

# the green ink

## Environmental journalism seminar for young Euro-Med journalists

Trondheim, Norway // January 31<sup>st</sup> – February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010

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### I. Introduction

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The world is already undergoing a major ecological crisis virtually affecting each and every one of us, no matter how hard we try to ignore it. If that already sounds like a cliché, it's probably the best proof we haven't done enough. Unlike other such issues, finding solutions to the environmental crisis has already proven to be possible mainly through international collaboration. Involvement is practically each and every human's commitment to future generations.

Therefore, young journalists, who are aspiring to influence the world in which they live and willing to make a change, should be highly concerned. 2010 was declared by the UN as the International Year of Biodiversity ([www.countdown2010.net](http://www.countdown2010.net)). This year also stands for the European 2010 Biodiversity Target, in accordance with Target 7B of the UN Millennium Development Goals – all of these aiming at curbing the continuous biodiversity loss. The Trondheim Conference will be among the most important biodiversity-related gatherings during this year.

The Green Ink project has been developed in partnership with the European Youth Press organization and the Society of Environmental Journalists. Held aside the Trondheim Conference, it offers a unique opportunity for early-career media-makers from both Europe and the Middle East to address contemporary environmental affairs, and in particular those related to the current state of biodiversity.

The seminar participants will get to, not only expand their knowledge about this highly important topic, but also to share their own insights and experience, and to establish international contacts for improving the media coverage of environmental issues. They will also be given the unique opportunity to attend the Trondheim Conference sessions and to cover the event for their home media outlets.

But on top of these goals, The Green Ink also aims at producing collaborative work tackling specific environmental topics. The journalistic projects produced – as written articles, video or audio reportages, photojournalistic pieces or blogs – will be published on a designated website and on various media.

With biodiversity as the main theme of the seminar, a range of aspects of cross-border nature conservation will be brought up: illegal international trade of wild animals, fishery, climate change, regional environmental policies and conventions, cross-border cooperation and others. All of these are intended to reflect the cultural, social and economic causes and impacts within the Euro-Med region echoing in the topics of the lectures and their following workshops.

The 20 participants will be young journalists between 20 and 30 years old, from all types of media. 10 of them from EU countries, together with 10 from the Middle East and North Africa, shall come together for six days in Trondheim, Norway on January 31<sup>st</sup> – February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010. They will be attending a variety of lectures and workshops led by experts on different environmental fields - representatives from environmental NGOs, established scholars and scientists, environmental journalists, representatives from governments and agencies and others.

### 1. Preparation

In order to realize the project, the organizing team, led by Ido Liven, shall continue the project development contacting a number of potential partners in order to coordinate the required funding and logistic arrangements. The team is responsible for processing the applications, approaching guest experts and appointing three trainers to moderate the event. The team maintains regular communication via email and hold frequent online meetings.

A final preparation meeting of the core organizing team will be taking place four days prior to the seminar, in order to review the recent progress, to finalize the event schedule and decide on the remaining tasks and arrangements required.

Working language at the seminar is English. Costs related to the seminar (accommodation, transportation and meals for the participants) will be covered by the organizers.

### 2. Participants application

In order to allow a fair and equal opportunity for all interested young journalists, while ensuring the attendance of those of them who qualify, an application process will be implemented. The basic mean for choosing the specific participants shall be upon an original article (700-1100 words) written by the applicants on a specific topic related to the seminar theme. The article can be either a reportage or a commentary.

The applications shall be received over a period of at least three weeks with the deadline being seven weeks prior to the event. The articles will be reviewed, anonymously, by three lectors appointed by the organizers. A designated grading system for each region will be based on the "Environmental Performance Index 2008" (<http://epi.yale.edu>) in order to give priority to participants coming from countries ranked lower in the list. An emphasis will also be put on equal gender representation among participants.

The 20 best articles will award their writers with the option to attend the seminar. A discussion-group on the seminar's website will give the successful applicants the possibility to communicate with each other prior to the event with ideas for future collaborative projects focused on specific international environmental topics to be realized during and following the seminar.

