



2nd MEDITERRANEAN WATER FORUM

Auditorium et Centre de Congrès Victor Villegas

Murcia, Spain

25-27 November 2014

General Synthesis & Conclusions



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By Francisco Cabezas, General Director of Foundation-Euro Mediterranean Water Institute (F-IEA)

By Hachmi Kennou, Executive Director of Institut Méditerranéen de l'Eau (IME)

Day 1, Tuesday 25 November 2014

Side-Events : Outside of the 2nd Forum, 3 regional workshops were organized by Institution partners

Regional Workshop on "Managing Water Demand in the Mediterranean" organized by Plan Bleu, Mediterranean Centre for the Integration and French Development Agency.

This workshop highlighted the need to refocus actions towards demand management, and the many benefits that can be obtained, such as quantitative and qualitative, environmental, economic and energy related.

Some aspects that were highlighted included:

- The significant still existing savings margin (e.g. in irrigated agriculture);
- The term demand management should result in a more operational process, primarily through the use of economic concepts and tools that enable different stakeholders to have a common language;
- The importance of water pricing according to usage, as well as taxes and subsidies in other sectors that directly affect water use;
- And the distribution based on a cross-sectoral analysis of water efficiency.

Regional Workshop on "New Technologies for Water in Spain. Irrigation Modernization" organized by the Junta Central de Usuarios Regantes del Segura

- This workshop emphasized the need of a legal framework for regulating the modernization of irrigation schemes to ensure legal certainty in the application of modernization policies.
- It was recalled that not only we have to export technologies, but ensure their transfer and knowledge share between countries on both shores of the Mediterranean, such as ICTs applied to water management and the fight against evaporation in irrigation reservoirs.
- Modern desalination techniques (with a joint use of wastewater reuse techniques) allow a specific design for irrigation with greatly reduced cost, considering it is a resource to integrate with other existing ones.

- Different projects and case studies in the sector were presented, applicable to energy recovery and the fight against water leaks in irrigation reservoirs.
- The workshop also highlighted the Murcia example where great advances in modernization have been obtained, which can be exported to Southern Mediterranean countries.

III Spanish-Dutch Water Event. "Efficient water use in agriculture" organized by Reino de los Países Bajos

This third workshop demonstrated once again the solid relationship between both countries and the existing complementarities on R & D issues and knowledge application.

Different Spanish (Murcia, Cartagena ...) and Dutch cases were presented, with the participation of several companies that addressed new technologies in development to improve the efficiency of water use. For example, cases were described on greenhouses, experimental treatment technologies or the use of brackish water and its impacts on certain crops.

Various on-going research projects were also presented that count with participants from both countries, and the interest to continue cooperation on water management aspects was enhanced.

Official opening ceremony

The opening ceremony highlighted the importance of water in the Mediterranean region, for health and for socioeconomic development as well as for the environment. Furthermore, the significant technological advances witnessed in recent years were highlighted.

Among other things, the following points were emphasized:

- The relevant contribution of this 2nd Mediterranean Water Forum to the 7th World Water Forum in Korea, as well as the consolidation of this regional initiative born in Marrakech three years ago, received with great interest by the World Water Council;
 - The drafting of the Strategy for Water in the Western Mediterranean (Dialogue 5 + 5) and its expected approval early next year 2015.
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First panel on "Use of new innovative technologies adapted to the field of water".

In this first technical panel the following important aspects were concluded:

- For both demand and supply management sophisticated and modern information and communication systems allow providing decision-support tools that are increasingly more advanced and efficient.
- The water resources shortage in the Mediterranean region aggravated by climate change effects leads to the need of complementing water supply with non-conventional resources, such as desalination, reuse and others.
- Wastewater reuse offers an important field of new resources with great guarantee, where however, efforts should be taken to avoid health risks.
- Current desalination technologies have reached maturity, where higher energy cost reductions are not expected. However, research in this field must be enhanced as this resource will soon cease to be non-conventional.

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- The IME would pilot a Desalination Mediterranean Observatory to share knowledge and experiences in the region, involving the different participating countries of the Forum.

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Thematic working groups of the Mediterranean Regional Process for the 7th World Water Forum 2015

Different working groups were held covering the following topics:

- 1. Effective Water Governance**
- 2. Integrated Water Resources Management**
- 3. Sanitation for All**
- 4. Adaptation to Climate Change**
- 5. Improving education and capacity building**

Their conclusions have been presented by each of the coordinators during the morning.

Second panel on “Water/Energy/Food Security nexus”

This second panel stressed the importance of the interrelationship between water and its contribution in power generation and food production, and therefore of its vital importance for almost all socioeconomic activities. The speakers highlighted the most important challenges faced by the region, such as climate change or demographic pressure especially in coastal areas. The following aspects were highlighted:

- The improvement in agricultural production, and the progressive reduction in the use of water and energy.
- The development of policies with a holistic approach to face food security issues and the strengthening of institutions and administrations.
- The fair distribution of water resources and the importance of supporting local rural development.
- And the need to access reliable water data in the region.

Third panel on "Mediterranean Water knowledge Platform".

In this third and final panel, we have heard the following general ideas on the platform project:

- Information availability has been identified as a weakness in many Mediterranean countries;
- Integrated water resources management should be based on good quality information. More and reliable information is needed for better water governance

To address these needs, the Forum offers the solution of a platform with two components:

- The development of national information systems
- And the Preparation of a White Paper on Water, which will present a diagnosis of the situation in the region

The project is based on a mechanism to exchange methodologies and experiences, plus a benchmarking exercise for the search of coherence between different techniques used in Mediterranean basins.

Apart from these few general conclusions just presented, the organizers shall make available a more detailed report on the main resolutions, presentations and summaries of the interventions that we have seen over these days.