

Annex 1: Concept Note of the 5th Meeting of the Water Expert Group, 23-24 November 2015, Luxembourg

**UfM Water Expert Group
5th Meeting**

23-24 November 2015, Luxemburg

Concept Note

List of Abbreviations

AMCOW	African Ministerial Council on Water
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
GWP-Med	Global Water Partnership–Mediterranean
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ICZM	Integrated Coastal Zone Management
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
LAS	League of Arab States
MAP	Mediterranean Action Plan (of UNEP)
MED EUWI	Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative
MENBO	Mediterranean Network of Basin Organisations
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
RCC	Regional Cooperation Council
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEE	Southeastern Europe
SWIM-SM	Sustainable Water Integrated Management-Support Mechanism (EU Programme)
SWM	Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean
TDG	Technical Drafting Group (of the WEG)
UfM	Union for the Mediterranean
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
WACDEP	Water, Climate and Development Programme (of GWP)
WEG	Water Expert Group (of the UfM)
WFD	Water Framework Directive (of the EU)

The 5th UfM WEG Meeting 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 EC through the Sustainable Water Integrated Management-Support Mechanism (SWIM-SM) Programme and the GWP Water, Climate and Development Programme (GWP WACDEP).

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1. Purpose of the document

The Water Expert Group (WEG) of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) convenes for its 5th Meeting on 23-24 November 2015, in Luxemburg. Mandated by the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Water (Dead Sea, Jordan, 2008), the WEG delivered the draft Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean (SWM) through an intensive technical process (2009-2010). The SWM failed political approval at the UfM Ministerial Conference on Water (April 2010). The latest 4th UfM WEG Meeting was held in May 2011.

The present Concept Note aims at providing a background on the state of play, objectives and contents of discussions of the 5th UfM WEG Meeting, including a suggested outline of possible next steps.

2. Setting the scene

2.1. Water challenges in the Mediterranean

The Mediterranean region is shaped by its unique geographical, ecological, geopolitical and cultural features. In a rapidly changing world, the region is challenged by natural conditions including water scarcity, demographic change, unemployment, poverty, changing consumption patterns, urbanization, rising water and food demands, growing energy needs, environmental degradation, climate change, gender disparities and more. Part of the region currently faces an enduring economic crisis, socio-political instability, conflicts and large-scale migratory movements often under dramatic conditions.

Water fosters human security, supports economic growth and provides for environmental needs. The Mediterranean is faced with varying water-related situations and challenges in its different rims. The **southern shores** of the region are among the world's most water-scarce areas, with more than 150 million people facing water stress. According to the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC), this figure is set to rise by a further 80-100 million by 2025. The **northern shores** are better off on water availability, but increasingly encounter extreme phenomena like floods while droughts have become more frequent and persistent. Furthermore, water deficit is becoming common in the northern part, particularly during the dry seasons. **Modification of water bodies**, including due to **pollution**, is a threat in all Mediterranean countries.

With **agriculture** consuming up to 90% of water resources in some countries, efforts towards increasing water use efficiency and productivity (more 'crop per drop') and controlling pollution from fertilizers and pesticides need to be enhanced. With 60% of the region's population living in cities, **urban** water supply and sanitation services need to be rehabilitated and expanded, including through employment of green and innovative solutions. Similar has to be the effort in **rural** communities, particularly those provided with poor services. As **groundwater** reserves, including non-renewable fossil aquifers, are being depleted in many areas of the region and heavily polluted by agriculture, industry and domestic

uses, their mapping, protection and management need to be urgently improved. **Industry**, though not the major water consumer, is a significant source of pollution. Overall, more effort is required to protect the **environment** and maintain environmental services including in wetlands and coastal areas, and to improve water quality safeguarding both ecosystems and **public health**.

Climate change effects, including more extreme phenomena like droughts and floods, are likely to exacerbate the situation, both in the south and north of the Mediterranean. Adaptation measures will require effective water resources management. Given that several climate-related aspects remain uncertain, 'no-regret' actions present a sustainable way for responding to challenges. Furthermore, aiming at adaptation-mitigation co-benefits through interlinking water, land, energy and environment interventions, could provide tangible solutions and promote innovation in the region.

Governance remains a key challenge. Efforts focus on improving policies making and action planning, institutional settings, law and regulation, enforcement mechanisms, innovative financing, application of cost recovery and polluter pays principle, etc. To achieve sustainable models of development, water must be mainstreamed into other sectoral policies such as agriculture, land planning and use, energy, industry, tourism and trade. Political will is key for making these happen. The importance of **cross-cutting issues**, such as gender, equity, poverty and rights, is increasingly recognized but is still relatively poorly tackled.

Financing of appropriate water and sanitation services as well as water pollution abatement, does not meet the needs. It may require new tools and partnerships, including through socially-sensitive engagement of the private sector. Understanding related options, adapting them to national needs and developing capacities are ingredients for advancing the agenda according to country choices. It will be necessary to include in the equation the contribution to and benefits from ecosystem services. Quantifying the cost of inaction towards water and environmental degradation can help managers and decision makers to assess the importance of investment.

