



7<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum

## *Regional Final Report*

### *Mediterranean*

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# Mediterranean Regional Process

2015-05-15

#### Regional Coordinators

Institut Méditerranéen de l'Eau (IME)

Global Water Partnership Mediterranean (GWP-Med)



*Le projet bénéficie du soutien de la Fondation Prince Albert II de Monaco*

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# 1 Executive Summary

The Region's specificities demonstrate the strong linkages of water, food and energy with due reference to environmental/ecological and climate change considerations, especially as the Mediterranean is considered as one of the main 'hot spots' in the world according to the IPCC. The nexus approach, involving agriculture, energy, industry, tourism, urban development, nature conservation, climate resilience, etc. with due consideration for cross-cutting issues (e.g. gender, equity, poverty, rights, health) entails the prescriptions for improved and holistic water management reforms.

Representatives from a wide range of national and regional stakeholders involved in the water and environment sectors – national and local authorities, regional organizations, private sector, civil society, institutes, initiatives, donors, consultancies – took part in this consultative, inclusive and participatory process.

The Mediterranean Preparatory Process for the 7<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum supported by working groups identified six thematic priorities of the region to prepare its participation to Korea: effective water governance; integrated water resources management (IWRM); sanitation for all; adaptation to climate change; improving education and capacity building; science and technology. Dedicated thematic sessions were held during the World Water Forum along with a concluding session of the overall Process.

## 1.1 Key messages from the region

The Mediterranean Water Community approached the 7th World Water Forum with a clear commitment to share experiences and gain from the related exchanges with other regions. A Position Paper elaborated in this framework has a dual purpose: to reflect on what has been achieved in the Mediterranean and what is needed further. Also it aims to communicate the key messages of the Mediterranean Region to the global water community, foster further collaboration to obtain tangible impacts, responding to the expectations and servicing the needs of people throughout the world



## 2 Introduction

### 2.1 Background

The Mediterranean water community has traditionally been very active at the World Water Forum, the global water community's largest regular interface with an outreach to actors outside the water box, strongly voicing core messages and highlighting experiences from the region. This contribution has been systematically concretized for each Forum through a dedicated Mediterranean Cross-Continental Preparatory Process.

The Process towards the 7<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum that convened on April 12-17, 2015, in the Republic of Korea, was launched in February 2014, coordinated by the Mediterranean Water Institute (IME), in close collaboration with the Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean (GWP-Med), and steered by a multi-stakeholder Committee involving national and regional water actors.

The preparatory process in the Mediterranean Region was initiated by IME, GWP-Med and the involved partners in February 2014 after the 2<sup>nd</sup> Stakeholders Consultation Meeting of the 7<sup>th</sup> WWF in Korea, where guidelines for the regional process were confirmed.

The regional process was inclusive and opened to any interested stakeholders who wished to participate.

The region's contribution to the 7<sup>th</sup> WWF was made by consensus among IME, GWP-Med and the members of the Steering Committee and in agreement with all the other Mediterranean stakeholders involved.

### 2.2 Regional Overview

At the crossroad of three continents (Africa, Asia and Europe), the Mediterranean is a particularly water stressed Region with specific geographical, ecological, geopolitical and cultural features. This formation traditionally renders the Region a "privileged locus of exchanges" among countries and stakeholders, with water firmly placed at the heart of national and regional policies and with a series of successes, despite the unfavourable regional conditions in a vastly and rapidly changing Mediterranean and global setting. In addition to developmental and environmental challenges, currently the region faces an economic crisis, with socio-political unrest and armed conflicts in the southern and eastern part, aggravating the pressures on natural resources in many countries, including the strains on water, exercised by the influx of a large number of refugees.

Efforts towards water security constitute a key challenge within and across countries, especially as traditional water uses (i.e. agriculture) continue claiming the largest share of available water resources (particularly in the South and East of the region) and consumption, not only because of lifestyle changes but also due to demographics, is still increasing. Climate change implications including more frequent extreme phenomena (floods, droughts), rapid urbanisation trends, increased demand for resources (water, energy, other), rapidly changing socio-political conditions linked also with the urgent need for job creation, add further layers of complexity in the struggle to achieve sustainable management of water resources.



Similarities across the region linked to climate, geography and culture, provide fertile ground for broad cooperation to improve water management practices and involving a considerable number of regional and international partners. Although in this context, action is underway by a variety of stakeholders at local, national, regional and transboundary levels, still more is needed.

