



TOWARDS A MEDITERRANEAN WATER KNOWLEDGE PLATFORM

Summary Note



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Knowledge for adapting water resources management to climate change

This project responds to the request made by the Ministers at the Water Conference of the Union for the Mediterranean held in Jordan in late 2008 to improve water governance processes not only on their territory but also on shared resources and more generally in the Mediterranean region as a whole. The establishment of a Mediterranean Water Knowledge Platform is, indeed, a prerequisite to the development of sustainable policies for integrated water resources management (IWRM) and climate change adaptation.

The challenge is twofold: firstly, to provide a common basis for the development of National Water information Systems - NWIS - allowing both cost reduction in the implementation and harmonisation of data needed for inter-institutional, regional and international co-operation in a country, and secondly, to develop a regional framework (White Paper) capable of performing a detailed assessment of available resources, environmental needs, uses, and major policies and programmes of measures applied in the countries of the region. To ensure appropriation at local and national levels, the project focuses on the data, information and expertise necessary for planning integrated water resources management and water policing.

The harmonisation of data provided by the NWIS and analyses and thinking given in the White Paper will allow a valuation of best IWRM practices, joint management of transboundary resources and follow-up of regional or sub-regional policies in the Mediterranean region, such as the draft Mediterranean Strategy on Water, draft Water Strategy for the Western Mediterranean region under 5+5, the Strategy of Arab countries on water, Mediterranean Pollution removal, the water and sanitation component of the Sustainable Development Goals, the future UN sustainable development goals or the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development.

The project directly contributes to facilitating the involvement of all stakeholders concerned in order to improve the democratic process and have greater transparency in the administration. In addition, data infrastructure provided by the project is likely to generate the creation of added-valued services and thus contribute to growth through innovation in the Mediterranean countries and promote investment in the region (donors).

The main expected results are:

- Operational NWISs in Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan, and Lebanon providing data needed at all levels of government and public institutions for socio-economic development and sustainable management of water resources in their countries;
- A database on water resources shared between Arab countries (Arab League);
- A demonstration and validation of reporting automation (through NWIS) to international initiatives on voluntary basis, namely the Mediterranean Action Plan of UNEP (Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development), the Arab League (water resources shared between Arab countries), the European Environment Agency (Pollution of the Mediterranean);
- Harmonised regional guidelines and a series of training courses for the development and management of shared water information systems in accordance with European principles in



force and ready to be applied by all Mediterranean countries. The implementation of these recommendations will guarantee success and the reduction of costs and duration in the development of future NWISs;

- A regional platform for exchange of experiences, best practices and for co-ordination between the Mediterranean countries;
- A comprehensive assessment of conventional and unconventional resources, sectoral water use, produced and treated pollution;
- Recommendations on the process of developing national white papers on water based on dialogue with stakeholders.

The project is based on the knowledge gained on water data management in Europe (Shared and enlarged Environmental Information System -SEIS, Water Information System for Europe -WISE, INSPIRE Directive for spatial data infrastructure), the United Nations system (System of Environmental Economic Accounting for Water - SEEA-W), in some developed countries (France and Spain - Spanish White Paper in particular) and tools and data provided by the European Space Agency.

The White Paper will cover five Mediterranean pilot countries (Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Spain, and Tunisia) in its first phase. NWISs will be achieved in four pilot countries which already started this process (Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia). Other Mediterranean countries will be involved in joint actions, methodological validation, training and transfer of best practices. The development of NWISs and White Paper in other volunteer countries having an appropriate context could be considered if additional funds can be raised.

The beneficiaries are the national and local water authorities and other government agencies involved in the water sector, especially the ministries and their supervised agencies in charge of the environment, agriculture, health and statistical institutes. Data management will be strengthened with a win-win approach for all institutions involved to guarantee success and better appropriation.

This Mediterranean water knowledge platform is part of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (European Neighbourhood Policy, H2020, SEIS).

The project received the Union for the Mediterranean label in April 2014. In June 2015, it has been selected as a solution of the Mediterranean region for mitigation and adaptation to climate change in the region.

Project promoters: International Office for Water (Information Systems) and Mediterranean Water Institute (White Paper on Water)

Implementation partners:

- **Jordan** : Ministry of Water and Irrigation,
- **Lebanon**: Ministry of Energy and Water
- **Morocco** : Ministry of Energy, Mines, Water and Environment
- **Tunisia** : Ministry of Agriculture (General Directorate of Water Resources)
- **Spain**: Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment,
- Euro-Mediterranean Water Information System
- Arab League Center for Water
- Blue Plan (UNEP-MAP activity centre)
- Mediterranean Network of Basin Organisations
- Euro-Mediterranean Water Institute
- AGBAR Foundation

