



## *MEDITERRANEAN CROSS-CONTINENTAL PROCESS*

### *Concept Note*

*“Sustainable solutions for water in the Mediterranean:  
Managing scarcity and improving quality”*

*October 2011*

## Rationale

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Regional processes have been clearly identified among the four main pillars of the 6<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum, aiming to bring legitimacy to the Forum by providing the platform of the international water community, including all related stakeholders, to define and bring the necessary solutions to the table, so as to assist with effectively tackling the world water predicament.

The 6<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum has the intention of being an innovative step towards providing input to future international agendas, such as Bonn +10 and Rio +20, in the form of the commitments that are anticipated to be made.

The Mediterranean cross-continental process is in accordance with the challenge set by the World Water Council, France and the City of Marseilles, for the 6<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum to be a Forum of constructive dialogue leading to concrete actions and commitments, and which will deliver a common message through the thematic, political, regional and grassroots and citizenship processes.

Within this framework, the **Mediterranean region**, characterized by geo-climatic and geo-political specificities and its position at the crossroads of three continents, namely Africa, Asia and Europe will be present at the 6<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum.

## THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION



## *Mediterranean cross-continental process*

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The Mediterranean region, at the crossroads of three continents, is a privileged venue for exchanges between all the countries that make up the region.

Going beyond the obvious disparities and similarities linked to the climate, the geography and its ancient cultures, the region constitutes an immense area of cooperation, and its riparian countries intend to build on this basis to further improve their water management and to create a platform for reinforced solidarity towards shared challenges.

During the 5<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum, held in Istanbul in March 2009, a regional session dedicated to the Mediterranean region was organized, which allowed a large number of water stakeholders, state representatives, parliamentarians, local councillors, professionals and civil society to exchange ideas and give their expert opinion on the issues and challenges facing the region, as well as establishing links to further consolidate this cooperation.

For that purpose, it is proposed that the Mediterranean region is present at the 6<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum, to deliver strong messages to the international water community:

- ✦ Both on the originality of dialogue mechanisms and on the cooperation necessary to implement concrete solutions;
- ✦ On the concerted involvement of all stakeholders in knowledge sharing and project implementation processes leaning on innovative and adapted solutions to the water scarcity that characterises the region.

Through its geographical, geo-economic and geo-political context, the Mediterranean region represents a setting for consultation between all stakeholders in the water community, through which solutions may emerge and which could be applied and replicated in other regions of the world.

In June 2010, during the Kick-Off of the 6<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum, the Mediterranean water community was mobilized in order to reflect upon its contribution to the Forum through concrete solutions and tangible commitments.

This mobilization of the Mediterranean community facilitated the preparation of the methodological foundation for the participation in the 6<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum, during a regional meeting held in Murcia on April 18 and 19, 2011.

Following a related request, the International Forum Committee validated on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2011 the participation of the Mediterranean Process, through a participatory process involving the main stakeholders of the Mediterranean water community, in bringing in priority issues to Marseilles in March 2012.

The Mediterranean Preparatory Process, to be carried out during 2011 and until March 2012, will be aligned with the guidelines defined by the International Forum Committee for the organization of the different cross-continental regional processes by taking into account in particular the 12 key priorities and 3 conditions for success defined by the Forum's thematic process, as well as the targets from the continents that make up the region, namely: Africa, Asia-Pacific and Europe.

## *Organization of the partnership*

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The Mediterranean preparatory process was initiated by a Steering Committee in which a certain number of countries, regional networks and national institutions with a regional outlook were invited to take part and play an active role.

Being a partner in this Steering Committee implies a technical, scientific and financial participation.

