Clean Beaches 2010
HRH Princess Lalla Hasnaa in the presence of the laureates of program “Clean Beaches” 2009 in El Jadida
The FEE has appreciated Morocco's work and progress: 20 of the 57 beaches in the program «Clean Beaches» have hoisted the Blue Flag. Beachgoers have observed the difference: the Blue Flag label and the Clean Beaches program have helped reconcile them with their beaches. This is due mainly to efforts in cleanliness. Specialized companies have been contracted to improve beach cleanliness and promote beachgoer awareness activities.

Thanks to support for ministerial departments, which are gradually strengthening, structuring and institutionalizing, in 2010 the Foundation and its partners have committed to actions to improve the quality of sand and bathing water, which are important Blue Flag criteria and to the opinion of beachgoers. Bathing water quality is monitored on 129 beaches, 15 beaches more than in 2009.

Six pilot beaches prepared for the implementation of the New European Directive (NED) for bathing water quality: Mdiq, Agadir, El Jadida, Skhirate, Achkar and Sidi Rahal. Profiles have been established for each of these beaches, including the identification and study of pollution sources affecting their water quality.

In 2010, for its eleventh season, the international coordinators of the Blue Flag Program inspected eight labeled beaches. This visit's magnitude demonstrates the degree of maturity and sustainability that the Clean Beaches program has become. The program reinforces its operators, the Mohammed VI Foundation for Environmental Protection (FAME), as a key player among the sixty member countries of the International Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), which promotes the Blue Flag label.

In 2010, the first season for mycological analysis of the sand was conducted on 10 beaches: Saidia, Cala Bonita M&Diq, Martil, Haouzia, El Jadida, Safi, Essaouira, Agadir, and Sidi Ifni. This action will be extended gradually to all beaches.

I should like, once again, to praise the work carried out by the Foundation, which falls within the scope of the development efforts I am spearheading as part of coherent, continuous program designed to promote awareness about the need to preserve our country’s natural resources and diversity within the framework of a sustainable development policy.

In this connection, I regard the Clean Beaches program as a model of practical action for preserving our beaches and for promoting environmental conservation habits through partnership mechanisms and the combined efforts of all the stakeholders involved.

Extract from Message of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, read by Her Royal Highness Princess Lalla Hasna, President of the Mohammed VI Foundation for the Protection of the Environment on the occasion of the Celebration of the 10th anniversary of the launch of “Clean Beaches” program- El Jadida, November 8, 2010.
To enhance the swimmer safety and organize water sports on the beaches, in 2010 the FM6E and its partners have committed to a number of actions.

A. STRENGTHENING SWIMMER SAFETY

In 2010, the General Directorate of Civil Protection recruited 2,050 lifeguards. Training and professional working conditions have also been strengthened.

a) Professionalization of the lifeguard profession

Following the successful experiences of 2008 and 2009, in 2010 ANAPEC assured training for lifeguards and professional supervisors from Civil Protection, in first aid, stress management and communication. The covenant rules, which are to be observed by lifeguards, have been published as posters and badges worn by seasonal lifeguards. Two training sessions were also held in El Jadida in April and May. These sessions involved 230 people, and focused on the technical maintenance of rescue equipment, navigation techniques for inflatable boats and jet skis, and sea rescue techniques.

b) Acquisition of rescue equipment:

Civil Protection equipment was enhanced through the acquisition of:
- 600 latest generation life preservers
- 160 new boats to renew the General Directorate of Civil Protection lifeboat fleet,
- A set of rescue equipment was offered by ONE for Oualidia beach, which included a jet-ski, 10 buoys, two megaphones, two pairs of binoculars, 30 parasols, and 3 watchtowers.

B. STRENGTHENING WATER SAFETY:

Markup of beach zoning: 34 beaches were marked up in 2010, equal to 6 more than in 2009: Saidia, Sidi Kaouki, Larache, Plages des Nations, Dar Bouaza, and Mirleft.

Zoning compliance: In order to respect all signage and strengthen safety, the FM6E held consultative meetings with all stakeholders (the Department of Ports and Public Maritime Domain and Department of Merchant Marine from the Ministry of Equipment and Transport; the General Directorate of Local Authorities (DGCL) and Civil Protection from the Ministry of the Interior; the Royal Gendarmerie; and the General Directorate for National Security). These meetings focused on raising awareness about the increasing number of accidents, requesting the authorities to enforce the measures imposed in the existing Ministerial circulars, and strengthening beach supervision. With this aim, the Department of Ports and Public Maritime Domain set up public service awareness signage.

The Health and Safety Committee established by the FM6E for the Clean Beaches program has held numerous meetings to improve beach health coverage. Upon completion of this work, the Ministry of Health sent a circular to all its delegates to strengthen the system of health coverage on the beaches by:

1. The establishment of beach medical units with the Civil Protection and the Moroccan Red Crescent. This antenna, consisting of a physician or nurse, is responsible for providing first aid to the wounded and referring difficult cases to the nearest hospital.
2. Regular monitoring of restaurants and retail food outlets, in collaboration with the Municipal Hygiene Offices (BMH).
3. The sanitary control of drinking water at points installed on the beaches.
4. Participation in public awareness events on issues of health education (respect of beach hygiene, environment, etc.).
5. Training and supervision of public and private entities responsible for beach first aid services.
6. The programming of supervisory visits to the beaches to assess first aid and assistance services by local health teams (Health-BMH).
7. Activity coordination for different stakeholders (Health, Moroccan Red Crescent, Civil Protection and BMH).