The Region's specificities demonstrate the strong linkages of water, food and energy with due reference to environmental/ecological and climate change considerations, especially as the Mediterranean is considered as one of the main 'hot spots' in the world according to the IPCC. The nexus approach, involving agriculture, energy, industry, tourism, urban development, nature conservation, climate resilience, etc. with due consideration for cross-cutting issues (e.g. gender, equity, poverty, rights, health) entails the prescriptions for improved and holistic water management reforms.

## 2.3 Overall Progress

The Mediterranean Preparatory Process for the 7th WWF was officially set off during a regional workshop held in Rabat, Morocco, on the 18th June 2014. During the Rabat Workshop a dedicated session presented the context and structure of the 7th WWF and introduced the themes and the modalities of the Mediterranean Preparatory Process. It is noted that the Rabat Workshop launched also the 2nd Mediterranean Water Forum. This most important event in the Med Preparatory Process held in Murcia, Spain, on 25-27 November 2014 and aimed to gather representatives of the Mediterranean Water Community at large to discuss issues of common concern and interest.

Beside the Steering Committee activities and the 2nd Mediterranean Water Forum, several other meetings have been organized as milestone events in the Mediterranean region for the 7th World Water Forum. Those events ensured that the Mediterranean regional process contributes to raise water issues high on the agenda of leaders and promote dialogue and the exchange of experiences on policies and solutions to increase water security with a view of presenting a concerted view of Mediterranean realities, challenges and ways forward at the 7th WWF.

A final meeting is kept under the shape of a conference call to finalize the participation in the 7th forum and prepare the Position paper of the Mediterranean Region.

Over the last year, a series of milestone meetings took place, structuring the work in six working groups focused on identified thematic priorities, namely: effective water governance; integrated water resources management (IWRM); sanitation for all; adaptation to climate change; improving education and capacity building; science and technology. These working groups formed the Mediterranean Regional Process' dedicated sessions during the World Water Forum along with a concluding session of the overall Process.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Beirut Water Week (Beirut, 22-23 May 2014), the Kick-off Meeting (Rabat, 18 June 2014), the 2nd Mediterranean Water Forum (Murcia, 25-27 November 2014), as well as a Concluding conference call (1<sup>st</sup> April 2015) marked the Mediterranean Process' way to the Korea Forum, along with regular Steering Committee meetings that provided the necessary guidance. For example, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Mediterranean Water Forum hosted plenaries, debate panels, side events and working groups with more than 300 participating stakeholders, exchanging views on common key water challenges, solutions, priority actions for the world water community, innovative ways to strengthen the water management knowledge base, as well as current and upcoming issues, such as the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus.



## 2.4 Regional Design Coordinators and Partners

Stakeholders from all Mediterranean countries were invited to participate in the process and also the Neighbouring countries.

The Mediterranean Region touches on Africa, Europe and Asia and involvement of some countries may be relevant in more than one region. Thus, consultations with related Design Groups were carried out aiming to identify options to prepare joint sessions during the 7th WWF. Similar consultation were sought with the other processes of the 7th WWF (Thematic, Political, Science and Technology), so as to enhance the impact of the Mediterranean messages beyond the Region.

### Partners and consulted stakeholders

Similar to the process followed for the World Water Forums of Istanbul and Marseille, the partners involved in the Mediterranean Process within the Steering committee are organizations (institutions or network) working actively in the Region and representing the stakeholders concerned with and working on water.

- Network partners: Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE), Euro-Mediterranean Irrigators Community (EIC), Euro Mediterranean Water Information System (EMWIS), Foundation-Instituto Euromediterraneo de Agua (FIEA), Institute de Prospective Economique du Monde Méditerranéen (IPEMED), Mediterranean Network Basin Organizations (MENBO), Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE), Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED).
- Institutional Partners: Centre for Mediterranean Integration (CMI), the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfMs), PLAN BLEU - UNEP/ MAP, Fondation Prince Albert II de Monaco.

It is noted that for the 7th WWF, IME and GWP-Med besides ensuring the involvement of their members as network partners, they also cooperated on the overall coordination of the Mediterranean Preparatory Process.

The Steering Committee also integrated National Authorities in charge of Water in the Mediterranean countries which expressed the wish to be a part it.

