

**UfM Water Agenda**

Informal UfM Water Expert Group Meeting

**Consultation Meeting**

with UfM Member States, international institutions, regional organisations and civil society

on

**the UfM Water Agenda and Financial Strategy in view of SDG6 and the Green Deal: Policy Actions,  
Economic Responses, and Ways Forward in the post-COVID 19 context**

**On-line Meeting**

**9-10 June 2020**

Concept Note & Annotated Agenda

**INTRODUCTION**

In the past months, humanity has been facing an unprecedented situation as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. There is no aspect in the political economies around the globe that has not been affected by the virus outbreak. Moreover, this crisis has amplified disparities within and across countries and has exposed the ease with which international targets towards sustainable development and climate resilience can be side-tracked due to emergency re-prioritisation. The Mediterranean is no exception, with countries across its shores looking for responses that not only address the COVID-19 crisis, but also tackle long-standing challenges in the region, including ensuring the availability and sustainable management of water and access to water supply and sanitation services for their populations.

The COVID-19 crisis proves, as clear as ever, the inextricable link of health with access to safe water and hygiene, with the WASH agenda being among the centrepiece for responses. The crisis also proves the risks of water-related inequalities, particularly for the more vulnerable populations. Implementing water efficiency options, as well as intensifying efforts to improve the good chemical, quantitative and ecological health of all waters, can increase water availability for all uses and contribute in enhancing environmental health, promoting development options and strengthening the resilience of societies. Improved water governance and sustainable financing instruments to create an enabling environment, contribute to the same direction and should not be undermined in post COVID-19 recovery plans.

On the 'day after' of the crisis, when relief and development investments are mobilised, governments, businesses and development partners need to maintain the focus on meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and not jeopardise the progress made over the last decades. Post COVID-19 investments should increase and facilitate efforts towards meeting SDGs, for instance by making sector-specific financial support measures conditional to SDGs contributions. This is very relevant for the Mediterranean countries and, within

the SDGs agenda, for actions related to Water, Climate Change, Energy, Agriculture, Environment, Gender, Partnerships, etc. Within the UfM Water Agenda, the Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems Nexus (WEFE) and the Water-Employment-Migration (WEM) agendas, can contribute to further promote sustainability solutions, including a focus on Gender and Youth.

Aiming to assist with this demanding endeavour, the Water, Environment and Blue Economy Division of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), has called for an online consultation with its Member States and partner institutions and organisations, with a twofold objective to:

- a) take stock of the situation, the implications for the region and responses to COVID-19, also relating to the implementation of its UfM Water Policy Framework for Actions 2030<sup>1</sup>, and
- b) discuss and agree on regional priority actions that can complement individual country efforts, supported by and eventually aligning with the European Green Deal as a roadmap for sustainable and resilient post-COVID recovery<sup>2</sup>.

With regards to the second objective, the online consultation is expected to foster synergies of the UfM Water Agenda with ongoing work at the European Commission, through the identification of areas for collaboration and potential complementarity of work.

The online consultation, though informal, will utilise the modality and structure of the UfM Water Expert Group (WEG) meetings in order to provide a common reference framework and a platform for exchanges among the UfM Member States. The meeting is planned to take place over two days (starting in the afternoon of Day 1 and concluding after lunch on Day 2) and will be hosted by the UfM Secretariat with support from the Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean (GWP-Med). Separate channels for simultaneous interpretation in English, French and Arabic will be available to the participants.

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<sup>1</sup> At the mandate of the Ministerial Declaration on Water (Malta, April 2017), the UfM Water Expert Group (WEG) elaborated a Water Agenda and an associated Financial Strategy (FS). The Water Agenda, titled Water Policy framework for Actions 2030 containing four priority thematic areas [Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystem Nexus (WEFE); Water-Employment-Migration (WEM); Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), and Water and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA)], was endorsed by the Senior Officials in December 2017 and its implementation has been ongoing since then. The full texts of the Water Agenda and its Financial Strategy are available at: [https://ufmsecretariat.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/UfM-Water-Policy-Framework-for-Actions\\_baja-calidad.pdf](https://ufmsecretariat.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/UfM-Water-Policy-Framework-for-Actions_baja-calidad.pdf)  
[https://ufmsecretariat.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/UfM-Financial-Strategy-for-Water\\_for-web-paginas.pdf](https://ufmsecretariat.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/UfM-Financial-Strategy-for-Water_for-web-paginas.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en) and <https://www.euractiv.com/section/energy-environment/news/green-recovery-alliance-launched-in-european-parliament/> and <https://euobserver.com/environment/148059>

