

# Union for the Mediterranean

## Newsletter UfM-Water



Union for the Mediterranean  
Union-pour la Méditerranée  
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط



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# NEWSLETTER 2020

Despite the challenges in the Mediterranean region, which have been broadened by the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020 showed resilience and opportunities while consolidating the cooperation concept. Even in the most sensitive sectors like water. This newsletter presents some flagships events and illustrates successful cooperation.

## UFM MEETINGS

### **Webinar on Water and Public Health in the Mediterranean: Towards a Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Policy in the COVID-19 context**

19 November 2020, Online

In the framework of a study launched by the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), the Mediterranean Water Institute (IME) organised a webinar in the form of a panel with the aim of initiating a discussion on Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Policy in the COVID-19 context.

### **AMWAJ Forum – A Mediterranean Water And Journalism Conference**

28-29 October 2020, Beirut - [More information](#)

Beirut, 28 October 2020 –The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) partnered with AMWAJ Forum, a leading platform focusing on tackling water scarcity and

energy challenges and with CEWAS Middle East, and KAS – REMENA, to address the most pressing issues facing the Mediterranean region on the fronts of energy and water nexus. The third edition of AMWAJ Forum took place as a digitally-immersive learning experience spanning over 2 days on October 28-29, 2020.

### **EU-UfM Egypt Water Governance & Business Forum**

19 October 2020, Cairo - [More information](#)

The EU-UfM Business & Governance Forum brought together in Cairo over 120 high-level actors involved in the water and financing sectors at national and regional level to discuss EU, Mediterranean and Egyptian water issues including the UfM vision, plan and action towards sustainable development and sustainable water finance. The Forum was identified as a flagship event during the 2nd Cairo Water Week and was organised by the Union for the Mediterranean and by the EU Delegation in Egypt, in partnership with the League of Arab States, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and the Global Water Partnership-Mediterranean (GWP-Med).

### **Webinar: ‘Blended finance for water and climate: when theory meets practice’**

27 August 2020, Online - [More information](#)

The webinar on ‘Blended finance for water and climate: when theory meets practice’ took place on August 27, 2020. It brought together a diverse cross-section of public and private actors applying blended finance solutions to address water and climate change-related challenges. Organised by the French Water Partnership, it featured experts and practitioners who discussed the potential of blended finance and lessons learned through three case studies, a moderated virtual roundtable, and an audience Q&A.

### **UfM Water Task Forces on Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems Nexus (4th Meeting) & Water-Employment-Migration (5th Meeting)**

23 July 2020, Online - [More information](#)

The UfM Water Task Forces on Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems Nexus & Water-Employment-Migration took place online on 23 July 2020. The Meeting was addressed to members of the UfM WEFE Nexus and WEM Task Forces as well as other stakeholder organisations. The Meeting was co-chaired by Lebanon, Italy and Turkey, and was facilitated by the UfM, with technical inputs and assistance

by GWP-Med. The Meeting was supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation.

### **Technical Webinar on Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems Nexus in Practice**

21 July 2020, Online - [More information](#)

The technical webinar took place online on 21 July and was organised with the Global Water Partnership Mediterranean. The objectives of the Webinar were to share case studies and tangible examples of WEFE Nexus technical solutions applied in the Mediterranean region, with emphasis in the MENA, share lessons learnt and create a common understanding of challenges and opportunities in applying WEFE Nexus technical solutions and discuss the enabling environment to apply WEFE Nexus technical solutions.

### **Accelerating water action to build our countries back better post-COVID and scale up SDG delivery**

7-16 July 2020 - [More information](#)

The UfM co-organised together with the Global Water Partnership (GWP) and UN Environment Programme (UNEP) the high-level side event in the framework of the UN High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development. High-level representatives of countries and of international organisations reflected upon the opportunities and challenges around transformative post-COVID pathways leading to a new normal, based on accelerated delivery of science-based, cost-effective and sustainable actions.

### **UfM Virtual Climate Week 2020**

15 June 2020 - [More information](#)

The 2020 UfM Climate Week took place through several online meetings. UfM members' representatives, scientific experts, civil society, IFIs and other relevant climate actors discussed over several online gatherings the science-policy interface, the regional analysis of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) as well as the support to climate finance. Those meetings were organised under the umbrella of the UfM Climate Change Expert Group, the regional dialogue platform for climate action in the Mediterranean.

