

**MEDITERRANEAN COMPONENT
of the EU Water Initiative
(MED EUWI)**

**Strategic Partnership on
Water for Sustainable Development**

Lead Country: Greece

MED EUWI

PROGRESS REPORT

4 November 2003

1. Background and political commitment

The Mediterranean Component (MED EUWI) is an integral part of the EU WI and shares its overall objectives, aiming to:

- assist design of better, demand driven and output oriented water related programmes,
- facilitate better coordination of water programmes and projects, targeting more effective use of existing funds and mobilization of new financial resources and,
- enhanced cooperation for project's proper implementation, based on peer review and strategic assessment.

MED EU WI, announced during WSSD, currently runs its Design Phase, giving particular emphasis to Mediterranean and Southeastern Europe priorities.

Political commitment for the development of MED EUWI has been already expressed in various fora, inter alia, the *EU Informal Council of Environment Ministers (May 2003, Athens)*, *5th Pan-European Ministerial Conference of the "Environment for Europe" process (May 2003, Kiev)*, *Euro-Mediterranean Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs (May 2003, Crete)*, *two meetings of the North African Ministers Council on Water (February and October 2003, Cairo) etc.*

2. Thematic Areas

The MED EU WI focuses on the following Themes:

- Water supply and sanitation, with emphasis on the poorest part of the societies
- Integrated water resources management, with emphasis on management of transboundary water bodies
- Water, food and environment interaction, with emphasis on fragile ecosystems
- Non-conventional water resources

while as horizontal Themes are identified

- Transfer of technology, transfer of know how, capacity building and training
- Education

Key areas where the MED EUWI could make a difference are likely to include:

- Promoting water as a cornerstone of sustainable development
- Raising the programmatic profile of water in PRSPs and NSSDs of partner countries
- Coordinating funding for water in a better way among the partners of the Initiative
- Linking together the wide range of financing ideas, networks and mechanisms that currently exist for water in the Mediterranean and Southeastern Europe
- Supporting better project preparation facilities
- Supporting the elaboration of a wider range of models for water sector restructuring in addition to involving private sector participation by competent international operators.

3. Actors

The area of activity of MED EUWI comprises, the following *partner countries* :

In the Mediterranean – Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Turkey, Tunisia.

In the South East Europe – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Former Yugoslavic Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), Romania, Serbia and Montenegro.

MED EUWI is open to all partners willing to commit to the objectives, targets, and guiding principles, having genuine willingness to work with others seeking practical solutions. Partnership refers to partnership between the EU and the Mediterranean and Southeastern European countries as well as partnership between government, civil society and the private sector. Non-EU donors and international organisations (including the UN family and the IFIs) are also invited and encouraged to join the Initiative.

A regional Multi-Stakeholder Working Group assists in the development of the MED EU WI. The Component is led by the government of Greece while the MED EUWI Secretariat has been undertaken by the GWP-Mediterranean Secretariat.

4. Activities

Within 2003, a set of activities are under development aiming to reach consensus on the objectives and modalities of the Component, develop a sound background, secure political commitment and raise awareness.

4.1. Activities within the period January-October 2003

The following activities have been implemented within the period January - October 2003:

1. *Meeting with Ministers of the North African countries (sub-regional NAMCOW), 6 February 2003, Cairo, organized by GWP-Med and CEDARE* – presentation made and feedback received. The NAMCOW Ministers have recommended a set of actions for the sub-region within the MED EUWI.

2. *Kick-Off Meeting of the Multi-Stakeholder Forum of the Mediterranean Component, 17 February 2003, Brussels* – presentation of a Concept Note on the MED EUWI, feedback for the development of the MED EUWI received. The Minutes of the Meeting are available. Discussions mainly focused on the need to raise the profile of issues related to agriculture, environmental protection and food security and their linkages to water in the Region within the Component's work, on the lack of comprehensive data on financial flows to partner countries in the Region and the need to compile an inventory of previous and future/channelled ODA flows, as well as on the need to develop specific demonstrations and twinning projects for identified for river basins in the Region that would enable implementation of the IWRM approach on the ground level.