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### On-line Meeting

**9-10 June 2020**

Annotated Agenda

(all timings are in CET time zone)

All speakers are kindly asked to take close note of the time allocated as it is not possible extending it and  
microphones will be automatically muted

Moderated by: Almotaz Abadi, UfMS-Water and Vangelis Constantianos, GWP-Med

#### DAY 1 – Tuesday, 9 June 2020

##### 14:00-14:30 Welcoming remarks

- UfM Co-Presidencies (EC DG Near, DG Environment & Ministry of Water and Irrigation, Jordan)
  - Ali Subah, Secretary General, Ministry of Water and Irrigation, Jordan (6')
  - Daniel Calleja Crespo, Director General, DG Environment, European Commission (via recorded message) (6')
  - Henrike Trautmann, Head of Unit, DG Near B.2 - Regional Programmes Neighbourhood South, European Commission (4')
- Peter Lundberg, Councillor, Head of Regional Development Cooperation for Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Embassy of Sweden in Jordan (4')
- Monika Weber-Fahr, Executive Secretary & CEO, Global Water Partnership (GWP) (4')
- HE Nasser Kamel, Secretary General, UfM Secretariat (UfMS) (5')

##### 14:30-14:50 Setting the scene

Chair: Isidro González Afonso, Deputy Secretary General, UfMS-Water

##### Session's Objective:

- ✓ set the stage by briefly providing key information on the Water Agenda, the EU Green Deal and also a glimpse of the region's water-related responses to COVID-19

- The UfM Water Agenda and Financial Strategy: where we are and where we are going in the post COVID-19 era? (7')  
Almotaz Abadi, Managing Director, UfMS-Water
- Water and COVID-19 responses in the Mediterranean: a literature review (7')  
UfM TA Team Leader, Anthi Brouma
- The European Green Deal (7')  
Andrew Murphy, DG Environment, European Commission

14:50-15:00 Video

15:00-16:30 *The UfM Water Agenda's four thematic priorities*

*Session's Objectives:*

- ✓ *provide brief updates on the work of the four thematic priorities of the Water Agenda*
  - ✓ *consolidate the work of the WEFE and WEM Task Forces with emphasis on the elements of a Framework Programme*
  - ✓ *inform on financial and strategic partners' activities in the region towards enabling further synergies and collaboration*
- *Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystem (WEFE) Nexus (25')*
    - Introduction by Theme Leader
      - Mona Fakhri, Water Director, Lebanon (4')
    - Brief presentation of the WEFE Framework Programme by the theme's technical facilitator
      - Dimitris Faloutsos, Deputy Regional Coordinator, Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean (GWP-Med) (6')
    - Short reflections by financial and strategic partners
      - Bernd Manfred Gawlik, DG Joint Research Centre, European Commission (3')
      - Sara Datturi, Environmental Affairs Officer, UNECE (3')
      - Angelo Riccaboni, Co-Chair, PRIMA (3')
      - Nisreen Lahham, Advisor, GIZ (3')
      - Celine Dubreuil, Senior Water Expert, Plan Bleu, UNEP MAP (3')
  - *Water-Employment-Migration (WEM) (20')*
    - Introduction by Theme Leaders
      - Enrico Granara, EuroMed Coordinator, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation, Italy (4')
      - Tuğba Evrim Maden, Turkish Water Institute (SUEN), Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Turkey (4')
    - Brief presentation of the WEM Framework Programme by the theme's technical facilitator
      - Vangelis Constantianos, Executive Secretary, GWP-Med (6')
    - Short reflections by financial and strategic partners
      - Blanca Moreno-Dodson, Manager, Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI) (3')
      - Michela Miletto, Coordinator, UNESCO WWAP (3')

- *Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) (15')*
  - Introduction by Theme Leaders
    - Manuel Sapiano, CEO, The Energy & Water Agency, Malta (4')
    - Tahani Sileet, Head of Central Department for External Cooperation, Nile Water Sector, Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation, Egypt (4')
  - Brief presentation of updates by the theme's technical facilitators:
    - Hachmi Kennou, Executive Director, Mediterranean Water Institute (IME) (4')
    - Mustafa Nasereddin, UfM TA Advisor on WASH (3')
  
- *Water and Climate Change Adaptation (WCCA) (15')*
  - Introduction by Theme Leaders
    - Siham, Laraichi, Head of Concessions and Partnership Service, Department of Water, Ministry of Equipment, Transport, Logistics and Water, Morocco (4')
    - France tbc (4')
  - Brief presentation of updates by Khalid Tamsamani, UfM TA Advisor on WCCA (4')
  - Short reflection by strategic partner
    - Anjali Lohani, Programme Specialist for Climate & Water Resources Management, GWP (3')
  