## **Consultation Meeting on the UfM Water Agenda and Financial Strategy and Ways Forward in the post-COVID 19 context**

9-10 June 2020, Online - [More information](#)

The Water Division of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), organised an on-line consultation with its Member States and partner institutions and organisations, on the afternoon of 9 June and the morning of 10 June. The meeting provided an opportunity for participants to address the implications for the region and responses to COVID-19, particularly in relation to the implementation of the UfM Water Policy Framework for Actions 2030 and to agree on regional priority actions that can complement individual country efforts.

## **3rd brainstorming virtual session on water, sanitation and COVID-19**

19 May 2020, Online - [More information](#)

The Mediterranean Water Institute (IME) wanted to bring together the main water operators and experts in water and sanitation engineering, to discuss and reflect on ways to ensure continuity of services and on measures to be taken during and after the pandemic. This 3<sup>rd</sup> session mobilised the experts of IME, who exchanged on their point of view regarding the impact of COVID-19 and answered the questions asked by water and sanitation service managers in urban and rural areas, regarding crisis and post-crisis management.

## **Mediterranean countries share water emergency and recovery plans to tackle the aftermath of COVID-19**

6 May 2020, Online - [More information](#)

The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and the Mediterranean Water Institute (IME) met with experts from Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Palestine, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey to share their response to the water emergency and provide policy recommendations on how to move forward. Participants agreed that providing sustainable water access is essential for many jobs and discussed their emergency and recovery plans to help water utility operators cope with the crisis.

## **Debates on the Mediterranean from Fundación 3 Culturas: session online on sustainable development, water, environment and energy**

30 April 2020 - [More information](#)

Isidro González, Deputy General Secretary of the Union for the Mediterranean in charge of Water, Environment and Blue Economy exchanged with Francisco José Gutiérrez Rodríguez, from the General Secretariat of the Environment, Water and Climate Change at the Junta de Andalucía regional government in the fifth (and final) session of the cycle, 'Debates on the Mediterranean: session on sustainable development, water, environment and energy' from the Fundación 3 Culturas.

## **Second brainstorming session on water and sanitation during the Covid-19 Pandemic**

27 April 2020, Online - [More information](#)

The UfM and the Institut Méditerranéen de l'Eau organised a second brainstorming session on the water and sanitation during the Covid-19 Pandemic on 27 April. The meeting extended IME key conclusions from the first meeting that took place earlier in April 2020, and gathered more than 30 participants from Palestine, Turkey, Greece, Spain, France, Malta, Cyprus, Jordan and Egypt.

## **First steering Committee, The road to the 4th Mediterranean Water Forum: Advancing on a regional strategy for action on water**

21 April 2020 - [More information](#)

The UfM, the Mediterranean Water Institute (IME) and the Energy and Water Agency of Malta held a meeting to prepare for the 2020 Mediterranean Water Forum. The meeting aimed to further advance a regional strategy for action on water in line with the 2021 World Water Forum's objectives.

## **100 entities gathered by the UfM to contribute to the future of the Blue Economy in the Mediterranean**

20 April 2020, Online Consultation - [More information](#)

More than 100 experts and representatives from international organisations participated in the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) online consultation on the future of the Blue Economy in the Mediterranean region. Taking into account the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, they provided more than 350

recommendations in key sectors such as governance, fisheries, aquaculture, tourism, renewable energies, marine litter, blue jobs and safety and surveillance.

### **First exchange meeting between IME Members to discuss the sanitary situation generated by COVID19**

8 April 2020, Online - [More information](#)

The UfM and the Institut Méditerranéen de l'Eau (IME) met online for the first brainstorming session on the water, sanitation and COVID19, along with 25 partners and experts from Lebanon, Spain, France, Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. This was the first of a series of meetings to exchange views on the water emergency response to the pandemic.

## **PROJECTS**

### **Spain unveils EUR 1Million financing to the construction of a Desalination Facility for the Gaza Strip**

25 June 2020, Barcelona - [More information](#)

The Secretary of State for International Cooperation of Spain, Ángeles Moreno Bau, met online with the UfM Secretary General, Nasser Kamel, and the Palestinian Minister of Water, Mazen Ghoneim. They discussed Spain's support to the construction of a desalination plant project to supply water to 2 million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. During the call, Spain announced a financial contribution of EUR 1 million to this vital project.

### **“Water is in our hands”: promoting water-saving solutions on water-scarce Mediterranean islands**

15 July 2020 - [More information](#)

Following more than 12 years of leveraging non-conventional water resources and promoting water efficiency to address water-scarcity and climate change impacts at local level in more than 38 Mediterranean islands, GWP-Med launched a new water saving initiative in partnership with Reckitt Benckiser's Finish dishwater detergent. The new initiative titled “Water is in our Hands” is now focusing on changing mindsets and habits within households in island communities, promoting a new culture of water saving and offering practical solutions to reduce water consumption at home.