2.2. Approaches to address challenges

The **Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM)** approach has been introduced seeking solutions at basin, local, national and regional level going beyond administrative borders. Joint methodological approaches between **IWRM and Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM)** add value in taking action in the Mediterranean coast that receives great developmental pressures while been the host of important ecosystems. The implementation of a **Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus** approach can further contribute to optimizing the use of vital natural resources while addressing environmental needs and climate variability and change impacts.

For achieving a sustainable future, better planning and effective **implementation and enforcement**; reliable metering, data and exchange of **information**; coordinated monitoring of progress achieved against objectives set; greater and more efficiently employed **investment**; transparency; awareness; capacity building, and meaningful **stakeholder participation**, are needed. **Education** remains the most rewarding long-term investment.

Recognising these, the Mediterranean countries have engaged in long-term **water sector reforms**, involving state and non-state actors as well as donors where relevant. Among them, the role of river basin organisations and local authorities is increasingly recognised and supported. The positive outcome of these processes is visible in many countries, though a number of obstacles remain. Furthermore, **new**

challenges emerge like those linked with changing consumption patterns; climate change including extreme events; increased migration flows due to conflict, social unrest and degradation of natural resources; unsustainable tourism development, etc.

With natural water supplies no longer meeting the growing demand in several countries throughout the region, **non-conventional water resources**, such as treated wastewater reuse and desalination, are increasingly becoming an additional contributor to water availability. Related environmental, energy, health and other impacts need to be carefully considered while defining the potentials and limitations of such options. Improving non-conventional options demands better governance, planning and regulation; coordinated investment; monitoring of operations and quality information; building managerial capacity; and, where relevant, mitigating their negative impacts including along the coastline. Overall, where development of non-conventional options is necessary, it should not be considered in isolation but be combined with water demand management actions (which should run in parallel and with the same intensity) and considered as part of an integrated water resource management approach.

A large percentage of the region's water resources shared between countries. Sustainable management of **transboundary water resources** through integrated approaches, presents a unique opportunity towards avoiding conflicts and can assist advancing cooperation towards shared benefits. Tackling transboundary water pollution is a key area for improvement. Particularly in the north of the region, hydropower production in transboundary basins remains challenging towards securing ecosystem's integrity. Food security is more in the focus in the southern Mediterranean. Successful cooperation cases in the EU and the Balkans (e.g. Danube, Rhine, Sava, Drin) may inform and inspire transboundary synergies throughout the region.

2.3. The role of regional cooperation and related regional processes

Regional cooperation adds value to national efforts by facilitating and supporting experience sharing; replication of best practices; promotion of common approaches after adaptation to local needs; joint pilot projects; innovative practices including through knowledge transfer; and access to funding. These are promoted through regional political and technical cooperation processes, initiatives and programmes. Such regional undertakings also assist in raising the political profile of water issues and foster inter-sectoral synergies that may not advance as fast at national level, where more traditional development policies are, at times, applied.

International processes are reflected at regional and national level. The region reached to a large extend the water-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs, 2000). The recently approved (2015) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide an ambitious framework for action towards sustainability, including on water (SDG 6) and inter-linked sectors and targets. The coordinated implementation of SDGs provides new impetus for regional cooperation. The UN Conventions on water also provide important principles, instruments and approaches for managing water resources.

Regional and sub-regional institutions and initiatives provide the political and technical framework for advancing dialogue and action on shared objectives, bringing countries together on equal footing, promoting stakeholder engagement and facilitating interaction with financiers. The most significant political initiatives active in the region include:

- the UfM, guided by the decisions of its Ministerial bodies and its Senior Officials Meeting;

- the European Union (EU), including its Water Framework Directive (2000), its Daughter Directives and the extended EU *acquis* on issues related to water, environment and climate change adaptation;
- the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), including its South East Europe 2020 Strategy (2013);
- the League of Arab States (LAS), including its Arab Water Security Strategy (2011) and other Strategies related to water, environment and climate change adaptation;
- the 5+5 Initiative for the Western Mediterranean, including its Water Strategy (2015);
- the African Ministerial Council on Water (AMCOW) and its decisions;
- the UNECE Water Convention (1992), that is globally open since 2012;
- the Barcelona Convention (1974) including its Protocols and the revised draft Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (2015), serviced by the UNEP Mediterranean Action Plan and its Regional Activity Centres.

A range of regional and sub-regional programmes and projects are promoting IWRM aspects in the region. A great number of regional, national, local and transboundary institutions, organisations, donors and stakeholders (users, river basin organisations, local authorities, utilities, civil society, academia, private sector, media, etc) are engaged in such efforts. The UfM has labelled and promotes a number of projects related to water and environment in cooperation with stakeholders and financiers.

3. The UfM Water Expert Group

Water had a prominent role in the **Euro-Mediterranean Partnership** (Barcelona Process, launched in 1995). A number of Ministerial Conferences and high-level meetings were organised between 1996 and 2008 aiming at promoting sustainable water management and regional cooperation on water. In July 2008 (Paris), the Heads of States of the Euro-Mediterranean countries launched the **Union for the Mediterranean**.

