated in several activities in human rights, education, and health promotion, in addition to supporting reform in several other sectors of public life.

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