Region	Sub-region*	Organization	Focal Point (Contact info)	Country	Role	Note
Sub-region*	Mediterranean	Institut Méditerranéen de l'Eau (IME)	<i>Milagros Couchoud</i>	France	Coordinator	
		Global Water Partnership - Mediterranean (GWP-Med)	<i>Michael Scoullos</i>	Greece	Coordinator	

\* Note: If applicable.



## 2.5 Final Regional Session “Towards a Regional Water Knowledge Platform”

The Final Mediterranean session is based on priorities targeted by the UfM Ministerial Conference on Water (Amman, Jordan 2008) in its recommendations made within the framework of an EFFICIENT AND SHARED ELABORATION AND FOLLOW UP MECHANISM particularly the following: “(1) the importance of data, information and statistics, ... (2) the strengthening the coordination of exiting Euro-Mediterranean initiatives and networks ... (3) the importance of exchange of best practices (5) the importance of elaborating and implementing through participatory processes, effective national and local IWRM based on realistic financing strategies”.

The first part of this final session presented the highlights and main conclusions of the regional Mediterranean sessions held during the 7th World Water Forum on six priority themes : Integrated Water Resources Management, Effective Water Governance, Water Education/Capacity Building, Climate Change, Sanitation for all and Innovative technologies on water.

The second part of the session introduced a regional approach for the implementation of a ‘Regional Water Knowledge Platform’. This platform will include all the main components which are required to develop a vision and a strategic plan for sustainable management of water resources, and will bring together all the water and environmental stakeholders from the Mediterranean region.

The Regional Water Knowledge Platform should improve the coordination of challenges and solutions related to water and the environment. Most especially, it should help implement good practices in integrated water management in the Mediterranean region by enhancing good governance, bringing forward the best information systems, and above all, proposing tools that can help decision-making for rational use of water resources and the improvement of populations’ living conditions - of a social economic and environmental nature.

### 2.5.1 Session Program

Jointly coordinated by Ms. Milagros Couchoud from IME and Prof. Michael Scoullou from GWP-Med, the Final Mediterranean Session commenced with a keynote speech by the Honorary President of World Water Council, Mr. M. Loic Fauchon and continued with a synthesis of all six thematic sessions held during the Forum, with each Focal Point presenting the highlights and main conclusions.

Following a brief presentation of the Mediterranean Position Paper as elaborated during the Regional Preparatory Process and concluded during the Final Mediterranean Workshop (Athens, 1 April 2015), a plenary discussion and targeted interventions took stock of the current state of water in the region, asserted the context of the Position Paper and discussed areas in need of urgent action through an inclusive, transparent and informative multi-stakeholder process.

With a dedicated discussion, the Final Mediterranean session discussed the ‘Regional Water Knowledge Platform’ project, presented by MENBO on behalf and as one of the project promoters. The Platform shall include all main components required to develop a regional vision and strategic plan for the sustainable management of water resources. This Regional Platform should bring together as many Mediterranean



water and environmental stakeholders as possible, improving the coordination on challenges and solutions, helping implement good practices in integrated water management in the Mediterranean region, enhancing good governance, bringing forward the best information systems, and above all, proposing tools to help decision-making for rational use of water resources and the improvement of populations' living conditions. The first reactions to the Platform echoed that this is a positive, yet ambitious initiative, that needs to link closely to existing institutions and networks, particularly for securing the needed financial resources. Also, adjustments may be required in the process, especially considering the emphasis on information gathering, the rapid changes with new technologies and the semi-static nature of assessments in view of the region's prospect analysis.

The session included also a High-Level Panel Discussion with representatives from the Foundation Prince Albert II of Monaco, governments of Algeria and Spain, the Global Water Operators' Partnerships Alliance (GWOPA)/The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UNHABITAT), GWP-Med, as well as IME.

## 2.6 Key messages

The Mediterranean Water Community approached the 7th World Water Forum with a clear commitment to share experiences and gain from the related exchanges with other regions. A Position Paper elaborated in this framework has a dual purpose: to reflect on what has been achieved in the Mediterranean and what is needed further. Also it aims to communicate the key messages of the Mediterranean Region to the global water community, foster further collaboration to obtain tangible impacts, responding to the expectations and servicing the needs of people throughout the world.

