Water - Side event 2
Resilience to climate change : WEFE NEXUS Strategy in a Mediterranean Source-to-Sea Continuum

Date and time: Nov. 19, 2026, 16:30 – 17:30
Location: UfM pavilion
Organizers: UfM
COP31 PRIORITY ALIGNMENT: PRIORITY 4: FOOD SECURITY & PRIORITY 5: POWERING CLIMATE ACTION

Background:
The deep interdependencies across water, energy, food, and ecosystems (WEFE) demand an integrated management approach to address the triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss in the Mediterranean. Agriculture remains the region's largest freshwater consumer, while water and food systems are highly energy-intensive. Moving from "Nexus thinking" to "Nexus doing" requires translating regional policy commitments into coordinated actions, investment opportunities and measurable results.

Jointly prepared by the UfM, UNEP/MAP and the European Commission, with technical contributions from GWP-Med, PRIMA and the EU-funded WES-BCA project, and following three year of broad regional consultations, the Strategy for the Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems Nexus in the Mediterranean Source-to-Sea Continuum was adopted by the 15th Meeting of the UfM Regional Platform on Water and endorsed as a Flagship Initiative under the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD 2026–2035) at COP24 of the Barcelona Convention.

The Second UfM Ministerial Declaration on Water, adopted in Rome on 28 September 2026, provides renewed political impetus for the Strategy's operationalisation. It explicitly mandates the UfM Regional Platform on Water, in cooperation with member states and relevant partners, to develop a Regional Action Framework to strengthen cross-sectoral engagement, facilitate implementation and promote the development and financing of WEFE Nexus investment projects and programmes, including technology transfer and capacity development.

Building on the longstanding cooperation between the UfM, UNEP/MAP and the European Commission, with technical contributions from GWP-Med, PRIMA and the EU-funded WES-BCA project, this activity will focus on advancing the development and implementation of the Action Framework, while continuing broad stakeholder consultations, fostering inclusive dialogue and expanding partnerships with relevant regional and national institutions, development partners, financial institutions, the private sector and civil society. The Action Framework will provide a practical regional architecture for translating strategic priorities into coordinated interventions, strengthening cross-sectoral governance, scaling up innovative solutions, including

Nature-based Solutions, the sustainable development and management of non-conventional water resources (such as treated wastewater reuse and desalination), and digital technologies, and mobilising public, private and blended finance for sustainable WEFE Nexus investments.

Objectives:

- Jointly present the longstanding cooperation between the UfM, UNEP/MAP and the European Commission and its technical partners, highlighting the 2026 UfM Ministerial Declaration's mandate and the next steps towards operationalizing the WEFE Nexus Strategy through the development and implementation of its Regional Action Framework, including priority action lines, institutional arrangements and monitoring indicators.
- Identify and showcase successful demonstration applications, innovative technical and managerial approaches, and investment opportunities that can inform the Action Framework, strengthen the financial, social and ecological business cases for integrated WEFE Nexus solutions, and facilitate their replication and scaling up across the Mediterranean.

Outputs:

1. Joint institutional and policy recommendations to guide the development and implementation of the Regional WEFE Nexus Action Framework, mainstream Nexus considerations into national and regional sectoral strategies, and strengthen cross-sectoral governance and coordination.
2. Provide inputs for developing operational guidelines and priority investment pathways to identify, prepare, finance and scale up cost-effective WEFE Nexus demonstration projects, mobilising public and private investment, blended finance, technical assistance and capacity development.
3. A coordinated regional cooperation and implementation roadmap among core partners (UfM, UNEP/MAP, GWP-Med, PRIMA and the European Commission) to support the Action Framework's development and roll-out through joint policy dialogue, institutional coordination, knowledge exchange, capacity building, investment mobilisation and monitoring of implementation progress.

Draft agenda:

Time	Session	Speakers and format (to be confirmed)
16:30-16:35	**Opening**	• DSG Joan Borrell, UfM

Time	Session	Speakers and format (to be confirmed)
16:35-17.25	**Panel**	• Moderators: Frederic de Dinechin, Sr Policy advisor, UfM • Prof. Michael Scoullos, Team Leader, WES-BCA (Water and Environment Support – Biodiversity and Climate Action) • Dr Enrique Cifres, International Commission on Large Dams, Hon Vice-President, Chair of ICOLD committee on World Declaration on Dams and Energy Transition and Climate Change Adaptation. "Chengdu World Declaration on Role of Dams in Energy Transition and Climate Change Adaptation". • Mr. Fatih Türkmendağ (Head of Department, Monitoring and Water Information Systems, General Directorate of Water Management, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Republic of Türkiye) • Ms. Samraa Smadi, Environmental and Sustainability Consultant, Blue Peace Middle East Youth Ambassador, Amman, Jordan WEFE and transboundary cooperation.
17:25-17:30	**Closing**	• Frederic de Dinechin, Sr Policy advisor, UfM