## **PARTNERS**

### **OECD - Roundtable on Financing Water**

7-8 December 2020, Online - [More information](#)

A regional meeting focused on Europe was organised in partnership with the OECD and the European Investment Bank (EIB). The regional meeting of the Roundtable supported OECD's broader work on financing water as well as EIB's strategic priorities, commitment and increased ambition on climate action and environmental sustainability.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> WES Steering Committee Meeting**

23 November 2020, Online - [More information](#)

The second Steering Committee brought together the WES Water and Environment Focal Points from the Partner Countries, the European Commission, institutional partners, representatives of the new WES Demonstration projects and regional organisations. Participants discussed the progress of the project and the work-plan for the next twelve months.

### **ASCAME - MedaWeek**

18-20 November 2020 - [More information](#)

MedaWeek was jointly organised by the Association of the Mediterranean Chambers of Commerce and the Industry (ASCAME) and the Barcelona Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Navigation, with the collaboration of prominent Euro-Mediterranean organisations. The 14th edition of MedaWeek Barcelona, serves as the flagship Mediterranean entrepreneurial-economic platform for the entire world.

### **AFD - Water drives resilient countries: call for a Water Finance Coalition**

10 November 2020 - [More information](#)

The Webinar gathered participants from institutions such as Banobras, CAF, CDG Capital, EIB and the World Bank. Climate finance needs to be tackled with a sustainable approach and should involve different types of actors. At the end of the session AFD, CAF, EIB and the World Bank, in cooperation with Sanitation and Water for All, called for all Public Development Banks - whether multilateral, bilateral or national - to boost financing for water and sanitation and to foster greater cooperation.

## **INBO - 18<sup>th</sup> International Conference for the Implementation of the European Water Directives**

9-10 November 2020 - [More information](#)

The 18<sup>th</sup> "Europe-INBO 2020" International Conference for the Implementation of the European Water Directives was held virtually. Participants from 47 countries enriched the discussion, taking part in interactive workshops and webinars organised over two days.

## **OECD - 14th Meeting of the OECD Water Governance Initiative**

2-3 November 2020, Virtual meeting - [More information](#)

The meeting gathered more than 80 practitioners, policymakers and representatives from major stakeholder groups. Information was exchanged on the OECD's views on COVID-19 recovery plans and expectations for international cooperation.

## **Global Water Partnership - GWP Network Meeting 2020: Bringing the Change**

21-22 October 2020, Online - [More information](#)

GWP Partners were invited to the Annual Network Meeting of GWP Partners 2020, which took place online, under the theme 'Bringing the Change'. As part of the Network Meeting, the Partners had the opportunity to comment on the GWP in Action 2019 Annual Report and the GWP Annual Financial Report 2019.

## **Women in Water Diplomacy in the MENA region at Cairo Water Week 2020**

21 October 2020 - [More information](#)

Action for strengthening the role of Women in Water Diplomacy, with emphasis on the Middle East and North Africa region, was the focus of the session co-organised by GWP-Med and the Geneva Water Hub. The Session was based on a Comparative Study on Women & Water Diplomacy in the MENA region.

## **GWP-Med - 3<sup>rd</sup> African Young Water Professionals Forum at Cairo Water Week**

19-21 October 2020 - [More information](#)

GWP-Med, as key partner to the Cairo Water Week since its launch in 2018, co-organised and facilitated a day-event and two sessions, giving a strong message for enhanced focus on facilitating investments in the water sector, the role of gender in water diplomacy and mobilising Young Professionals in the fight to meet the SDGs.



## **ESCWA - Addressing the Water-Energy-Food (WEF) Nexus in the Context of Climate Change and Sustainable Development**

14-27 October 2020 - [More information](#)

The UN Commission ESCWA held a series of webinars as part of a regional training on renewable energy technologies. The webinars were organised by the EU-GCC Clean Energy Technology Network, the United Nations Regional Commission of Western Asia (ESCWA), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), the Environmental Center for Arab Towns (ECAT), the Middle East Desalination Research Center (MEDRC) and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in the UAE.

## **7<sup>th</sup> OECD Forum on Green Finance and Investment**

6-9 October 2020 - [More information](#)

This pioneering annual event convenes leading actors across the green finance community to help catalyse and support the transition to a green, low-emissions and climate-resilient global economy.