- the Mediterranean being a microcosm itself feels the global change circumstances in a stronger and more urgent way, and therefore needs more innovative approaches and an overall behavioural/mind-set change;
- there is a need to bring closer concepts on ethics with those on economic efficiency;
- There are several strengths in the region, notwithstanding the solid and long-standing experience with political and economic processes;
- There are no regional tools in the Mediterranean. There are old-fashioned national tools to deal with existing and emerging challenges;





## 3 Outcomes

### Three pillars are expected to guide the Mediterranean Process' priorities:

1. a renewed governance approach that will trigger the necessary change of mind-set/behaviour;
2. sustainable and transparent financing;
3. The apparent link between transfer of knowledge, education and Science- Technology - Innovation.

Although not a novel thinking, the above needs to be contextualised in a more sophisticated manner.

### 3.1 Recommendations

- Learn from others and from existing knowledge available around the world and especially the one that goes into the roots of education. Develop more the South-South knowledge transfer;
- Need to convince Governments to dedicate resources for the needed soft activities (that are often marginalised as the benefits are not immediate);
- Develop innovative Science & Technology for water knowledge sharing, also with relation to climate change;
- Allow for more transparency in the decision making, including for the storage and transfer of water;
- Understand better and provide the financing for ecosystem services. Consider nature as one of the providers and not only as a user.

### 3.2 Commitments

In reference to the launching of the Mediterranean Water Knowledge Platform by the same Steering Committee which coordinated the Mediterranean Preparatory Process for the 7<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum and the organisation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Mediterranean Water Forum, the mobilization of the stakeholders of the Mediterranean Water Community concerned by water and environment will continue.

Each coordinator remains in charge of the follow-up of his respective thematic under the facilitation and coordination of IME and GWP-Med.

### 3.3 Follow-up steps after the 7<sup>th</sup> Forum

After the 7<sup>th</sup> WWF, the SC set up will continue to be in contact with the preparatory process of the 8<sup>th</sup> WWF and the 3rd Mediterranean Water Forum which should be held in a country of the Region during 2016.



### 3.3.1 Future Orientations

A more political approach will be integrated to the Preparatory process for the next WWFs

### 3.3.2 Implementation of the action plan and monitoring

By the end of this year, a more detailed evolution will be proposed to the main stakeholders concerned in the Mediterranean Region in order to define an Action plan more coherent and federative.

## 3.4 Distinctive achievements

### *A great distinction at the Water Showcase Global Final*

Apart from the above-mentioned sessions of the Mediterranean Regional Process, a regional success came also through the great distinction that GWP-Med received at the Water Showcase Global Final, a special programme of the 7th World Water Forum, on 15 April 2015, [with the 2<sup>nd</sup> place ranking of the Non Conventional Water Resources \(NCWR\) Programme in the Mediterranean](#), a multi-stakeholder programme, with activities in water scarce insular communities in Greece, Malta, Cyprus and Italy. The NCWR Programme in the Mediterranean was the only non-Asian showcase, with strong competition from India, South Korea, Bangladesh and Indonesia, among more than 120 showcases from around the world. *"This distinction is a proof of acknowledgement that the programme constitutes a showcase which can be adapted and replicated in water scarce communities not only in the Mediterranean but also around the world. For GWP Mediterranean, it has been a continuous effort to develop and expand the programme in the Mediterranean since 2008 with the support of Coca-Cola"*, said Ms. Konstantina Toli, Senior Programme Officer at GWP Mediterranean and Coordinator of the NCWR Programme, as the result was announced.

## 4 Conclusion

Representatives from a wide range of national and regional stakeholders involved in the water and environment sectors – national and local authorities, regional organizations, private sector, civil society, institutes, initiatives, donors, consultancies – took part in the consultative, inclusive and participatory process. They ultimately finalized the Mediterranean contribution for Korea during the final Steering Committee Meeting of the Mediterranean Process at the Athens (1<sup>st</sup> April 2015), synthesizing the main messages and sharing views on the key regional concerns into a Mediterranean Position Paper on "Addressing the crisis and 'nexus' through innovation and good governance", which was widely disseminated during the Forum.

In future World Water Fora, the Mediterranean Process shall place emphasis on urban issues, as well as on exogenous factors, such as climate change, socioeconomic pressure from refugee flows, unemployment, etc. For the 7<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum, effort was placed on tackling urban issues horizontally, hence the absence of a dedicated working group.

By its specificity of arid and semi-arid zone, the region marked its contribution in the 7<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum by presented solutions and best practices which could be help in other similar regions in the world.