

UfM Water Expert Group

1st Meeting of the **Drafting Group**

5 April 2016, Athens

Concept Note

List of Abbreviations

EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
GWP-Med	Global Water Partnership–Mediterranean
ICZM	Integrated Coastal Zone Management
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SWIM-SM	Sustainable Water Integrated Management-Support Mechanism (EU Programme)
ToR	Terms of Reference
UfM	Union for the Mediterranean
WACDEP	Water, Climate and Development Programme (of GWP)
WEG	Water Expert Group (of the UfM)

The 1st Meeting of the Drafting Group of the UfM Water Expert Group is co-chaired by the UfM Co-Presidencies, Jordan and the European Commission. It is organised by the UfM Secretariat-Division of Environment and Water. It is co-sponsored by the UfM and the GWP Water, Climate and Development Programme (GWP WACDEP).

UfM Water Expert Group

1st Meeting of the WEG Drafting Group

5 April 2016, Athens

Concept Note

1. Purpose of the document

The Water Expert Group (WEG) of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) convened for its 5th Meeting on 23-24 November 2015, in Luxembourg, giving the mandate to a smaller Drafting Group to work on its Roadmap and associated Work Plan.

The present Concept Note aims at providing a background on the state of play, objectives and contents of discussions of the 1st UfM WEG Drafting Group, on 5 April 2016, in Athens, including a suggested outline of possible next steps. In part 3, it includes suggestions towards a draft Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Drafting Group. In part 4, it provides ideas for a draft Work Plan of the WEG and its Drafting Group until the possible UfM Ministerial Meeting on Water. A draft Agenda of the 1st UfM WEG Drafting Group is also included.

2. Background

The Mediterranean countries are faced with a range of natural and human-made challenges related to **water resources**, and are responding to these through various approaches. The added value of **regional cooperation**, served through a number of regional and sub-regional processes, is recognised by Mediterranean countries. Mandated at Ministerial level, the **UfM and its WEG** provide a platform for information sharing and promotion of common objectives through synergies. A brief background on these was described at the Concept Note (Annex 1) and the Conclusions (Annex 2) of the 5th UfM WEG Meeting, provided attached for convenience.

In line with the 5th WEG Meeting's Conclusions, the UfM Co-Presidency and Secretariat, with the technical assistance of GWP-Med, called for nominations, received feedback by the countries, and are launching works of the **WEG Drafting Group**.

As indicated at the 5th WEG Meeting, should the Drafting Group be successful in reaching its deliverables during the course of 2016, Malta is exploring to organize a **UfM Ministerial Meeting on Water** during its EU Presidency, to take place at the 1st semester of 2017.

3. Draft ToR of the Drafting Group

3.1. Objective: The Drafting Group of the UfM WEG aims at preparing the proposal for a joint regional Roadmap and associated Work Plan of the WEG. These will be presented to the WEG for discussion towards approval.

3.2 Synthesis: The Drafting Group consists of representatives of the Administrations of the UfM countries. Though the 5th WEG Meeting decided on a representative participation by sub-region, high

interest expressed by the UfM countries to contribute led to an extended synthesis of the Drafting Group.

3.3. Modalities of work: The Drafting Group:

- Receives suggestions on contents of work by the UfM Co-Presidency and Secretariat;
- Advances and concludes its works based on consensus;
- Proposes to the WEG draft contents of the decided products;
- Keeps minutes of its Meetings;
- Is chaired by the UfM Co-Presidencies;
- Is assisted by the UfM Secretariat, with technical support by GWP-Med, and contributions by other partners as needed;
- Works and convenes on costs borne by its members, unless it otherwise becomes possible particularly for travel expenses of UfM developing countries.

3.4 Roadmap: A tentative line of work and a set of meetings of the Drafting Group and the WEG towards a possible UfM Ministerial Meeting on Water, include:

No	Work/Event	When	Key outputs
1	<i>Technical work</i>	Until March 2016	Draft Concept Note of Drafting Group Meeting 1: - Draft ToR of the Drafting Group, including Roadmap - Draft contents of the Work Plan until the Ministerial
2	Drafting Group Meeting 1	5 April 2016, Athens	Based on the Concept Note, guidance on: - Draft ToR of the Drafting Group, including Roadmap - Draft contents of the Work Plan until the Ministerial
3	<i>Technical work</i>	April to June 2016	- ToR of the Drafting Group, including Roadmap, presented and agreed by WEG (via e-mail) - Work Plan until the Ministerial: Draft 1 prepared
4	Drafting Group Meeting 2	July 2016	- Further guidance on contents of the Work Plan until the Ministerial
5	<i>Technical work</i>	July to Sept 2016	- Work Plan until the Ministerial: Draft 2 prepared, including preliminary drafts of materials for the Ministerial
6	WEG 6 Meeting	September 2016	- Work Plan until the Ministerial agreed - Guidance on materials for the Ministerial provided - Sharing of information, and possibly recommendations on, on-going and new regional initiatives and projects
7	<i>Technical work</i>	Sept to Nov 2016	- Drafting of materials towards the Ministerial
8	Drafting Group Meeting 3	November 2016	- Finalization of draft materials towards the Ministerial
9	WEG 7 Meeting	January 2017	- Drafts approved as technical background for the Ministerial Conference
10	Ad Hoc SOM in view of the Ministerial	February 2017	- Preparation of the draft Ministerial Declaration
11	2 nd Ad Hoc SOM in view of the Ministerial (as needed)	April 2017 (as needed)	- Preparation of the draft Ministerial Declaration
12	UfM Ministerial Meeting on Water	Possibly in April 2017	- Ministerial Declaration

