



MedINA Strategic Plan 2022-2024

Protecting our land and water to nurture life

DECEMBER 2021

Positioning Statement

MedINA is a conservation organization that works with local communities to protect their natural & cultural heritage and foster their prosperity.

Why we are here

Biodiversity and healthy ecosystems are vital for our wellbeing and our very existence. They provide food, they sustain a balance in climate and they support every human activity. Yet, unsustainable human activity is causing climate change, biodiversity loss and is jeopardizing the future of current and future generations. Biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse is one of the biggest threats facing humanity in the next decade.

Greece, located at the heart of the Mediterranean, is one of the richest in biodiversity countries of the European Union; despite its small size, it hosts 25% of the total species of Europe. At the same time, its diverse landscapes and rich cultural heritage make it one of the most visited countries in the world. The need to protect these irreplaceable and invaluable assets is evident.

Yet, Greece's natural assets are vulnerable; almost 1 in 2 endemic species are extinct or threatened, its ecosystems and natural capital are facing multiple pressures from climate change, agriculture, unsustainable practices across sectors, urbanization, tourism and overall degradation of natural resources.

We work with local communities to protect their biodiversity and to reinforce their resilience to climate change, adopting practices that preserve and protect their land and water on which their life depends, becoming stewards of their own natural and cultural heritage. Only when communities become allies in this process can real, sustainable progress be made. **Only then, we can envision a world where societies prosper in harmony with nature.**

Our Strategic Direction

Our vision

A world where societies prosper in harmony with nature.

Our mission

To improve the wellbeing of local communities by conserving and protecting their natural resources and promoting their cultural heritage.

Our values

Commitment

We are committed to our mission aspiring to make the world a better place for all

Collaboration

We believe in collective action as a driver to bring change

Diversity

We believe that diversity of species, ecosystems, cultures & opinions makes us better &

Passion & Creativity

We love what we do. We're excited & inspired by new ideas

Our Approach

Step 1: Combining science & traditional knowledge to build understanding

Our work is based on scientific data combined with traditional local practices, used to identify and understand the most critical issues in the communities and find sustainable and effective solutions. Through a holistic conservation approach that looks into local natural and cultural assets, we tackle challenges in ways that have a positive impact both on people and the environment.

Step 2: Building alliances to find solutions

We collaborate with local organizations, institutional actors, scientists and community leaders to maximize the impact of our work. We seek high-level expertise through partnerships across different sectors and synthesize knowledge to identify the most appropriate approach to the most complex issues.

Step 3: Empowering Communities to foster change

We empower communities to feel proud about their natural and cultural heritage and take ownership in respecting and protecting them. We work systematically and long-term in communities to build those perceptions and behaviors that will encourage participation and action for the protection of their valuable assets.

What makes us different

We take the best things from the past and look into the future. We are not just a conservation organization. We use the learnings of the past to find innovative solutions for the protection of our ecosystems, while improving the wellbeing of communities. We embrace a holistic approach that encompasses:

- ✓ Environmental interventions
We promote the sustainable management of natural resources with the engagement of local, regional and national actors
- ✓ Cultural practices & traditions
- ✓ We preserve traditional knowledge that helps communities progress, maintaining their cultural identity
- ✓ Human welfare
We support communities improve their livelihoods and resilience, promoting opportunities for sustainable development

Our Strategic Priorities

1. Priority 1: Protecting & Conserving Biodiversity

Our goal is to protect our valuable ecosystems, ensuring a sustainable future for local communities

Local communities are places of abundance in terms of biodiversity and unique ecosystems. These communities depend on their natural resources for local produce and economic prosperity and have rich local traditions, which are connected to their land and are part of their cultural identity. However, small communities face major environmental threats due to uncontrolled climate changes combined with unsustainable human behavior. The overexploitation of their natural resources and the loss of local biodiversity is threatening their wellbeing and undermining their development.