3. *Presentations at the 3rd World Water Forum, 16-23 March 2003, Kyoto, during the (a) 'Day of Europe', (b) 'Day of Middle East and Mediterranean', (c) Ministerial Conference* – reaffirming political will for further developing and implementing the EUWI and particularly the MED EUWI, awareness raising. Discussions during the Day of Europe where the EUWI and all its Components were presented placed emphasis on the common commitments of the EU and its partners: The EU needs to enhance coordination and increase financial and development assistance to the water sector and partner countries need to prioritise and include water as an integral part of their NSSDs and PRSPs.

4. *Presentation at the CSD Meeting, 28 April-8 May 2003, New York* – reaffirmation of political will, awareness raising. Progress on the EUWI and presentation of the concrete actions undertaken under its various Components and particularly the MED EUWI were discussed during the side event organized by the Commission on 28 April.

5. *EU Informal Council of Environment Ministers, 3-4 May 2003, Lagonissi, Athens*, – water resources management in South East Europe was one of the two major issues discussed. The Meeting was attended by the enlarged EU (25 countries), by the Ministers of South East Europe countries and the EU Commissioner for Environment. EU Ministers stressed the

importance of promoting an efficient subregional cooperation in South East Europe and the Mediterranean by intensifying transboundary cooperation on environmental matters and encouraging common work on transboundary waters, using water as a catalyst and a means for conflict prevention. It was agreed that concerted activities on water that need to be developed in the Region should be in the framework of the MED EUWI providing an important formal support to Component.

6. *International Conference on “Sustainable Development for Lasting Peace: Shared Water, Shared Future, Shared Knowledge”, 6-7 May 2003, Vouliagmeni, Athens, organised by Greece and the World Bank.* Cooperation for the management of transboundary water bodies and aquifers in the South East Europe and the Mediterranean was the priority theme of the Conference, The Conference contributed in reviewing the knowledge base, in assessing opportunities and constraints and in shaping recommendations, with an emphasis on cooperation for sustainable development, peace and stability. The Declaration of the Conference is a substantial contribution to the development of the MED EUWI and it foreseen that its follow up activities, especially with regard to the assessment of regional and national frameworks for implementation of IWRM in countries of SEE and the Med and the initiation of a specific framework program for drafting IWRM and water use efficiency plans for major rivers and lakes in SEE, will be part of the Component.

7. *5th Pan-European Ministerial Conference of the “Environment for Europe” process, 21-23 May, Kiev.* The Ministerial Declaration of the Conference welcomes the initiatives of countries of SEE and the Med, in the context of the MED EUWI, to promote peaceful and productive cooperation by promoting IWRM approaches for transboundary waters. The EU Statements made during the Conference also included reference to the various aforementioned events related to the SEE and the MED EUWI.

8. *Presentation at the Euro-Mediterranean Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, 26-27 May 2003, Crete – raise of political will.* The Meeting was attended by the Ministers of the Euro-Mediterranean and South East Europe countries.

9. *Preparation of an Operation Plan,* describing the context, basic content and proposed structure of the MED EUWI as well as the steps to be taken until the end of 2003. Within the Operation Plan, a Call for Building Blocks was launched aiming to collect by the end of 2003 a first pile of on-going and new projects that consist the start-up working platform of the MED EUWI. The Operation Plan was launched during the Hellenic Water Week, 17-20 June.

10. *MED EUWI Session during the EU Green Week, 5 June 2003, Brussels – awareness*

11. *Hellenic Water Week, 17-20 June 2003, Athens, organized by Greece and the Commission of the European Union.*

- 11.a. *Regional Seminar on the ‘Implementation of the Water Framework Directive in the European Union and beyond’, 18-19 June 2003, Athens*

The meeting shared experiences from the EU Member States on the development and implementation process of the WFD, as well as from neighboring countries of the region, which share transboundary waters and/or have bilateral and multi-lateral agreements with the EU. The meeting explored the usefulness of the WFD as an eventual model or target for other countries of the region to formulate compatible frameworks. The outcomes of the meeting assisted in enriching the knowledge base of the MED EUWI.

