

DOC2AMU INTERDISCIPLINARY DOCTORAL DAY

PRESENTATION OF THE OTMED LABEX INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH PROGRAMME

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The laboratory of excellence OT-Med, an interdisciplinary project for studies on climate change and natural risk in the Mediterranean Region.

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Labex OT-Med is a laureate of the 2011 call of the French Program “Investments for the Future”. It is one of the ten Labex of A*MIDEX initiative. It is based in Aix-en-Provence and led by the CEREGE. The main objective of OT-Med is to promote interdisciplinary research (natural and social sciences) on global change and natural hazards in the Mediterranean basin and the semi-arid regions of Sahel at an international level. Another objective is to elaborate and gather data, models and technologies to help stakeholders for the establishment of public policies in their environmental efforts, and to transfer our knowledge to a large public.

OT-Med is structured into three thematic work packages: (1) Climate change and natural hazards in the Mediterranean (landslides, coastline changes, ...) on various time scales ; (2) Impact of climate and anthropogenic changes on Mediterranean ecosystems and on the services they provide, with a focus on biodiversity, soils, agriculture, forestry, marine ecosystems and trophic webs, (3) Human-environment interactions: perception, adaptation and mitigation; functioning of international governance on climate and biodiversity. Two transverse work packages have been defined to support the modelling (from climate to societal impact) effort and the data acquisition (equipment and databases).

OT-Med is a significant contributor to the scientific ranking of our university in the domain of Mediterranean environmental studies. So far, 17 PhD and 19 postdoctoral fellowships (60% from abroad) have been contracted and to date, 3 PhD students funded by OT-Med have defended their thesis. OT-Med supports the International Carbon Observatory (ICOS) coupled with the Oak Observatory (O3HP) in Saint-Michel l’Observatoire, member of the AnaEE network (Infrastructure for Analysis and Experimentation on Ecosystems), recently selected by the European Space Agency as calibration sites of the AtmoFLEX satellite campaign to measure vegetation fluorescence. OT-Med is strongly committed to interdisciplinary research with several projects involving both natural and social sciences. International collaborations (Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Chad, USA, UK) have been established and maintained by OT-Med, through common projects, invited lectures, mobility fellowships and training events.

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Communication and assessment towards social actors has been one of the OT-Med high priority scopes, with the launch in 2015 of the network of Mediterranean Experts on Climate and environmental Change (MedECC) with more than 370 members. OT-Med also contributes directly to IPCC reports currently in preparation. OT-Med is also co-leader of the group of regional experts and scientists on climate change of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (PACA) region, called GREC-PACA. An important initiative to general public is a MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) on climate change in the Mediterranean region, devoted to high school teachers.