



**1st Steering Committee meeting**  
**4th Mediterranean Water Forum preparatory process**  
**21 April 2020**

*List of Participant in annex 1*

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**1. Purpose of the meeting**

This meeting is the 1st meeting of the Steering Committee mobilized for the Preparatory process of the 4th Mediterranean Water Forum which will be held from 11th to 13th of November 2020 in Malta

This meeting gathered 27 participants who represented water networks of the Mediterranean to get their points of view and advice for the preparation of the 4th Med Forum regarding their experiences and priorities defined at regional level.

The main regional networks are involved in the 4MWF process:

- Arab Water Council
- Center For Environment & Development For The Arab Region & Europe
- Center for Mediterranean Integration
- Euro-Mediterranean Information System on know-how in the Water sector
- European Institute of the Mediterranean
- Global Water Partnership Mediterranean

- Group of European basin organizations for the implementation of the European Water Directives
- Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development
- Mediterranean Network of Basin Organizations
- Plan Bleu - Blue Plan
- World Water Council

Coordinated by the Organization Committee:

- Energy and Water Agency
- Institut Méditerranéen de l'Eau
- Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean

The 4<sup>th</sup> Mediterranean Water Forum will take place as scheduled in November 2020, but the SC has informed that it will be keeping a close eye on how the situation is developing, in the Mediterranean and across the world and will follow carefully all guidelines from the health authorities while currently maintaining the proposed event dates. If it would be impossible to hold the forum on the spot, the possibility of bringing participants together in a virtual conference was discussed ((in a worst case scenario).

## **2. Welcome messages**

Mr Alain Meyssonier, President of IME, delivered the opening speech thanking Ambassador Nasser Kamel, the UfM Secretary General, for his support to the process and his commitment, which was translated into actions by the Water Team. Also he appreciated the Government of Malta for hosting the event (*message in annex 2*).

Isidro Gonzalez, DGA of WEBE expressed the support of the UfM to the process and he will ensure the political support of the 43 Member States besides calling to link this event to the 25th anniversary of the Barcelona process.

## **3. Introductory note**

Manuel Sapiano, CEO of the EWA presented the Forum outlines (*Ppt. Presentation in annex 3*)

The Forum aims to present the Mediterranean as a hub of innovative water management solutions, which have been locally developed or adapted to address the prevailing challenges of the region including those related to climate change impacts. It will also outline how the Mediterranean region is developing an integrated implementation framework through the Union for the Mediterranean's Water Agenda, while also servicing other important political and technical regional and sub-regional frameworks, which ensures that different water management actions reinforce each other thereby providing a comprehensive solution for evolving needs.

The main theme of the 9th World Water Forum (22-27 March 2021, Dakar, Senegal) is “Water Security for Peace and Development”, and discussions in the Forum are expected to be focused on the identification of effective responses which can guarantee water security.

In alignment with the World Water Forum themes, the Mediterranean Water Forum will target specific themes for the Mediterranean region coordinated by the main regional stakeholders.

The Mediterranean water Community had agreed that the Forum will be a great opportunity to take our region joint action and to show the region values in the response to the water Scarcity and Drought and Climate Change and to contribute to the economic development while keeping in mind the nexus with Public health and Hygiene.

#### **4. Discussion / Incomes of the SC**

The 4th World Water Forum will be structured in 5 Technical Sessions. These sessions will tackle the Mediterranean as a Hub of Water Management solutions and responses, Non-conventional water resources, Integrated Management, Financial and investment as well as International Collaboration with a special view of how to move forward after the COVID 19 pandemic.

The Forum will be an opportunity to organize a back-to-back event such as the “18th Europe-INBO International Conference”. The goal is to merge experiences and contributions to the future of Water in the Mediterranean.

Water Security will play a key role in the Conference. Synergies between the 9th WWF objectives and the UfM Water Policy Framework of Action 2030 had been stressed.

Managing Director of Water at the UfM, Almotaz Abadi, highlighted the importance of following the guidance of the Ministerial mandate of 2017, where water is an element of regional cooperation, a factor of contributing to the GDP, to Public health and hygiene, as well as water is a driver for Job creation, which is the most evidence response to the aftermath of the COVID19 crisis. He stressed the necessity of creating a road map for the donor community, of defining how the region will contribute to the water security as well as the build resilience program, while responding to the climate change and considering the paramount responsibility on the water community to achieve other SDGs, including economic development.

Ambassador Senén Florensa, President of IEMED, emphasized the importance of including the participation of young professionals, women, institutional representatives, practitioners and civil society in this Forum. Representatives of GWP-Med, MIO-ESCDE and CMI were in accordance with this proposal.

It was suggested including MEDIWAT in the SC, it is a network of young professionals of water in the Mediterranean supported by the World Bank and CMI. Thus, works of the 4th Med Forum will benefit from MEDIWAT Members experiences in their countries.

The participants pointed out that the following cross-cutting priorities to be addressed in the sessions: **Governance, Hydro diplomacy, Gender, Youth, Employment and Education.**

The awareness and education are necessary, as the economy of water in washing hands; which has become an important issue nowadays. Also the fresh water and marine environment needs to be stressed.

## 5. Conclusions

The draft agenda will be reviewed to take into consideration the recommendations received during the meeting, so as to ensure a better alignment with the objectives of the 9th WWF

The review of the agenda will try to highlight the alignment of the MWF topics with the WWF objectives of:

- *Water Security and Sanitation*
- *Cooperation*
- *Water for Rural Development (transversal)*
- *Means and Tools*

Furthermore, the Med Forum will also focus more on RESPONSES in addition to actions

During the meeting, there was also an interest to further tie post-COVID 19 into the discussions. All interventions delivered during this first Committee Meeting will be taken into account for the next steps and including in the elaboration of background documents. Working groups to be set up will coordinate the drafting of these documents

The SC is:

- to support the development of the agenda and technical documents
- to promote the Forum
- to ensure high level participation
- to contribute during the event to the Technical sessions with presentations.

Moreover, the SC members are invited to organize side events that would be held on topics related to water and Mediterranean. For this purpose, four side rooms will be available in the Forum venue. EWA will be providing further details for the coordination of such side events.

Similarly, the provision of stands during the exhibition is offered to them.

### **FOLLOW-UP | Next steps**

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Participants had supported the idea to convene the second Meeting of the Steering Committee back to back with the UfM Formal Water Platform, which had been indicated early June and aims to identify opportunities within the water sector to achieve its sustainability in the time of crisis.

It also includes the implementation of the two main components: Water Employment migration and the WEF Nexus as two Programmes of the Water Agenda that will bolster investment and entrepreneurial in the Mediterranean and aim at achieving water and food security.