In order to monitor health coverage on the beaches, Ministry of Health delegates send the Department of Epidemiology and Disease Control the health coverage action plan for each beach, developed in consultation with the Civil Protection, the Moroccan Red Crescent, and BMH before the start of the summer season (June 15). They will then send a detailed report on health coverage at the end of the summer season.

Finally, the Department of Hospitals and Ambulatory Care has updated the composition of the beach emergency kit, which is referred to in the «Health, Hygiene and Safety» guide published by the FM6E.

In 2010, the FM6E and its partners committed to two important actions for beach development: the establishment of beach use and management plans, and a Blue Flag label management procedure.

BEACH USE AND MANAGEMENT PLANS

To reconcile the expectations of tourists, safety requirements, hygiene, and environmental protection, requires well thought organization for each beach. The experience obtained since the beginning of the Clean Beaches program now enables the perfect design of beach space. The FM6E and the Department of Ports and Public Maritime Domain had this intention, by launching a study to develop a beach use and management plan. This first study phase involved six beaches in 2010: Bouznika, Mohammedia, Ain Diab, Sidi Rahal, Dar Bouazza and Mehdia.

This initiative is expanded to areas that undertake similar studies, through the Regional and Provincial Departments of Equipment. They concern the following beaches:
- Essaouira and Sidi Kaouki (Essaouira)
- Miami and Ras Rmel (Larache)
- Ras Ali Ma, Miami, and Arakman (Nador)
- Sidi Ill, Imin Toungha, and Sidi Mousou (Tiznit)
- Saidia (Berkane)

BLUE FLAG LABEL ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE

Maintaining a Blue Flag beach label requires constant vigilance. In order to enable the labeled beaches to monitor deviations from the Blue Flag criteria requirements and the timely detection failures, a detailed procedure has been prepared and sent to all partners (local authorities and joint sponsors).

Nador Lagoon, an area of great wealth and with a comprehensive plan for lagoon remediation and protection, provided the ideal place to educate local people about the interactions between beach management and lagoon preservation. National and international experts presented their experiences on this topic.

The event made it possible to focus attention on wetlands preservation, which requires sustainable management including beaches.
The national Clean Beaches committee members made unannounced visits to the beaches between July 9 and July 30, 2010, to verify compliance with the Blue Flag label qualification criteria. Their findings, studied and discussed at working sessions, confirmed the progress of these visits.

**1- BATHING WATER QUALITY (BWQ)**

Despite the procedure for disseminating the Bathing Water Quality results introduced by the Clean Beaches national committee, the display of results is not yet widespread.

**2- PLANNING & MANAGEMENT**

The unanimous user opinions collected during these visits confirmed the progress in beach planning and management. Only a few minor areas for improvement were noted:

- The open-air showers, while useful for tourists, generate excessive water consumption and pollution associated with the use of shampoos and soaps.
- The maintenance of restroom facilities is satisfactory, but some failures have been identified due to the staff responsible for maintenance.
- Some construction was observed on the public maritime domain.
- Some failures with the heavy cleaning equipment acquired by the business partners and placed at the disposal of the Municipality have led to deficiencies in cleaning the sand.

**3- SAFETY & HEALTH COVERAGE**

The strengthening of logistical and human resources has led to a significant improvement in beach health coverage. Some points to improve are noted:

- Lack of facilities, and sometimes personnel dedicated to this activity, have hindered the widespread use of first aid units on beaches.
- On some beaches, facilities for civil protection and/or first aid have been allocated to other activities.

**4- ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION**

Unannounced visits revealed the massive participation of local associations in raising awareness and environmental education. These associations have demonstrated original and innovative ideas: various workshops for youth, educational games related to the environment, libraries on the beach, etc.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

To capitalize on achievements, overcome recorded failures, and raise beaches to meet international standards, the national Clean Beaches committee has made the following recommendations:

**1- BATHING WATER QUALITY (BWQ)**

The laboratories will be responsible for displaying test results every 15 days. The results document will include website links to the department concerned, where the results will be published in full. This Internet publication will allow a wide diffusion of BWQ results.

**2- PLANNING & MANAGEMENT**

To improve beach maintenance and cleanliness, the committee agreed that this action will be entrusted entirely to the private sector. In this context, it is necessary to ensure recovery of the fully functional maintenance equipment at the municipal level, such as sand screeners already acquired by the partners, but which remained out of service.

**3- SAFETY & HEALTH COVERAGE**

- Some disorder-generating activities on the beaches should be banned, such as the rental of parasols, chairs, tables, etc.
- Some practices that jeopardize the overall beach landscape and aesthetics, such as using sheets to make tents, should be banned.

**4- ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION**

The success of environmental awareness and education enables their extension to a maximum of beaches. The participation of local associations and federations in raising awareness and environmental education will be encouraged.

Data sheets (CD) on the status assessment for all 57 beaches covered by the Clean Beaches program highlight the accomplishments and gaps in terms of equipment, management, hygiene, safety, and implementation of environmental awareness and education. It also contains information on the backshore, rescue equipment, first aid, health centers, etc.
Mohammed VI Foundation for the Protection of Environment thanks all its partners who have made of 2010 edition a great success.

So much thanks also to the Royal Moroccan Federation for Yachting and to the National Federation for Moroccan scouting and to associations which have provided growing awareness actions with an added value.

Thanks also to the media and particularly to the Moroccan Radio and Television and 2M for their numerous broadcasted reports which contribute to the success of the operation.

And finally, our particular thanks to Mr. Mohammed Bennani, designer of Lalla Hasna Trophy for beaches.