4. Outline of a draft Work Plan of the WEG and its Drafting Group until the possible UfM Ministerial Meeting on Water (March 2016 to mid 2017)

Building on the discussions at and Conclusions of the UfM WEG 5 Meeting, a Work Plan of the WEG and its Drafting Group in the period until the possible UfM Ministerial Meeting on Water ie. between March 2016 and mid 2017, should reflect countries' needs in service of a regional water agenda. It should describe:

4.1. Objectives and key outputs. These could include the following [*examples are provided in italics as food for thought*]:

(i) Prepare contents of the possible UfM Ministerial Meeting on Water by:

i.a. Suggesting contents of strategic guidance on joint priority fields of regional relevance in the water agenda in the Mediterranean and related responding approaches, following up on conclusions from previous Ministerial Conferences as well as policy documents and action plans including the draft Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean.

Priority fields for upscaling intervention through leveraging synergies at regional level, may include: water governance, including cross cutting issues (gender, equity, poverty and rights); water financing, including through private sector participation; water demand management, including through innovation and non-conventional water resources management; water and climate change adaptation, including through mitigation/adaptation co-benefits; water-energy-food-ecosystems nexus, including in rural, peri-urban, urban, coastal and transboundary levels; water quality protection and depollution, through 'source-to-sea' approaches; etc.

Responding regional approaches may include: setting up and operating an aligned/common monitoring and reporting system for the water-related SDGs, particularly for Target 6.5 on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM); enhancing financing opportunities including by utilizing new instruments (e.g. the climate funds), engaging new partners and testing related approaches (e.g. central and private banks, private sector, etc) and enhancing coordination between regional and national level financing; promoting employment opportunities/green jobs in the water sector, particularly for youth; tackling new challenges like water security and migration; enhancing transfer of technological solutions towards increased efficiency; etc.

i.b. Proposing a mechanism/process (rather than a specific product such as a Strategy/Action Plan as previously done), including roles and responsibilities for addressing the priority joint fields for regional collaboration.

Such a mechanism could be provided through the UfM WEG that could be mandated by the UfM Ministerial Meeting as a regional technical coordination body in charge of the implementation of the strategic guidance. WEG's works could unfold through a rolling WEG Biannual Work Plan, the achievements of which could be presented to and further guided by UfM Ministerial meetings in regular intervals (e.g. every 4 or 6 years). WEG's agenda should be aligned, as possible, with other regional/sub-regional bodies and other relevant UfM Expert Groups, including but not limited to the UfM Climate Change Expert Group, H2020 Working Groups, EU Water Directors,

LAS water-related technical bodies, RCC Working Group on Environment, 5+5 Western Mediterranean Strategy technical bodies, UNECE, MAP/MCSD, etc. WEG's works should stimulate contributions and support by regional institutions, stakeholder organisations and donors. Depending on available human and financial resources, WEG could work in thematic sub-groups.

(ii) Promote cooperation and coordination on water issues of regional interest by:

ii.a. Receiving/exchanging information on major on-going regional water-related programmes and projects, including but not limited to those labelled by the UfM, and providing technical recommendations towards their further development through enhanced synergies, aligned with countries' needs.

ii.b. Been presented with and providing technical recommendations on new water-related programmes and projects of regional interest, including but not limited to those aimed for UfM labelling.

ii.c. Serving as a regional technical reference group for guidelines on pertinent subjects in water-related fields elaborated by regional institutions, groups of organisations and regional projects.

4.2. Activities and timeline as well as **roles and contributions of key partners**, including as means of implementation, like by the governments of the UfM countries, the UfM Secretariat, and technical contributors like GWP-Med, SWIM-SM Project, institutions and organisations assisting other regional and sub-regional processes, etc.

5. Key questions to be discussed at WEG Drafting Group 1 Meeting

Suggested questions to facilitate discussions, spread in different sessions of the Meeting, include:

- What should be the ToR of the Drafting Group, including the Roadmap for the Drafting Group and WEG? *After elaboration, the draft ToR should be submitted to the WEG for approval.*
- What should be the contents of the Work Plan of the WEG and the Drafting Group until the possible UfM Ministerial Meeting on Water? *After drafting that, the outline should be submitted to the WEG for approval before further elaboration.*
- What should be the organisation / division of work until the 2nd Meeting of the Drafting Group (foreseen for July 2016)?