



**ECOWEEK ONLINE CHALLENGE : The 15 Year Anniversary Edition  
October 2 – 4, 2020**

**NGO ECOWEEK celebrated its 15-year anniversary  
with an online challenge to inspire, challenge and innovate  
with lectures, design workshops and a virtual exhibition!**

**With activity in 17 countries, two online events that reached out to more than 20 countries  
and a network in 56 countries, ECOWEEK brought together young and established  
professionals for innovation and sustainable design, green buildings, Placemaking, social  
architecture, environmental activism, Circular Economy and more.**

Responding to the COVID-19 travel restrictions and the need to intensify environmental awareness, policy and action, ECOWEEK held on October 2-4, 2020 its second **online event** in collaboration with the EUNIC Tel Aviv cluster and the EU delegation in Israel.

The online event was opened by **Despoina Kouinoglou** landscape designer and ECOWEEK Associate who gave the framework of the day, and ECOWEEK founder and coordinator architect Dr. **Elias Messinas** spoke about the ECOWEEK mission and activity around the world. Speakers included keynote speaker **award-winning French architect Nicola Delon (Encore Heureux Architectes)**, and lectures by experts from Israel, Romania, Poland, Austria, Lithuania, Greece, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. **Nine 48-hour design workshops** engaged young professionals and students in architecture, design, landscape design, agronomy and other professions in projects around the world, which may lead to real interventions in place. A unique **virtual exhibition**, was created by a team of young architects and designers and coordinated by architect **Pavlos Symianiakis**, member of the ECOWEEK team. The exhibition aimed to express the values behind ECOWEEK, to represent 15 years with 15 pavilions, and to inspire with ideas on sustainable design, with the exhibition panels of 200 ECOWEEK design workshops in 17 countries.

Two ECOWEEK - EUNIC Tel Aviv lecture panels were moderated by architect and environmental consultant Dr. **Elias Messinas**, founder and coordinator of ECOWEEK, an adjunct senior lecturer at Holon Institute of Technology, Israel and University of Patras, Greece. A third ECOWEEK panel was moderated by architect **Sofia Passia**, a member of the ECOWEEK organizing team.



The lectures and workshops presentations were held on ZOOM on Friday, October 2 and 4 respectively, and were broadcasted live on Youtube. More details at <https://ecoweeek.online/>

### THE LECTURES

The ECOWEEK - EUNIC Tel Aviv panels addressed the topic: **Preserving the planet : How to reverse the trend?** Given the situation reported by the scientists, the global targets of the current state of the planet as opposed to the targets set by governments or the Paris agreement of 2015, the situation is quite disheartening and even worrisome. What the panelists presented were proactive and positive initiatives, examples of good practices, and policy that, if applied on a global scale, could help reverse the trend. Speakers spoke for 15 minutes and then had a Q&A with the moderator and chat questions from the public.

The mid-day lectures panel on the topic Preserving the Planet: **Making it (more) Circular and (more) Sustainable** was moderated by architect **Sofia Passia**. The panel included speakers: Landscape architect engineer and Urban Designer **Natalia Pantelidou** from Greece, educated in Denmark, with over 10 years' experience in balancing the technical and cultural aspects of architecture in her work. Today, she is the Vice Mayor of Public Works in the Kalamaria neighborhood of the city of Thessaloniki in Greece. Her lecture shared examples and good practices of **Kids and Public Space**.

### THE WORKSHOPS

#### 'OVERCOMING THE COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS WITH (ONLINE) CREATIVITY AND SUSTAINABILITY'

ECOWEEK has developed for the past 15 years a platform where young professionals and students meet experts and together they analyze the site, get to know the local stakeholders and develop in co-design frameworks ideas, diagrams, plans, and prototypes, many of which are implemented in on-site hands-on workshops. Since COVID-19, ECOWEEK had to adjust by seeing an opportunity to keep enabling these empowering, engaging and educating formats on online platforms, and keep creating as much as possible of an experience that is compatible with the physical workshop.

The first experiment took place in May 2020, where teams of young professionals and students worked with experts from around Europe on projects on circular economy in design. The second experiment took place in October 2-4, 2020, where also in collaboration with EUNIC Tel



Aviv - the network of european cultural institutions Tel Aviv cluster, experts from around Europe, Israel and South America, were invited to lead the interactive ECOWEEK workshops. They worked with students and young professionals from Europe and Israel to produce ideas in **Thessaloniki**, Greece, **Vienna**, Austria, **Netanya** and **Ashkelon** in Israel, and **Sao Paulo** in Brazil. Projects included real projects with the aim to further develop them as prototypes and to be constructed in situ by local teams. Other projects included inspiring prototype ideas that could be applied in different urban contexts. Overall, the COVID-19 restrictions and the online 'limitation' were overcome to maintain the parameters that make the ECOWEEK workshops stand out: location and real context, community, and sustainable design.

### ABOUT ECOWEEK

ECOWEEK is a non-profit organization, established in 2005 by architect and social entrepreneur **Elias Messinas**, with the passion to change peoples' habits and the mission to raise environmental awareness and to promote sustainability. Based in Greece and Israel, for 15 years ECOWEEK has been engaging, training and empowering more than 4000 students and professionals from 56 countries with inspiring speakers and challenging design workshops. ECOWEEK has become for many young professionals a unique experience and a turning point to their growth and career.

ECOWEEK **Organizing Team**: Elias Messinas, Despoina Kouinoglou, Pavlos Symianakis, Sofia Passia, Vicky Panagiotidou, Eleni Mantika, Nafsica Mouti, Margarita Kyanidou, Ina Patsali, and Theodora Passia.

ECOWEEK **Exhibition Team**: Pavlos Symianakis, Evgenia Dickins, Mehmet Kisa, Artemis Korovesi, Foteini Masiala, Despoina-Elisavet Michaelidi, Flaka Pergjegaj, Çlirimtare Syla, Bijona Trakaniqi, and Anjeza Vokshi.

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