



TOWARDS A MEDITERRANEAN WATER KNOWLEDGE PLATFORM

Summary Note

(February 2014)

*The project, proposed to **the approval by the secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean**, is composed of two complementary sub-projects namely: the establishment of national water information systems and the preparation of a Mediterranean White Paper on water.*

Knowledge for effective water resources management

This project responds to the request made by the Ministers at the Water Conference of the Union for the Mediterranean held in Jordan in late 2008 to improve water governance processes not only on their territory but also on shared resources and more generally in the Mediterranean region as a whole. The establishment of a Mediterranean Water Knowledge Platform is, indeed, a prerequisite to the development of sustainable policies for integrated water resources management (IWRM) and climate change adaptation.

The challenge is twofold: firstly, to provide a common basis for the development of National Water information Systems - NWIS - allowing both cost reduction in the implementation and harmonisation of data needed for inter-institutional, regional and international co-operation in a country, and secondly, to develop a regional framework (White Paper) capable of performing a detailed assessment of available resources, environmental needs, uses, and major policies and programmes of measures applied in the countries of the region. To ensure appropriation at local and national levels, the project focuses on the data, information and expertise necessary for planning integrated water resources management and water policing.

The harmonisation of data provided by the NWIS and analyses and thinking given in the White Paper will allow a valuation of best IWRM practices, joint management of transboundary resources and follow-up of regional or sub-regional policies in the Mediterranean region, such as the draft Mediterranean Strategy on Water, draft Water Strategy for the Western Mediterranean region under 5+5, the Strategy of Arab countries on water, Mediterranean Pollution removal (by H2020), the water and sanitation component of the Millennium Development Goals, the future UN sustainable development goals or the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development.

The project directly contributes to facilitating the involvement of all stakeholders concerned in order to improve the democratic process and have greater transparency in the administration. In addition, data infrastructure provided by the project is likely to generate the creation of added-valued services and thus contribute to growth through innovation in the Mediterranean countries and promote investment in the region (donors).

The main expected results are:

- Operational NWISs in Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan, and Lebanon providing data needed at all levels of government and public institutions for socio-economic development and sustainable management of water resources in their countries;
- A demonstration and validation of reporting automation (through NWIS) to international initiatives on voluntary basis, namely the Mediterranean Action Plan of UNEP (Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development), the Arab League (water resources shared between Arab countries), the European Environment Agency (Pollution of the Mediterranean);
- Harmonised regional guidelines and a series of training courses for the development and management of shared water information systems in accordance with European principles in force and ready to be applied by all Mediterranean countries. The implementation of these recommendations will guarantee success and the reduction of costs and duration in the development of future NWISs;
- A regional platform for exchange of experiences, best practices and for co-ordination between the Mediterranean countries;
- A comprehensive assessment of conventional and unconventional resources, sectoral water use, produced and treated pollution;
- Recommendations on the process of developing national white papers on water based on dialogue with stakeholders.

The project is based on the knowledge gained on water data management in Europe (Shared and enlarged Environmental Information System -SEIS, Water Information System for Europe -WISE, INSPIRE Directive for spatial data infrastructure), the United Nations system (System of Environmental Economic Accounting for Water - SEEA-W), in some developed countries (France and Spain - Spanish White Paper in particular) and tools and data provided by the European Space Agency.

The White Paper will cover six Mediterranean pilot countries (Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Monaco, Spain, and Tunisia) in its first phase. NWISs will be achieved in four pilot countries which already started this process (Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia). Other Mediterranean countries will be involved in joint actions, methodological validation, training and transfer of best practices. The development of NWISs and White Paper in other volunteer countries having an appropriate context could be considered if additional funds can be raised.

The beneficiaries are the national and local water authorities and other government agencies involved in the water sector, especially the ministries and their supervised agencies in charge of the environment, agriculture, health and statistical institutes. Data management will be strengthened with a win-win approach for all institutions involved to guarantee success and better appropriation.

This Mediterranean water knowledge platform is part of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (European Neighbourhood Policy, H2020, SEIS, etc).

In 2013, thanks to raised funds and partners' equities, some regional actions and the 1st stages of the NWIS study and implementation have started in Tunisia, Morocco Jordan. In November 2012, a regional consultation initiated the drafting of a Mediterranean White Paper on water.

It is now urgent to launch regional activities to consolidate investments in these countries, to ensure inter-institutional co-operation and maintain the continuity of the commitments of Mediterranean countries.

Project developers: International Office for Water (Information Systems) and Mediterranean Water Institute (White Paper on Water)

Implementation partners:

- **Jordan** : Ministry of Water and Irrigation,
- **Lebanon:** Ministry of Energy and Water
- **Morocco** : Ministry of Energy, Mines, Water and Environment
- **Monaco** : Prince Albert II Foundation
- **Tunisia** : Ministry of Agriculture (General Directorate of Water Resources)
- **Spain:** Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment,
- Euro-Mediterranean Water Information System
- Arab League Center for Water
- Blue Plan (UNEP-MAP activity centre)
- Mediterranean Network of Basin Organisations
- Euro-Mediterranean Water Institute
- AGBAR Foundation

Total Budget estimate: M€ 16.2:

- About 80% are related to the NWIS sub-project with: 80% dedicated to the national systems in the 4 pilot countries. The promises of subsidies and already raised funds amount to 57% of the budget for Phase 1 and 33% on the total duration of the project.
- About 20 % are related to the elaboration of the Mediterranean White Paper on Water with 23% representing in kind contribution from partners (countries and networks).

The total budget is allocated as follows:

- Guides, tools, capitalisation, regional training and validation of the benefits for international reporting: M€ 2.7
- NWIS: Jordan: M€ 1.9; Lebanon: M€ 2.85; Morocco M€ 2.15; Tunisia: M€ 3.33;;
- Mediterranean White Paper on Water : M€ 3.3

Provisional duration of the project: 5 years (2013-2017), including Phase 1 (2013-2015) and Phase 2 (2016-2017)