### 3. Discussion panel

The seminar will kick-start with a welcome dinner preceded by a discussion panel of four to six different experts who are familiar with the media coverage of environmental issues. Moderated by one of the seminar trainers, the panel will hold a debate on the way current media coverage defines the influence over both public opinion and stakeholders on environmental topics, and the changes thereof through the past decade. The seminar participants will be encouraged to present questions to the panel.

### 4. Presentations and journalistic trainings

The first session of the seminar will begin with a couple of ice-breaking games enabling creative interaction and generating open and relaxed atmosphere. The session itself shall allow the participants to familiarize themselves with their counterparts. Each of the participants will have ten minutes for introducing him/herself and their relevant professional background, in addition to a summary of the status of environmental media coverage in their country. Participants coming from the same country will be allowed to present their country's briefing together. The other participants will be encouraged to present a few questions to the presenters.

A following session, led by the three trainers, will be focused on improving the participants' journalistic skills in the scope of developing and implementing joint projects. The participants will be able to discuss working methods on international journalistic projects including establishing contacts, setting budget and schedule and tasks distribution. An emphasis will be put on research and approaching sources in a foreign country. Therefore, in order to experience the challenges in smaller scale, each pair of participants will be asked to research a specific topic given to them by the moderators during the session and bringing their conclusions, while employing all methods available (internet, phone, fellow participants and others). Afterwards, they will present their outcomes and discuss the difficulties they faced and ways to overcome them.

A second training session will be dedicated to presenting and discussing possible narrative styles, forms and constructs, according to each of the different media. These will be demonstrated by exhibiting outstanding examples of journalistic pieces and analyzing them.

## 5. Lectures and workshops

Five lectures, each approximately 45 minutes long (with additional 15 minutes for questions from the participants), by relevant professionals will address different aspects of transboundary environmental matters within the Euro-Med scope. Prior to the seminar, the participants will be provided with abstracts of the lectures and bios of the speakers.

The first session will include the following lectures:

- **Climate change and biodiversity** (IPCC) – ecologist or representative of IUCN/BirdLife/WWF
- **Speaking for the fish: Communicating environmental issues** – an environmental NGO spokesperson or an environmental journalist
- **Greening the plenary: Biodiversity and decision making on the national/international level** (Beyond COP-15, Millennium Development Goals and the 2010 Biodiversity Target) – representative of Greenpeace/UNEP/EEA/Norwegian Ministry of Environment

The second session of two lectures will address two distinctive examples of regional cooperation on environmental issues and will include the following lectures:

- **Something's fishy: Marine biodiversity and fishery** – representative of UNEP/WWF/IUCN/RACSPA-MAP/Greenpeace
- **Handling animals: Illegal wildlife trade** (cultural/economic causes, CITES, endangered species, invasive species) – representative of IUCN/WWF

Following each of these sessions, the participants will be invited to choose a workshop they wish to attend (5-9 participants in the first session workshops, and not more than 12 participants in the second session workshops). Each of the workshops shall be moderated by one of the trainers, and they will all debate the role of the media in dealing with the topics discussed in the lectures. The participants will be asked to respond to the challenges of illustrating the importance of these topics, as well as making them accessible. This will be an opportunity for the participants to bring their own input from their experience of covering either local or international environmental issues and to discuss it with both their colleagues and the different guest experts.

## 6. Field visit

In order to further visualize the complexities and the regional effects of environmental issues, the participants shall go on a full-day field visit to get their own impressions of a local case-study of a transboundary environmental case. The visit will be guided by a local expert who shall be demonstrating the different dimensions of the specific case, along with describing the recent media coverage of it.

Destination to be determined.

## **7. Joint projects development**

The last day of the seminar will be wholly dedicated for developing six future collaborative projects initiated by the participants themselves, with the advice of both the trainers and the guest professionals. The projects can be in the form of a series of written feature articles, photo-journalistic pieces, video or radio reportages or a blog.

These projects, expected to contain a series of 3-6 parts each, will be focused on an international environmental theme. The projects will be published on a designated website and the participants will also be able to publish them on their home media.