The **3rd Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Water (Dead Sea, Jordan, December 2008)** reached agreement on a set of issues including the preparation of a shared and long-term **Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean (SWM)** and approved guidelines for its elaboration; see Dead Sea Ministerial Declaration in Annex A.

The Dead Sea Ministerial Conference decided the establishment of a **Water Expert Group (WEG)** within the then newly announced UfM framework. The Dead Sea Ministerial Declaration provided the main elements of the WEG mandate in its Article 5:

Ministers task a Water Expert Group, composed of government designated representatives of national authorities in charge of water policy of Euro-Mediterranean countries having the capacity to take decisions (e.g. water directors) and the European Commission to elaborate further the Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean as well as to assist its implementation and follow-up, in line with the guidelines described in Annex 1.

Furthermore, Article 14 of the Declaration's Annex 1 entailed that:

a. Under the political guidance of the Euro-Mediterranean Ministers responsible for Water, the Water Expert Group will:

i. carry out the tasks defined by the Ministerial Declaration on Water agreed in Jordan on 22 December 2008 including through the provision of technical inputs for ministerial meetings;

ii. endeavour to provide technical input to water related initiatives and processes in the region including recommendations to enhance effectiveness, coordination and complementarity of all key water related activities;

iii. develop a draft annual work-plan along the lines of the calendar and tasks defined by the Ministerial Declaration on Water agreed in Jordan on 22 December 2008.

Article 14 includes more clauses (a. to h.) providing for WEG's working modes; see in Annex A.

Aiming at **delivering the SWM**, consultations on the WEG launching were held in June 2009 (Paris). The WEG followed a structured, open and inclusive regional preparatory process involving national governments, local authorities and regional stakeholders. Three WEG Meetings were organised: 1st, September 2009 (Athens); 2nd, November 2009 (Cairo); and, 3rd February 2010 (Madrid). In between, two meetings of a WEG Technical Drafting Group (TDG) were organised: 1st, October 2009 (Madrid); and, 2nd, February 2010 (Madrid). The WEG was co-chaired by France and Egypt as UfM Co-Presidencies. They were assisted by Spain (TDG Chair), Greece and the EC, and technically supported by the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative (MED EUWI) serviced by the Global Water Partnership-Mediterranean (GWP-Med). A great number of informal and technical contributions enriched the process through the organisation of regional and thematic multi-stakeholder dialogues.

The SWM aimed at providing a common policy framework for achieving IWRM in the Mediterranean countries, fostering effective cooperation between Euro-Mediterranean partners within the overall context of sustainable development. The SWM aimed to complement and not substitute other obligations undertaken by the countries and to promote internationally accepted principles such as the polluter-pays principle, and common but differentiated responsibilities according to respective capabilities.

Responding to the guidance of the Dead Sea Ministerial Conference, the draft SWM was structured in four main themes/chapters:

- enhancing effective governance for integrated water resources management;
- adapting to climate change and enhancing drought and flood management;
- promoting water demand management, efficiency and non-conventional water resources, and protecting quality of water and biodiversity;
- optimizing water financing, water valuation and appropriate instruments, with emphasis on innovative mechanisms.

Objectives, approaches/instruments and recommendations for action were summarized for each theme. Operational objectives based on short (2012-2015), medium (2016-2020) and long-term (2021-2025 and beyond) targets were also outlined as well as general technical criteria for selection of future projects.

It was envisaged that SWM could translate into both immediate and far-reaching policies, operational initiatives and tangible actions and projects at local, national and regional levels. In support of these measures, a future regional Action Plan (also mandated by the Dead Sea Ministerial Declaration) was envisaged to serve as a 'roadmap' to match policy choices developed in the SWM with major on-going and future operational plans and the implementation of selected projects as well as promote new financial commitments from all partners.

Though consensus was reached on the technical contents, political reasons made it impossible to adopt the draft SWM at the **4th Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Water (April 2010, Barcelona)**. Despite that, the draft SWM inspired advancements including the EU-supported SWIM Programme (22

mil euros), a number of UfM-labelled water projects, the elaboration of the 5+5 Western Mediterranean Strategy (led by Algeria and Spain, with technical support by MENBO) that received approval at Ministerial level (March 2015, Algiers), etc.

UfM, through its Division on Environment and Water (established in 2010), carried on the Dead Sea Ministerial agenda. The WEG held its latest **4th Meeting on May 2011 (Barcelona)**, receiving information and concluding with a set of recommendations; see its Conclusions in Annex 2. The majority of the recommendation were practically followed up. However, it is not before November 2015 (Luxemburg) that the WEG is convened for its 5th Meeting.

4. The 5th Meeting of the UfM Water Expert Group: towards advancing works

The 5th Meeting aims at re-launching a regular regional dialogue on water issues of common interest, building on the Dead Sea Ministerial Conference and the work carried out since then. The meeting is also expected to expand and integrate in the debate emerging issues like the Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems Nexus as well as pressing challenges like climate change.