### **Countries:**

- **Algeria**, Ministry of Water Resources
- **Egypt**, Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation
- **France**, Water and Biodiversity Manager's Office, Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development, Transport and Housing ,
- **Greece**, Department of International Relations and European Affairs, Ministry of the Environment, Energy and Climate Change
- **Morocco**, Direction of Water Research and Planning, State Secretariat for Water and the Environment
- **Spain**, Director General's Office for Water, Ministry of the Environment, Rural and Marine Areas
- **Turkey**, General Directorate of State Hydraulic Works

### **Regional networks:**

- Regional and local euro Mediterranean Assembly (ARLEM)
- Global Water Partnership-Med (GWP Med) / MED EUWI Secretariat
- Blue Plan (UNEP/MAP)
- Mediterranean Network of Basin Organizations (MENBO)
- Mediterranean Water Institute (IME)
- Marseilles Centre for Integration in the Mediterranean (CMI)
- Med Commission of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG-Med)
- Euro Mediterranean Water Information System (EMWIS)
- World Wide Fund for Nature – France (WWF-France)
- Euro-Mediterranean Community of Irrigators (EIC)

### **National Institutions:**

- Agence Française de Développement (AFD)
- Euro-Mediterranean Water Institute Foundation (F-IEA)
- IPEMED (Institut de Prospective Economique du Monde Méditerranéen)

### **Observers:**

- Coordinator for Arab Process
- Coordinator for Europe Process
- Coordinator for Africa Process
- Union for the Mediterranean

## *The key priorities*

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The Mediterranean region is characterized by issues connected to its specificity as a dry and semi-arid zone, a fact that influences considerably the priorities set at local, national and regional levels.

At present, the region is serviced by and services a large number of programmes and initiatives, which have been generating answers to the challenges set by the issue of managing and protecting scarce and vulnerable water resources.

For that purpose, eight (8) target objectives were defined for the Mediterranean aiming first and foremost at strengthening and at capitalizing on the previous achievements and the current initiatives.

Two priority components have been identified for the Mediterranean, namely:

### **A. Efficient water management, a priority issue to prevent shortages and crises exacerbated by to climate changes**

It is estimated that “water poor” populations in the Mediterranean, i.e. that of countries endowed with less than 1000 m<sup>3</sup> of renewable resources per capita and a year, could increase from 180 (in 2005) to 250 million persons before 2025. Water demand has doubled since 1950. Agriculture is the biggest water consumer and accounts for an average of 80% of water taking from the Mediterranean’s southern and eastern banks. To meet the increasing water needs, national strategies often give priority to increasing water supply by creating mega water infrastructure, by exploiting non-renewable aquifers or by developing the using to the non-conventional resources (re-use of treated wastewater, desalination of sea water or brackish water, rainwater harvesting, etc).

The scarcity and the irregularity of water resources represent undoubtedly one of the highest challenges faced by Mediterranean countries, on the southern and eastern shores, and also in the northern shore. It constitutes a crucial and context-specific aspect to be addressed by the Mediterranean cross- continental process towards the Marseille Forum in March 2012.

Moreover, the Mediterranean is one of the world’s regions where the environment and human activities are likely to be deeply altered by climate change. The increase of the temperatures and the reduction of the expected precipitation should lead to a decline of the available water resources in all the region (decline which can achieve in some places by up to 60 % by the end of the century).The. The lacks of water should accordingly aggravate and could increase the phenomena of desertification and degradation of watersheds and water supply, weakening the bases of the economic growth and the reduction of the poverty, particularly in the most vulnerable sectors in urban and rural zones. This context requires the development of policies and measure to improve the management of the offer and the demand in water in an effective and sustainable way.

Three major questions for the region were so accepted within the framework of the Mediterranean process for the 6th world Forum of the water:

### 1. Water Demand management

It will be a question in particular of wondering about the real consideration of the water demand management in the policies of water and in the national sector policies, and of approaching the question under an economic angle (comparison between the cost of saved water and that of new mobilized water).

*Target 1: By 2015, each Mediterranean country has set its own national objectives for water use efficiency in the various using sectors and for water allocation between the different uses (productive and environmental) and defined/implemented "efficiency plans" for achieving their short-, medium- and long-term objectives*

*Target 2: By 2015/2020, Mediterranean country has set its own national objectives for improving the water productivity of rainfed and irrigated agriculture, in the framework of an integrated water and food-security strategy, and defined/implemented measures for achieving their objectives in the short, medium and long term*

### 2. Use of non-conventional water resources

This corresponds to an approach determined by the supply. It includes specifically the desalination of sea water/brackish water and the water reuse.