In the first session of the day the participants will pitch as many ideas as they wish, and then they will all have the chance to examine and contemplate the different ideas and pick six of those most appealing to them. The chosen ideas will provide the ground for teaming up into groups of at least three members each, with at least one of them from Mediterranean country and one from European country.

The rest of the day will be dedicated for independently developing the different projects. Each of these will be presented in the closing session along with the first part of each of the projects, acting as its introduction.

## **8. Conference coverage and attendance**

The seminar participants will be encouraged to report from the conference for their home media outlets. They will be required to provide a commitment from an editor for publishing at least one item from the event. The participants will be given accreditation to attend the conference sessions and could also use the opportunity to conduct interviews with the conference speakers and participants. The published reports will be collected and posted to the seminar's website.

Nevertheless, the participants will be required to make sure in advance that at any given seminar session there will be no less than 14 of them. They will be given the programs of the conference and the seminar ahead of the event in order to decide, but will also be asked not to miss more than 4 seminar sessions each (with the seminar introduction session and the field trip being obligatory).

## **9. Project sustainability**

On the day of departure, the organizers and trainers will hold an internal evaluation meeting in order to assess the success of the seminar as well as its failures. In addition, the participants will be asked to deliver a feedback on the seminar with their conclusions from the different aspects, content and logistics. Within six weeks after the event the organizers will provide the project's partners with an extensive summary report of the project.

The organizers will monitor and follow the development of each project, providing the needed support. Upon publication of the second part of each of the projects (and no later than two months after the event) the best two of them, according to the decision of appointed lecturers, will be awarded with a grant of 500 Euro each in order to secure further realization. Maintaining further communication among the alumnis will be possible through the discussion group on the seminar's website which will remain operative for their use.

Additionally, the majority of the seminar sessions will be documented (by either written summaries or video/audio recordings) and later be available online on the seminar's website for the use of the participants and the project's partner organizations.

Nonetheless, sustainability is a key issue in the context of a project with the aim of promoting and educating environmental journalism, also on its logistic side. Therefore, the project's logistic arrangements will practically consider the environment with each and every case: prioritizing land-travel over air-travel; recycling waste produced during the event; preferring electronic written materials instead of hard-copies; avoiding use of disposable utensils, etc.

### III. Expected event schedule

#### Day I - Arrival day

Arrival and registration of participants

19.00 Welcome dinner with panel discussion

#### Day II – Introduction day

09.00 – 12.30 Introduction to the seminar and presentations session

12.30 – 13.30 Lunch break

13.30 – 16.30 Presentations session – contd.

16.30 – 19.00 Journalistic projects management training 1

#### Day III – Input day

09.00 – 12.45 Morning briefing and themed lectures session 1

12.45 – 13.45 Lunch break

13.45 – 16.00 Workshops session 1

16.00 – 19.00 Guided tour through the city

#### Day IV – Field visit

07.00 – 21.00 Field visit

#### Day V – Input day

09.00 – 12.30 Morning briefing and journalistic projects management training 2

12.30 – 13.30 Lunch break

13.30 – 15.45 Themed lectures session 2

15.45 – 18.00 Workshops session 2

#### Day VI – Projects development day

09.00 – 10.30 Morning briefing, media representatives' guidelines, pitching session and teams formation

10.30 – 18.00 Development of joint projects

18.00 – 20.30 Projects presentations

#### Day VII – Departure day

Departure of participants and staff

### IV. Steps to realize

<b>November</b>	Approaching potential sponsors; Finalizing funding lines; Arranging venue and accommodation; Selecting trainers; Approaching guest speakers and lecturers; Building the seminar's website; Dissemination of call for application (deadline on December 13th)
<b>December</b>	Arranging field visit, city tour and welcome dinner; Preparing background information materials; Finalizing lectures and workshops content and methods; Application evaluation process.
<b>January</b>	Sending out replies to all applicants and full information to participants; Launching online discussion group; Prep-meeting.
<b>February</b>	<u>The Green Ink seminar</u> ; Collecting and assessing feedbacks from participants.
<b>March</b>	Monitoring established projects and awarding the two best projects with follow-up grants; Sending out project summary report to partners.

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