The draft Agenda is structured to assist sharing of information and exchange of views on issues of common interest. It is expected that the meeting will conclude with a set of recommendations and agreements including on ways forward to re-launch, according to modalities and guidance provided by the countries, a clear and focused joint water agenda.

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

- *How could the WEG best assist in the implementation of the water related SDGs and their integration in the regional agenda?*
- *How could the regional and sub-regional processes enhance their cooperation? How could the WEG support this closer cooperation within the regional water agenda?*
- *Which of the thematic areas discussed over the two-days meeting would be a priority for the WEG, and how could they be best served within its capacity?*
- *What should be the next steps to operationalise further cooperation? What should be the roadmap for making these happen?*

More specific thematic questions are included in the agenda for further joint discussion.

Annex A.

Ministerial Declaration of the 3rd Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Water (Dead Sea, Jordan, December 2008)

**BARCELONA PROCESS: UNION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN:
DECLARATION OF THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
ON WATER**

Adopted, together with its annexes, by Ministers and Heads of Delegations participating in the Euro-Mediterranean Conference on Water held in Jordan on 22 December 2008

We, the Participants,

Recalling,

- i. The Algiers Declaration (1990) and the Mediterranean Water Charter (Rome, 1992), underlining that water can positively contribute to cooperation among countries;
- ii. The Euro-Mediterranean Summit of Barcelona (27-28 November 1995) recognizing that water supply together with suitable management and development of resources are priority issues for all Mediterranean partners and that cooperation should be developed in these areas, as appropriate;
- iii. The Declaration of the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial in Turin, 1999, that reached an agreement on an Action Plan on Local Water Management and entrusted the Euro-Mediterranean Water Directors with the task of orienting, following up and assessing the implementation of the Action Plan;

Noting,

- i. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio, 1992), the Millennium Development Goals (2000) indicating specific targets in the field of water by 2015, the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002) and actions taken under the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative (2003);

- ii. the Strategy for Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean and in particular its priority on «Improving integrated water resource and water demand management » adopted by the Parties to the Barcelona Convention in Slovenia (Portoroz, 2005) and supported by Euro-Mediterranean Partners during the 10th anniversary of the Barcelona Process;
- iii. the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change fourth assessment report , adopted in November 2007, as well as the United Nations Convention on Combating Desertification and its “10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008-2018); the United Nations Convention on the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses (1997);
- iv. The decision taken during the 15th Conference of State Parties to the Barcelona Convention in Almeria, 2008, to "strengthen cooperation and seek synergies with initiatives pursuing similar environmental objectives";

Highlighting,

The conclusions of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean (13 July 2008), and in particular its reference mentioning that the Euro-Med Ministerial conference in Jordan in 2008 will define a Mediterranean water strategy, promoting conservation of water resources, diversifying water provision resources and efficient and sustainable use of water and the decision of launching the initiative of de pollution of the Mediterranean built upon the Horizon 2020 programme, as adopted by the Euro-Mediterranean Ministers of Environment in Cairo (2006) .

Welcome favourably the representatives of civil society;

Underline the importance of the results of effective cooperation in the field of water between Euro-Mediterranean partners in order to efficiently meet the challenges facing the countries of the region and to empower them with the tools to address these challenges and encourage further strengthening of this effective cooperation in particular in the fields of Integrated Water Resource Management, water supply, sanitation and transboundary freshwater resources, within the context of sustainable development, thus promoting equitable access and adequate supplies of water;

Recognize the enhanced cooperation between the EU and its Mediterranean partners, through the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean, the Instrument for Pre-Accession and the European Neighbourhood Policy, and commit themselves to work together to implement the bilateral agreements, the Action Plans agreed in the ENP framework and other forms of co-operation, in order to promote sustainable development in the region;

Stress:

- i. the degradation of resources both from a quality and quantity point of view;
- ii. the necessity to design and implement strategies and plans to achieve sustainable water resources management through integrated approaches comprising all kinds of water and all its uses ;
- iii. the growing gaps between water consumption and availability of resources, in particular in the light of the priority given to supply side policies;
- iv. that the widening of such gaps, without a coordinated action, is likely to be worsened by the effects of climate change, economic development and demographic growth;
- v. that water supply measures (traditional or alternatives) might be considered once the projected impact of water savings prove insufficient;
- vi. the imbalances in access to water supply and sanitation, bearing in mind that equal access contributes to poverty eradication, the improvement of health, economic development, hygiene, sustainable land use development, education, protection of the environment and of ecosystems;
- vii. the need to prepare a comprehensive and detailed assessment of water resources in the Mediterranean and of management policies and based on homogeneous and coherent information;
- viii. the necessity to promote the development of science-based technologies that will provide inter alia for efficiency in water use and supply measures;