- Facilitated Discussion (15')

16:30-16:35 *Wrap up*

*End of Day 1*

<b>DAY 2 – Wednesday, 10 June 2020</b>
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09:30-09:40 *Recap of previous sessions & objectives for the day by UfMS*

09:40-10:45 *Sustainable Water Financing & Investments in the Mediterranean in the post-COVID era*

*Session's Objectives:*

- ✓ *provide brief updates and discuss planned activities in the implementation of the Financial Strategy for Water, with emphasis on the National Water Financing Dialogues and the UfM Annual Conference on Water Investments and Financing*
  - ✓ *discuss activities by financial partners that aim to encourage water financing and investments in the region*
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- *Food for thought - How can the Financial Strategy be of relevance for tackling the economic consequences of the COVID-19 crisis? (5')*  
Almotaz Abadi, Managing Director, UfMS-Water

- *Implementing the Financial Strategy (25')*
  - *The National Dialogues on Water Financing: Lessons learnt and the framework for upcoming dialogues in the post-COVID period*
    - Arduen Karagjozi, Director, Water Resources Management Agency, Albania (5')
    - Mohammad Al Dwairi, Secretary General Assistant for Strategic Planning, Ministry of Water and Irrigation, Jordan (5')
    - Roberto Martin-Hurtado, UfM TA Advisor on Water Economics (5')
  - *The UfM Annual Conference on Water Investment and Financing (ACWIF) Messages from 1<sup>st</sup> ACWIF & brainstorming on content of the 2<sup>nd</sup> ACWIF, by Roberto Martin-Hurtado, UfM TA Advisor on Water Economics (10')*
- Targeted interventions from financial and strategic partners (20')
  - Andre Oosterman, Senior Sector Economist, European Investment Bank (EIB) (4')
  - Inmaculada Paniagua, Senior Advisor for the Middle East, Spanish Cooperation Agency (AECID) (4')
  - Ayman Ayad, Water and Utilities Sector Manager, Delegation of the European Union to Egypt (4')
  - Kishan Khoday, Regional Team Leader, Nature, Climate and Energy, Regional Hub for Arab States, UNDP (4')
  - Frederic Dupont de Dinechin, Senior Knowledge Management Officer, World Bank (4')
  - Xavier Leflaive, Team Leader for Resilience-Adaptation to Climate Change-Water, OECD Environment Directorate (4')

The interventions will revolve around the following 3 questions:

1. What do you see as the three key challenges that the COVID-19 crisis poses for the financial sustainability of the water sector in the Mediterranean?
2. How could your organisation help UfM member states to address some of those challenges?
3. How could the UfM work help to address some of those challenges?

- Facilitated Discussion (10')

10:45-11:00 *Break*

11:00-12:00 *Looking ahead in the post-Covid-19 era for water and the environment in the Mediterranean*

*Session's Objective:*

- ✓ *share ideas and planned activities on water and environment with a post-COVID-19 outlook*

- Supporting the EU's neighbouring partners (7')  
Stefano Dotto, Head of Sector, Climate Change, Energy, Environment, Transport, DG NEAR, European Commission

- The European Green Deal and synergies with the UfM Water Agenda (7')  
Nuria Hernandez-Mora, Technical Assistance to DG Environment, European Commission
- Which way forward for meeting SDG6 in the Mediterranean? (7')  
UfM TA Team Leader, Anthi Brouma
- The response of the Water and Environment Support Regional Programme in the post-COVID 19 era (7')  
Michael Scoullou, Team Leader
- The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on drinking water and sanitation and the day after (7')  
Alain Meyssonier, President, IME

Facilitated Discussion to identify top priority areas for linking the Water Agenda with the European Green Deal (25')

*12:00-12:30 High level segment reflecting on the way forward*

Chair: HE Nasser Kamel, Secretary General, UfM Secretariat (UfMS)

- HE Fadi Comair, Chair, UNESCO IHP/ Director General, Hydraulic and Electrical Resources, Ministry of Energy and Water, Lebanon
- HE Ali Subah, Secretary General, Ministry of Water and Irrigation, Jordan
- HE Peter Lundberg, Councillor, Head of Regional Development Cooperation for Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Embassy of Sweden in Jordan
- HE Michael Farrugia, Minister, Ministry for Energy and Water Management, Malta
- HE Mohammed Abdel Aty, Minister, Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation, Egypt

*12:30-12:35 Wrap up and next steps by the moderators*

*End of on-line consultation*