*Target 1: In the short term, to ensure that water resources planning in all Mediterranean countries includes the contribution of non-conventional resources within the global water resources systems models and analysis. This planning should take into account the related possible effects on the environment, economy, health and energy.*

*Target 2: In the short term, to develop a common regulatory framework for the Mediterranean area that considers the specific hydroclimatic features of the region, with its singular problems of scarcity and droughts in semi-arid environments. This framework must integrate the contribution of non-conventional resources with the rest of supply and demand, structural and non structural alternatives.*

### 3. Water governance

This transversal issue will focus on IWRM and sector policies and organisation of the sector. A specific focus could be on knowledge and on-the-ground expertise of water resources management, mainstreaming and integration of cross sectoral policies and the role of stakeholders (whether local and regional authorities, civil society, etc) through enhanced participation.

*Target 1: In the medium term (by 2020), every Mediterranean country - supported by multi-stakeholder national dialogues and in view of achieving cross sectoral water resources management - has in place operational and applicable national IWRM Plans and Water Efficiency Strategies and has developed and/or substantially advanced river basin management plans, all of which are linked/align with National Development Strategies, National and/or Sectoral Financing Strategies, National Adaptation Plans and, where applicable, National Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plans and International Agreements regarding the protection of trans boundary water bodies.*

*Target 2: In the medium term (by 2020), every Mediterranean country has activated and operationally implemented mechanisms for effective stakeholder participation throughout the different components of integrated water resources management and has in place a functioning articulation between central and decentralised levels.*

## **B. De-polluting a shared ecosystem**

Southern and eastern Mediterranean countries concentrate the bulk of their industrial infrastructure, transport and tourism on their Mediterranean coasts where a large part of untreated urban wastewater is discharged. Beyond the damage caused to the biodiversity of the region, which is listed among the thirty sensitive areas of global importance, the degradation of the marine environment has huge health, social and economic impacts. The MAP has developed investigation and protection tools and has identified around a hundred highly-polluting sites.

The Horizon 2020 Initiative, adopted in 2006 by the Euro-Mediterranean Ministers of the Environment, has set itself the target of de-polluting the Mediterranean by the year 2020 by tackling the sources of pollution that account for around 80% of the overall pollution (i.e. municipal waste, urban wastewater and industrial pollution). Around forty projects totalling over 2 billion Euros have been identified, of which almost half concern the construction of wastewater treatment plants in major cities.

A 4<sup>th</sup> major question would thus be approached within the framework of the Mediterranean process:

### **4. Collection and treatment of industrial and urban wastewater**

*Target 1: By 2020, every Mediterranean country has put into force a rule supervising the discharge of industrial waste in the collective sanitation systems, and by specifying the technical, financial and monitoring modalities.*

*Target 2: By 2015, each Mediterranean country has defined a strategy of sustainable cost recovery (SCR) for sanitation services through the use of tariffs and fees, public subsidies and international financial assistance to ensure economical sustainability, equitable access for all and pollution control.*

*Thematic: Tariffs, Taxes and Transfers (the "3Ts")*

## *Methodology: Participatory process*

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Currently, the main stakeholders in the Mediterranean water community are present in the ongoing regional programmes and initiatives, especially those launched as part of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership of the Mediterranean Action Plan and of the Barcelona Process framework, or others.

It is within this framework that the key priorities have been identified, which represent the focus for highly relevant commitments and solutions. The Mediterranean region finds relevant all debates relating to water because of the importance of this sector for the development of environmental, economic and social issues in a sustainable manner.

For that purpose, an important step in this mobilization will be the organization of the 1<sup>st</sup> Mediterranean Water Forum in Marrakech on 19 and 20 December 2011.

Considering this importance, the stakeholders of the Mediterranean Water community can discuss and have a dialogue on the occasion of this first Forum which aims to provide the space for open and constructive debate.

This Forum will mobilize a big part of the actors of the Mediterranean Water community on the same level of commitment, deliver strong and targeted messages and reach the consequent objectives for the sustainable development of the region.

In parallel with this event, other regional meetings, seminars and workshops will be held, which should also contribute to this participatory process (Athens, September 14-15 / Porto, September 27-30).