1. A STRATEGY FOR WATER IN THE MEDITERRANEAN FOCUSED ON THE NEEDS OF POPULATIONS AND FUTURE CHALLENGES.

1. Taking note of the different challenges evoked, the Ministers agree to define the Long Term Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean, as decided by the Heads of State and Government. This coordinated and integrated Strategy, will:
 - i. tackle problems that go beyond the means of any one country, organisation or initiative, in particular those related to the impact of climate change and environmental needs, that call for a co-ordinated approach and increased cooperation;
 - ii. build on integrated approaches, taking into consideration every kind of water, the needs of different users, by means of integrated management at basin level, as a tool to allow countries in the Mediterranean to respond to these challenges collectively and individually;
 - iii. include two main goals: conservation of water quality including the prevention of further deterioration of water resources and the balance between the quantity of water used and the quantity of water available including mitigating and preventing the consequences of droughts and water scarcity;
 - iv. include both measurable qualitative and quantitative objectives, as part of a voluntary commitment to achieve these goals;
 - v. consider the most appropriate instruments to reach the objectives of the Strategy, with a view to achieve economic growth, social prosperity, equitable access and adequate supplies of water, and environmental protection, notably through improved efficiency of all water uses, appropriate governance arrangements, legislation and institutional arrangements, effective national and local planning, innovative financial mechanisms, tariff policies, standards, labels, alternative solutions, keeping in mind the differences in national situations and the need to increase the citizen's awareness by promoting the wide participation of civil society aiming at building the culture of water;

vi. develop and exploit for the benefit of all, scientific, technical and technological tools in these fields;

2. Based on these principles, Ministers approve the guidelines for the Strategy for water in the Mediterranean as defined in Annex 1 to this Declaration together with its elaboration calendar;

2. AN EFFICIENT AND SHARED ELABORATION AND FOLLOW UP MECHANISM.

3. Ministers decide to work more closely together in order to define, in a shared and balanced framework, the Strategy;

4. Ministers underline the need to work closely both at a regional and national level with other Ministers concerned by water issues;

5. Ministers task a Water Expert Group, composed of government designated representatives of national authorities in charge of water policy of Euro-Mediterranean countries having the capacity to take decisions (e.g. water directors) and the European Commission to elaborate further the Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean as well as to assist its implementation and follow-up, in line with the guidelines described in Annex 1;

6. Ministers agree to work to ensure the provision of appropriate financial resources and technical support to elaborate and implement the Strategy;

7. Ministers invite funding institutions to coordinate at regional and national level, in order to support the elaboration and the implementation of the Strategy;

8. Ministers call on all stakeholders, including parliaments and the EMPA, to contribute, where appropriate in a coordinated manner, to the development of the new Strategy as well as to support appropriate means for its implementation;

9. Ministers encourage further strengthening of effective cooperation in particular in the fields of Integrated Water Resources Management and Water Supply and Sanitation and reaffirm the importance of elaborating and implementing, through participatory processes, effective national and local IWRM based on realistic financing strategies;
10. Ministers reaffirm the importance of data, information and statistics on water, based on internationally agreed definitions and methods, structured within information systems, for analysis and decision making and insist on the need to dispose of national and regional systems that contribute to the definition, implementation and follow-up of the Strategy;
11. Ministers hence call for strengthening the coordination of existing Euro-Mediterranean initiatives and networks on information and expertise, policy planning and monitoring as well as capacity building so as to increase synergies between ongoing activities; in particular, exchange of information will be implemented through voluntary approaches, keeping in mind the objective of seeking comparability , consistency and avoiding duplication of work;
12. Ministers underline the importance of exchange of good practices, including through EU, Mediterranean, and other relevant programmes.

3. LAUNCHING OF THE ELABORATION OF THE STRATEGY FOR WATER IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

13. Ministers consider the technical work prepared by the Euro-Mediterranean Water Directors as a contribution to the success of the Conference;
14. Ministers welcome the contribution of civil society in the field of best practices as well as the projects and partnerships developed in line with its principles and presented in the margins of the Conference;

15. Ministers encourage a swift implementation of partnerships in order to implement concrete projects in line with the guidelines of the future Strategy and with a strong sense of co-ownership by the concerned populations and underscore the importance of the active participation of civil society, local and regional authorities and the private sector in the implementation of these partnerships;
16. Ministers suggest to adopt the Strategy for water in the Mediterranean by the next Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean summit scheduled in 2010; this Strategy will be subsequently developed in a related Action Plan and will be regularly reviewed;
17. Ministers propose to hold the 4th Euro-Med Ministerial Conference on water in the first half of 2010;
18. Ministers invite the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development to consider such Strategy as a possible contribution to the « Improving integrated water resource and water demand management » priority of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development;
19. Ministers invite the Foreign Affairs Ministers to take note of these conclusions and look forward to their presentation to the next Environment ministerial conference and, because of the issues at stake, to the Agriculture Ministerial Conference;
20. Ministers thank the Jordanian Government for hosting the 3rd Euro-Mediterranean Conference on Water co-chaired with the French EU Presidency and Arab Republic of Egypt as co-chairs of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean.

