Editorial from the President of the Mediterranean Water Institute

Dear friends of water,

From September 29th to October 2nd 2026, Italy and the city of Rome will host the Euro-Mediterranean Water Forum, an event that the Mediterranean Water Institute is offering in partnership with the One Water Committee Italy and the Union for the Mediterranean, following the 5th Mediterranean Water Forum in Tunis 2024.

Today, our basin is one of the planet's climate "hot spots": available freshwater is decreasing, its uses are multiplying, and tensions between agricultural, urban, industrial, tourist, and ecological needs are growing more intense every year. Faced with this reality, the Mediterranean can no longer afford to act separately. Together, it must invent the solutions for tomorrow.

That's exactly what this Forum is about, opening right after an important political moment: the day before our sessions, on September 28th, the 43 member countries of the Union for the Mediterranean will meet in Rome to adopt a Ministerial Declaration on water. This text will, for the first time, bring the whole region together around common goals, and it will give our Forum, whose themes align with the priorities of this declaration, a strong political mandate: to turn commitments into concrete, measurable and shared actions.

During four days, experts, public decision-makers, companies, researchers, local authorities, and civil society will come together to build answers to the big water challenges in the Mediterranean, around eleven topics that will structure our discussions:

1. Water scarcity and unconventional resources, to explore desalination, reuse of treated wastewater, and alternative solutions to cope with water stress.

2. Companies' water footprint and the value of water, so the economy finally integrates the true price of the resource and acts accordingly.

3. A new European vision of water, to provide a clear political direction across the continent and its Mediterranean neighbours.

4. Blue finance and blue investment, to mobilize the capital needed for the water transition (conservation, sobriety, efficiency, and resource diversity).

5. The water-energy-food-ecosystems nexus, to think of these resources as a system rather than in silos.

6. Beyond the source-to-sea approach, to widen our view from watersheds to the open sea, one single water cycle.

7. The prevention and management of extreme climate-related events, with droughts and floods at the forefront, and EW4Med implemented in each sub-region.

8. One health, one water, to connect human, animal, and environmental health.

9. Water governance, involving cities, basin authorities, and all stakeholders, moving from commitments to action.

10. The new blue technological hope, digital and AI water-efficient, serving water innovation.

11. Hydro diplomacy, to advance the right to water as a lever for regional peace and stability.

These eleven themes are not just simple session titles: they outline the roadmap for a Mediterranean that chooses cooperation over competition for water, and that makes this shared resource a bridge between shores rather than a dividing line.

The Mediterranean Water Institute, true to its role as a regional network of institutions, professionals and experts for over forty years, will be fully engaged alongside you during this Forum. We hope it will be a space for rigorous dialogue, but also a place for concrete decisions and commitments, directly continuing the Ministerial Declaration of September 28th. To make the Mediterranean a laboratory for the planet.

So, I look forward to seeing you in Rome, with the conviction that water, a common good of the Mediterranean, can and should become the thread that connects our shores rather than the one that separates them.

Welcome everyone!

Alain Meyssonnier

President of the Mediterranean Water Institute