



PRESS RELEASE

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EcoPeace – ICBSS Regional Workshop for Young Professionals “Promoting Climate Change Action Across the Black Sea and the Middle East”

On 29 November – 1 December 2024, the **International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS)** joined the **EcoPeace Middle East** in organising successfully the Regional Workshop **“Promoting Climate Change Action Across the Black Sea and the Middle East”**.

The workshop was part of the **Climate Diplomacy Young Professionals – CDYP**, a training programme, co-funded by Sida and other donors, and implemented by EcoPeace Middle East, with the aim to promote dialogue and knowledge for climate and water security for societies and countries across regions. The CDYP includes capacity building activities, tailor-made for young water professionals and policy scientists.

The **ICBSS – EcoPeace synergy** stemmed from the wider Black Sea – Middle East regions’ common characteristics: a pivotal geostrategic location at the crossroads of continents and seas, important trade and energy corridors that are gravely affected by the climate crisis. The Black Sea is already acknowledged as the most polluted sea basin, while the Middle East is the most water-scarce region in the world, often described as a “climate hotspot”.

In this context, the workshop **gathered 50 young scientists and environment advocates** that delved into the meaning of climate diplomacy for policy advocacy and awareness raising. Through interactions with their peers from across the Middle East and the Black Sea, participants learnt about the shared realities of the two regions, including how to navigate the complex sociopolitical and environmental crises that affect them.

The workshop also hosted a **dedicated panel on the wider Black Sea region**, with the participation of policy stakeholders and researchers from the region, that shared good practices of multilateral cooperation and knowledge exchange in the Black Sea, building on the experience of regional research projects and cooperation networks.

Amidst the unprecedented outbreak of violence both regions face, the Regional Workshop on Climate Diplomacy for Young Professionals was a milestone initiative, as it emphasised the significance of dialogue, advocacy, and mutual understanding among the next generation of professionals. As it was noted by the organisers, in a highly aggressive and unstable environment, joint initiatives as such are pivotal for cooperation and confidence building; to overcome common challenges, raise awareness and initiate action for common good.

The **EcoPeace Middle East** is an NGO that brings together environmentalists from the Middle East. Its primary objective is the promotion of cooperative efforts to protect the shared

environmental heritage. In so doing, EcoPeace seeks to advance both sustainable regional development and the creation of necessary conditions for lasting peace in the region.

For more information about the EcoPeace Middle East, please visit <https://ecopeaceme.org/>

For more information about the ICBSS, please visit <https://icbss.org/>

About the ICBSS: The International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) was founded in 1998 as a non-profit organisation. It has since fulfilled a dual function. On the one hand, it is an independent research and training institution focusing on the wider Black Sea region. On the other hand, it is a related body of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), and its think-tank. Thus, the ICBSS pursues applied, policy-oriented research, promotes knowledge on the Black Sea region both within and outside its boundaries, and offers policy advice with the aim of fostering multilateral cooperation among the BSEC member states as well as with their international partners.