ANNEX 1

Guidelines for the development of the Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean

- 1) The strategy aims at tackling the main challenges in the field of water in the Mediterranean region, notably by fostering effective cooperation between Euro-Mediterranean partners within the context of sustainable development;
- 2) It will be based on:
 - a) the lessons learnt from the implementation of the Turin Action Plan, the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative for the achievement of the MDG and WSSD targets, and from the “integrated water management and water demand” priority of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development bearing in mind that the Mediterranean Commission for sustainable development shall be consulted;
 - b) The work and experience of regional, national and local institutions dealing and supporting efficient water uses and aiming at improved quality of water for human consumption, to serve economic development, social equity and prosperity and environmental protection, to promote better management of water demand and an efficient allocation of water resources in the different activities;
 - c) The lessons learnt from best practices on water resources management;
- 3) The Strategy will address in particular the challenges of growing water demand and impact of climate change, keeping in mind the need for equity considerations and preparing a list identifying the countries most affected by climate change in the Euro-Mediterranean region; it shall aim at reintegrating or maintaining the balance between supply and demand, consumption and availability, firstly as regards agricultural uses (as agriculture is the main water consumer in the region), and taking into account the ecosystems’ needs;

- 4) The strategy should take into account governance reforms;
- 5) The Strategy will be translated into policies, initiatives and actions that should give high priority to improved demand management encouraging water efficiency and the mobilisation of water supply measures (traditional or alternatives including wastewater reuse, desalination, rainwater harvesting), once the projected impacts of water saving measures prove insufficient, and encouraging benefit sharing through transboundary water management.
- 6) The Strategy will cover the following areas :
 - a. Advancing on effective water governance for integrated water resources management and water supply and sanitation ; awareness, technical and capacity building and coordination within administrative units and among stakeholders;
 - b. Addressing water and climate change, through adaptation measures together with mitigation with emphasis, inter alia, on management of droughts and floods, mitigation of water scarcity effects and combat desertification;
 - c. Optimizing water financing, water valuation and appropriate instruments, with emphasis on innovative mechanisms;
 - d. Water demand management and efficiency and non-conventional water resources.
- 7) The strategy will include both qualitative and quantitative objectives, as part of a voluntary approach, in particular a quantified objective for water savings at regional level;
- 8) The strategy will include an Action Plan, specifying the modalities through which these objectives will be achieved for the related years ;
- 9) The strategy will draw upon existing initiatives and partnerships, in accordance with its principles;

- 10) The strategy will aim at developing a coherent system and efficient synergies between the existing initiatives in order to assess priorities both at a regional and national level ; enhanced coordination of financial resources at a national, regional, and international level shall be sought;
- 11) The elaboration, implementation and follow up of the Strategy will be assisted by the strengthened collaboration between existing organisations, institutions and initiatives on water related MDGs and IWRM targets;
- 12) To ensure definition and implementation of the Strategy, water related information will be structured at a regional level, based on existing thematic contributions;
- 13) Strengthening the coordination and synergies between the existing Mediterranean initiatives and networks on information and expertise should contribute further to the elaboration, implementation and follow-up of the Strategy by:
 - a. facilitating the development of national information systems, national documentation centres and related training activities;
 - b. developing, at regional and national level, within the context of existing initiatives and governance mechanisms, exchange systems inter alia on : (i) water related information and monitoring, (ii) documentary data, (iii) professional training (iv) prospective analysis, (v) research, know-how and technology;
- 14) Ministers agree to entrust the Euro-Med Water Expert Group with the following tasks and according to the below modalities:
 - a) Under the political guidance of the Euro-Mediterranean Ministers responsible for Water, the Water Expert Group will:
 - i. carry out the tasks defined by the Ministerial Declaration on Water agreed in Jordan on 22 December 2008 including through the provision of technical inputs for ministerial meetings;

- ii. endeavour to provide technical input to water related initiatives and processes in the region including recommendations to enhance effectiveness, coordination and complementarity of all key water related activities;
 - iii. develop a draft annual work-plan along the lines of the calendar and tasks defined by the Ministerial Declaration on Water agreed in Jordan on 22 December 2008;
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- b) The Water Expert Group is co-chaired, when possible, according to the co-presidency rules of the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean.
 - c) Representatives from local authorities, civil society including the private sector and other stakeholders dealing with water management, as well as international and regional organizations, funding institutions, donors and other bodies may be invited to the meetings of the Water Expert Group as observers.
 - d) The Water Expert Group works on the basis of co-operation and open exchange of views. Decisions should be taken only on the basis of consensus.
 - e) The Water Expert Group meets at least once a year.
 - f) The working languages of the Water Expert Group will be coherent with the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean.
 - g) Each participant of the Water Expert Group on Water Issue is expected to support his involvement in the Group's work with his own resources. If funding becomes available, participation in the Group's work (eg. attendance at meetings, etc) may be supported.
 - h) Where appropriate, a Secretariat facilitating the tasks of the Water Expert Group will be set up and will act in coherence with the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean.