We will work with local communities to advance knowledge and influence behaviors, practices and policies that undermine the environment. In collaboration with scientific institutions, farmers, small-scale entrepreneurs and local governments, we aspire to **build knowledge** about the land and water on which community life depends, **pride for cultural practices** that protect these valuable resources and **inspire individual and collective action** for the protection of the communities' natural and cultural heritage. In the next three years, we will engage with **1,000 local community** members to foster positive change and **18,000 citizens** to raise awareness on nature protection critical issues.

Objectives

1. Leverage research for the wellbeing of communities

We will apply scientific research to propose cost-effective solutions to real community problems and promote the wealth of local ecosystems and their value to the community wellbeing. We will ensure that this information is shared with communities to build understanding and inspire action.

2. Empower communities to become stewards of their natural heritage

We will mobilize community members-adults, children and youth-to understand the value of their natural and cultural assets and take action to protect them, promoting community development opportunities with a positive impact on people and the environment.

3. Engage national and local governments to manage sustainably their resources

We will engage with national and local governments for the implementation of critical EU strategies, such as the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030, the Farm to Fork Strategy and the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), as well as their translation into concrete action plans at local level. We will also strengthen our presence in global and regional fora, such as the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the Alliance for Mediterranean Nature and Culture (AMNC) and the Mediterranean Wetlands Alliance (MWA).

2. Priority 2: Building resilient communities

Our goal is to empower strong and healthy communities, protecting the land and water on which their life depends.

Climate change affects communities with significant impact on their social, cultural, and natural resources as well as the local economy and the communities' quality of life. Climate change can reduce the availability of critical natural resources, limiting the options for small communities to develop and opportunities to thrive.

We will support communities to safeguard their livelihoods, preserving and managing their natural resources and becoming resilient against climate change impacts. Using traditional knowledge and science, we will propose sustainable solutions to sustainable farming and water management and we will provide the tools, knowledge and support that communities need to implement them. Along with farmers and community members, we will seek to strengthen local food systems and to improve practices in protecting and managing water resources.

Objectives

1. Secure sustainable food systems

We will empower local farmers to adopt sustainable farming practices to protect their natural resources, produce high-quality biodiversity friendly products and get access to the marketplace. Through our program **Terra Graeca**, we will engage with **150 farmers** in insular and rural communities in the country.

2. Protect & preserve water resources

We will mobilize community members and leaders for the sustainable use and management of their water resources, establishing water collection and management systems based on traditional models and promoting efficient water management policies and practices. Through our program **Aqua Vita**, we will model these systems in **five (5) insular locations**.

3. Priority 3: Strengthening our organization

Our goal is to build a financially sustainable and well-orchestrated organization

We will prioritize the strengthening of our organization, so we can maximize our potential and fulfil our mission in the most efficient way. For the coming 3 years, we will focus on building a financial healthy and resilient organization, expanding our pool of donors, pursuing new funding opportunities and increasing the capacity of the organization to fundraise. We will also establish a strong governance and leadership scheme, that will guide the organization into the successful implementation of its strategy.

Our objectives:

1. Secure the funds needed* to ensure the efficient implementation and viability of our programs

Increase the diversification of our donors, opening new funding streams and invest in the capacity of the organization to pursue new funding opportunities, specifically in the areas of institutional funding and major donor fundraising.

2. Establish a governance and leadership scheme that is inclusive, accountable and effective

Set up a Board of Directors, assign a General Director and ensure the continuous development of the leadership team.

3. Improve efficiency and operation, being results driven and technology savvy

Set up the infrastructure and process to monitor organizational performance with the use of appropriate tools.

4. Build a learning & sharing culture that will help MedINA constantly improve and develop

Adopt a Monitoring Evaluation & Learning process to systematically assess the successes and challenges of the programs and capitalize on their strengths.

*according to the Fundraising Plan

This strategic plan is an expression of MedINA's aspiration to transform communities, fostering their prosperity and well-being.

This is a "living" plan. MedINA commits to put this plan into implementation, link it to a Program Plan and a Fundraising Plan and integrate in into the life of the organization with the active engagement of its staff and with appropriate investment in people, programs and infrastructure.

As this plans moves from concept to action, MedINA will need the right leadership that will allow the organization meet and exceed the challenges that this plan brings forward.

Working at the crossroads
of nature and culture



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