- 11.b. *Regional Seminar on the ‘Development of the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative’, 20 June 2003, Athens.* The Regional Workshop

- presented to an international audience the scope, structure and scheduled activities of the EU WI

- presented the achievements of the Preparatory Phase of the MED EU WI
- discussed an Operation Plan for the development of the MED EU WI
- elaborated on the different Themes of the MED EU WI, with expression of commitment, suggestions of concrete actions (*building blocks, demonstrations projects*) and development of synergies by different players.

12. *Meeting with officers of the EU Commission, 10 September 2003, Brussels.* The meeting aimed to review the current status of the MED EUWI and plans until the completion of the Design Phase and to discuss and identify appropriate means for making the MED EUWI fully operational within the first semester of 2004.

13. *Meeting with Ministers of the North African countries (sub-regional NAMCOW), 18 October 2003, Cairo, organized by GWP-Med and CEDARE* – presentation made and feedback received. The NAMCOW Ministers have expressed their willingness to actively cooperate with Greece and the EU in order to raise the momentum concerning the MED EUWI, to support efforts for funds raising to finance activities within the MED EUWI as well as to cooperate in finding synergies and prioritizing needs for the sub-region within the Component.

Aiming to raise awareness, the concept of the EUWI and the MED EUWI was also presented in a series of other regional and international events.

4.2. Activities foreseen for the period November 2003 - February 2004

14. *Brief Assessment on water financial flows in the Mediterranean* - the study will seek to elaborate on development aid and other financial assistance provided by the EU Member States, the EU Commission and other donor agencies to the Mediterranean and Balkan countries and regional projects. Through the study, an overall estimate of the financial requirements for reaching the MDGs/WSSD water related targets would be attempted.

15. *A Basic Mapping of Key Stakeholders* will complete an inventory of basic regional and national partners for the development of MED EUWI. Direct contacts will be made and their engagement will be sought. The activity is under development.

16. *A screening of potential donors for the development of the MED EUWI* will be made, aiming to identify donors' priorities and possible funding sources for the support the MED EUWI activities within 2004-2006 and its basic administrative structure (running of the Secretariat, Multi-Stakeholder Platform, background assessments, etc.). A related *Donors Meeting* is foreseen for January 2004.

17. *Compilation of the first list of building blocks and preliminary analysis of them* – following the Call for Building Blocks and according to the material that will be received a classification and preliminary analysis will be elaborated highlighting priorities and needs as well as areas of complementarity where synergies could be developed.

18. *Activity Plan 2004-2006* - based on all the aforementioned products / recommendations, the Activity Plan 2004 -2006 of the MED EUWI will be developed by the end of January 2004, describing the type of interventions to be undertaken, also taking into account the analysis of building blocks. Proposals for demonstration projects may be part of the Activity Plan, pending on donors' interest. Emphasis will be given to actions like elaboration of assessments of financial requirements for meeting MDGs / WSSD targets in the region and establishment of a related regional monitoring system, facilitation of country dialogues for prioritization of national needs related to water ODA and identification of existing gaps, exploration of the possibility for establishing a project preparation facility, facilitation of transboundary / national IWRM plans, etc.

19. *2nd Meeting of the Mediterranean Multi-Stakeholder Forum of the Mediterranean Component*- the Group will elaborate on the contents of a draft Activity Plan for the MED EUWI. The meeting could be combined with the *9th Multi-stakeholder Meeting of the EUWI* or the *Member States Meeting* foreseen for January 2004.

Contact details for further information:

Maria Papaioannou
Hellenic Ministry for the Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works
Department of International Relations and EU Affairs
15, Amaliados str., 115 23 Athens
T: +30 210 64 65 762, 64 59 213
F: +30 210 64 34 470
e-mail: m.papaioannou@minenv.gr

Vangelis Constantianos
GWP-Med Secretariat
c/o MIO-ECSDE
28, Tripodon str., 10558 Athens, Greece
T: +30210-3247490, -3247267, F: +30210-3317127
Mob: +306945-772016
E-mail: secretariat@gwpmmed.org