15) The calendar for the elaboration of the strategy must be coherent with the calendars of related initiatives and programmes: The calendar is the following

- a. Water Expert Group's contribution produced during its annual meetings, including two meetings before the end of 2009;
- b. Adoption of the Strategy: Ministerial Conference on Water of 2010 in order to be submitted to the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean summit;
- c. Developing strengthened coordination of the existing Mediterranean networks of information and expertise on water, including first discussions in early 2009 covering inter alia water information, policy planning and monitoring, capacity development and sharing of expertise and the development of partnerships as from 2009.

ANNEX 2

WATER PROJECTS

In the framework of the ministerial declaration adopted during the Conference on Water held in Jordan on 22 December 2008, the Ministers and Heads of Delegations wish to incorporate the continuation of their work into the ethos of the Paris Summit by the swift implementation of concrete and visible projects on the ground, helping to resolve the severe problems caused by the degradation of water quality and quantity and by the growing gap between resource availability and the increased needs and demands of the farming, domestic, industrial, tourist and environmental sectors.

They take note with satisfaction that the implementation of the Process has already enabled a number of water projects to be identified, with these projects in line with the Paris Declaration for the Mediterranean and relating to the following priority concerns:

- 1 - Adaptation to climate change.
- 2 - Balance between supply and demand.
- 3 - Conservation and rehabilitation of natural environments.
- 4 - Depollution of the Mediterranean.
- 5 – Technologies and efficient use of water.

Taking note of a first, indicative list of projects identified as examples and proposed by France, Jordan, Greece, Spain, The Netherlands, Egypt and Turkey, they ask all the partners to put forward the projects that they want to carry out so that they can be considered by the process.

They wish future projects to be in line with the guiding principles of the Future Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean and its accompanying action plan and consistent with ongoing processes, policies and programmes to learn lessons from replicable completed projects and emphasize the importance of multi-country projects. In addition, these projects could contribute to specific activities such as training, technology transfer, awareness and capacity building.

They call for mobilizing urgently additional funding for the implementation of the projects, in conformity with the Paris Declaration.

Annex B.

Conclusions of the 4th Meeting of the UfM Water Expert Group (Barcelona, May 2011)

Union for the Mediterranean Water Expert Group - Fourth Meeting

18th May 2011
Barcelona, Spain

CONCLUSIONS

The Fourth Meeting of the Water Expert Group (WEG) of the Union for the Mediterranean was held on May 18th 2011, at the Palau de Pedralbes in Barcelona, Spain. It was chaired by the Environment & Water Division of the UfM Secretariat and included representatives from Albania, Algeria, Austria, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Mauritania, Morocco, Netherlands, Palestine, Spain, Sweden, Tunisia, Turkey, the European Commission, the Arab league, and was also attended by the representatives of inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations.

A. Preamble

The Water Experts Group (WEG) is tasked with the implementation of the provisions included in the Declaration of the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Water held at the Dead Sea, Jordan, on 22 December 2008.

The First Meeting of the Water Expert Group (7-8 September 2009, Athens, Greece) decided, among others, on the establishment of a Technical Drafting Group (TDG) to work on the drafting of a Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean (SWM) aiming for a structured and inclusive process under the political and technical guidance of the WEG. MED EUWI provided administrative assistance to the process in coordination with the UfM Co-Chairs.

The TDG was chaired by Spain and composed of Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Croatia, the European Commission and the League of Arab States. The TDG met for the first time on 26 October 2009, and for the second time on 3-4 February 2010, in Madrid, Spain.

The Second Water Expert Group met on 4 November 2009, in Cairo, Egypt and the Third Water Expert Group met on 25 February 2010, in Madrid, Spain.

All participants recognize and thank Spain and MED-EUWI for their hard work in earlier WEG and TDG meetings.

B. The Water Expert Group was informed on:

1. The establishment and institutionalization of the UfM Secretariat and the Environment and Water Division during 2010.
2. The 2011 Work Programme of the Environment and Water Division approved by the UfM Senior Officials in December 2010.
3. The role and responsibilities of the WEG according to the Water Ministerial Declaration (Jordan 2008).
4. The Project Guidelines approved by the UfM Senior Officials in April 2011.
5. The background and current Status of the UfM Project Pipeline for the Water Sector.
6. Information provided by several WEG members on their projects.
7. Presentation of EU funded regional projects in the field of Water in the Mediterranean region (under ENPI) and Horizon 2020.
8. Future considerations for technical collaborative work on Water Issues in the Union for the Mediterranean with the presentation of several scenarios by the UfM Secretariat.

C. The Water Expert Group took note of:

1. The technical mandate bestowed on the UfM Secretariat by the Paris Joint Declaration of the UfM Heads of State and Government (July 2008), the Marseille Meeting of Foreign Ministers (November 2008) and the Statutes adopted by UfM Senior Officials Meeting (March 2010).
2. The mandate and tasks entrusted to the Water Expert Group (WEG) by the Jordan Declaration of the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Water (December 2008), and as further detailed at the first WEG Meeting (September 2009).

