



Maghreb Policy Dialogue on the Potential of Non-Conventional Water for Sustainable Agricultural Development in the Arab Maghreb Countries

March 22, 2021 - World Water Day

Ministerial Declaration

We, Maghreb Ministers and Senior Officials, participating in the Policy Dialogue on the Potential of non-conventional Water for Sustainable Agricultural Development, organized by the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on March 22, 2021 the World Water Day:

Acknowledging that water is a key factor of sustainable development for the Arab Maghreb countries;

Recognizing the commitment of the Maghreb countries for the implementation of the SDGs, and the region's challenges facing water scarcity that will be exacerbated in the upcoming years due to increasing water demand and climate change impacts;

Underscoring that non-conventional water resources have significant potential for our countries, particularly in the context of water scarcity and climate change, and should be incorporated into the integrated water resources management in the Maghreb countries;

Convinced that our countries have an important need for the strengthening of the institutional, legislative and technical aspects related to the planning, programming, management, financing, investment, implementation and operation of non-conventional water projects, in particular for the reuse of treated wastewater and drainage water resources;

Considering the achievements of the FAO-UMA project to unlock the potential of non-conventional water reuse ; in particular the results of the diagnosis and analysis of the reuse of treated wastewater and drainage water and the identification of socio-economic, political, legislative, institutional, health, environmental and technical challenges and opportunities (FAO, 2020) ;

Reaffirming the urgent need for our countries to plan and implement sound strategies, policies, programs and investments to unlock the potential of non-conventional water and address the alarming water scarcity ;

Re-emphasizing our commitment to promote the development of non-conventional water resources to deal with water scarcity in the Maghreb countries ;

And,

Declaring our membership in the Maghreb Initiative for Non-Conventional Water (IMENCO) and our support for the strengthening of Maghreb Cooperation through:

- 1) The establishment of UMA permanent technical committee dedicated to non-conventional water resources ;
- 2) The creation of a Maghreb Pole of Excellence for non-conventional water resources based on the development and interconnection of pilot sites of excellence across the Maghreb countries ; and
- 3) The setting up of a Maghreb Collaborative Platform as a mechanism for the Maghreb Pole of Excellence enabling the capitalization of the experiences of the last decades, the exchange of good practices and the sharing of knowledge and research results.