MEDITERRANEAN PAVILION

Interreg NEXT MED

Co-funded by the European Union

COP31 TÜRKİYE ANTALYA

Strengthening Food Security in the Mediterranean Through Sustainable Water and Agriculture Solutions

Side event

COP31 - Antalya

Mediterranean Pavilion

16 November 2026

11:30-12:30 (Antalya Time)

Agenda

As COP31 brings the international community together to accelerate climate action, the Mediterranean faces one of its most pressing challenges: growing water scarcity. Rising temperatures, prolonged droughts and increasing pressure on water resources threaten agricultural production, rural livelihoods and food security. Strengthening water resilience is therefore essential to safeguarding food systems and ensuring sustainable development across the region.

Interreg NEXT MED offers a practical response to these shared challenges by promoting transnational cooperation between 15 Mediterranean countries, bringing together organisations from both shores to develop and scale up innovative solutions. Through its funding, nine projects involving 59 organisations and a total budget of €24 million address key issues, including irrigation efficiency, smart agriculture, alternative water resources and wastewater reuse, strengthening agricultural resilience.

This session will showcase practical solutions emerging from Interreg NEXT MED projects, alongside insights and perspectives from external experts working on water cooperation and sustainable development in the Mediterranean. Through project presentations and an expert discussion, participants will exchange experiences, explore approaches to addressing shared water challenges and identify opportunities to strengthen cooperation among policymakers, researchers, practitioners and other stakeholders.

By bringing together project innovation and external expertise, the session aims to highlight how Mediterranean cooperation can contribute to more sustainable water management, resilient agriculture and long-term food security in a changing climate.

AGENDA

Welcome and opening remarks, **Alejandro Lafarga**, *Interreg NEXT MED Programme (Moderator)*

Enhancing water & food security through cooperation: The Interreg NEXT MED lasting impact from its projects - **Alessandro Pischedda**, *Interreg NEXT MED Programme*

Success cases:

- **MEDRESOURCE project**: transforming wastewater treatment sludge into valuable products. **Mondher Hind**, *Palestinian Wastewater Engineers Group*
- **MAENA project**: Replenishing the small water cycle towards a more resilient Agriculture. **Mashael Al Zou'bi**, *Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (Jordan)*

Nature-Based Solutions for Water & Food Security in the Mediterranean: a perspective from the International Union for Conservation of Nature - **Maher Mahjoub**, *Regional Director, IUCN Mediterranean*

Wastewater Reuse in the Mediterranean: Experiences and Lessons Learned Ms Atika Ben Maïd, *Deputy Head of the Climate and Nature Division, French Development Agency, Middle East Office.*

Round table: Cooperating to enable solutions across the Mediterranean

Conclusions and Closing Remarks, **Alejandro Lafarga**, *Interreg NEXT MED Programme*