D. The Water Expert Group agreed to:

1. Continue to seek political guidance from Co-Presidency/SOM on how and/or when to proceed with regards to the preparation of draft Action Plan. The Technical Drafting Group will be available to continue to work on the Action Plan, as and when needed.
2. Work with the UfM Secretariat and with the technical support of the MED EUWI Secretariat to develop a draft work plan for WEG for the rest of 2011 & 2012 in accordance with the Jordan Ministerial Declaration on Water (December 2008) and follow up on the other tasks defined by the said Declaration.

3. Support the UfM Secretariat in the attainment of its technical mandate of identifying, development and concretization of projects, with technical expertise and advice, whenever needed and possible, in order to support a more transparent and effective project appraisal/review process by the Secretariat.
4. In order to assess the projects received, the general criteria and guidelines adopted by the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) should be further detailed in line with the Water Ministerial Declaration (Jordan 2008), other relevant approved documents and E&W Division priorities detailed in the Secretariat Workplan for 2011. Further, urge the promoters of projects already submitted to resubmit them according to the UfM provided project fiche taking into account the Project Guidelines.
5. Support the organization of technical workshops for WEG members in order to enable Governments, Civil Society and other Stakeholders in the development of joint regional, sub-regional and trans-national project proposals (using the agreed concept of Variable Geometry).
6. Support the organization of workshops to exchange and encompass best practice in water resource management, water and sanitation services and joint project development.
7. Keep in close coordination, through the UfM Secretariat, with the EU Water Initiative, the Arab Water Strategy, where applicable, and other related strategic initiatives, programmes and frameworks in order to ensure harmonization and complementarity.
8. Within the realm of projects sought by the Environment & Water Division of the UfM Secretariat, recommend to SOM to incorporate project proposals from the agriculture sector that may contribute significantly to preservation and better utilization of water resources.
9. Propose to the SOM the labelization of the project of desalination for Gaza. Indicate to the SOM that a number of projects have been presented corresponding with the four thematic priorities of the Water Ministerial Declaration (Jordan 2008). The corresponding list of projects will be available on the web site of the UfM Secretariat. We recall the need to address, as expressed in Jordan, to strengthen the coordination and synergies between the existing Mediterranean initiatives and networks on information and expertise.

**Annex 2: Conclusions of the 5th Meeting of the Water Expert Group, 23-24 November 2015,
Luxemburg**

OUTLINE of RECOMMENDED CONCLUSIONS

1. BACKGROUND

- Recall the 2008 Declaration and the validity of the commitments therein as well as the technical relevance of the issues identified in the 2010 SWM.
- Recall the challenges of the region and identify new emerging ones, as per the Concept Note, e.g.,:
 - Natural (water scarcity, arid/climate conditions, hydro-morphologic, hydrologic, droughts and floods, etc.);
 - Socio-economic;
 - Human-made (pollution, pressures from agriculture, tourism, hydropower, industry, migration and refugees, etc.)
 - Cross-cutting and transboundary issues: Climate Change, Biodiversity loss including the Mediterranean Sea conditions
- A number of initiatives (including legal frameworks, platforms or projects) are working in parallel in the region with similar lines of action (5+5 WMS, Strategy SEE2020 (RCC), UNECE Water Convention, Nexus dialogues existing or about to be launched, UNEP/MAP, SIDA-supported projects Austria, etc.); New international and global commitments (e.g., support to the SDGs follow up and implementation) offer new opportunities, including opportunities for funding.
- Recall the items of the agenda and the attached Concept Note and presentations

2. REAFFIRM THE NEED OF JOINING EFFORTS TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES AND THE NEED FOR COOPERATION

3. TO ELABORATE A ROADMAP with OBJECTIVES, ACTIONS, and ASSOCIATED WORK PLAN (to be revised on a 2 to 3-year basis)

- Analyse how the initiatives/existing legal frameworks/organisations/ can work together and ensure synergies and efficient cooperation;
 - Identify existing and potential funding mechanisms and agencies and encourage synergies between them;
 - Identify the commonalities and gaps;
 - Identify an overview of guiding principles and objectives;
- Draft a Roadmap bringing the initiatives together and develop an operational work programme

4. ACTORS INVOLVED

- WEG (giving a mandate to a smaller drafting group to work on the Roadmap and associated Work Plan), duly coordinated/supported by the UfM Secretariat with the technical assistance continued to be provided by GWPMED

Drafting group will include:

- Co-Presidencies (Jordan and European Commission);
 - UfM Secretariat (with GWP as technical facilitator);
 - Country representatives (1 representative Maghreb, 1 representative Middle East, 1 representative Balkans & Turkey, and 1 representatives from EU MS);
- Outcome of the Drafting Group will be presented for discussion and approval to the WEG. This may involve discussion by the WEG of interim report(s) prior to final approval.
 - Political level: Ministers to validate the process, including the Roadmap and Work Programme

5. TIMELINE

- 2016 preparation (including 1+ (1 provided funds available) WEGs meetings

- Mid 2017 approval during the Maltese Presidency of the EU

Nominations representing the sub-regions for the drafting group to be sent to the UfM Secretariat (water@ufmsecretariat.org) by 31/12/2015