## **Ponza Prima-Med Initiative**

14 September 2020 - [More information](#)

The second edition of the Ponza PRIMA Med event was organised in collaboration with the Union for the Mediterranean, RIDE– the Italian Network for EuroMed Dialogue, the Anna Lindh Foundation, and Prospettive Mediterranee. The conference was held in Ponza and included an Inter-institutional Conference on Sustainable Development. The Euro-Med Manifesto for sustainable development, climate change and circular economy was presented on that occasion.

## **SIWI - World Water Week**

24-28 August 2020 - [More Information](#)

The conference took place virtually, gathering international experts to reflect on challenges related to sustainable and equitable access to water. With 120 sessions on a broad range of topics, the Week offered a valuable opportunity for people from across the world to learn from each other.

## **IEMed Webinar - Building resilience to health crisis through enhanced cooperation in the western mediterranean**

20 May 2020 - [More information](#)

The webinar was organised by the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed). The participants identified and discussed specific priority issues where North-South and South-South cooperation could be stepped up with the aim to develop the basis for common health policies in the Mediterranean.

## **GWP-Med - Political cooperation across borders protects water resources in Drin Basin**

24 April 2020 - [More information](#)

High level representatives from the five Riparians virtually signed a joint statement, endorsing the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the sustainable management of the Extended Drin Basin. Shared among Albania, Greece, Kosovo\*, Montenegro and North Macedonia, the Drin River Basin provides water resources for drinking, energy, fishing and agriculture, biodiversity, tourism and industry.

## **UNECE - Second Meeting of the Expert Group on the Transboundary Water Allocation Handbook**

30-31 March 2020 - [More information](#)

The Expert Group met via video conference to provide strategic advice and inputs for the development of a Handbook on Transboundary Water Allocation. Revisions and updates to the Handbook Outline were shared based on the first meeting, as was feedback on the content of main chapters.

## **CMI and MedYWat - Youth E-conference, World Water Day on Water and Climate Change**

23 March 2020 - [More information](#)

To better understand the complex interlinkages between water and climate change in the Mediterranean region and address this issue from a youth perspective, the CMI has organised the Fourth edition of its flagship regional youth workshop, aiming at raising the awareness of the future generation of water leaders on key water challenges in the Mediterranean.

## **UNECE, GWP-Med, ESCWA - Transboundary Water Cooperation deliberated during MENA Regional Workshop in Beirut**

3-4 March 2020, Beirut - [More information](#)

The two-day workshop “Enhancing transboundary water cooperation in the MENA region: progress, challenges and opportunities” brought together 35 participants from 10 MENA countries. The workshop focused on ways to strengthen transboundary water cooperation in the Middle East and North Africa and consequently support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and Goal 6 in particular, in the region.

## **MEDURABLE - Hydrodiplomacy and Climate Change for Peace: Case of the Governance of International Basins**

20 January 2020, Paris - [More information](#)

The fifth edition of the conference “Hydrodiplomacy and Climate Change for Peace: Case of the Governance of International Basins” brought together ministers, senators, ambassadors and water experts to discuss together the future of hydrodiplomacy and address the growing climate challenges and their dangers. The management of international basins and the governance of the Nile were at the heart of the debates.

## **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

### **UfM Water Agenda: Consultation Meeting with Regional Institutions and Stakeholders**

9 December 2020, Online - [More information](#)

The Union for the Mediterranean is holding a Consultation Meeting with Regional Institutions and Stakeholders. The meeting will be an outstanding opportunity to gather relevant actors of the Euro-Mediterranean region involved in water issues.

### **The Future of Water Jobs: Post Covid-19 Opportunities for Youth in the Mediterranean**

10 December 2020, Online - [More information](#)

The UfM supports the upcoming online webinar on The Future of Water Jobs: Post Covid-19 Opportunities for Youth in the Mediterranean, organised by UfM-Water in close collaboration with the World Youth Parliament for Water and the

International Water Resources Association in the framework of the Technical Assistance implemented by Greentech.

**IME - 2nd webinar on Water and Public Health in the Mediterranean: Towards a Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Policy in the COVID-19 context**

15 December 2020, Online

Following the 1st webinar held on last November 19th, the Mediterranean Water Institute (IME) is organising the 2nd webinar aiming to present examples of solutions proposed within the programme on Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Policy in the COVID-19 context. The objective is to promote demonstrative projects to be replicable in the Mediterranean countries related to water sanitation and hygiene.

**UNECE - Virtual Workshop on Financing Transboundary Water Cooperation and Basin Development**

16 - 17 December 2020 - [More information](#)

The Virtual Workshop will take place via an online platform on 16 and 17 December 2020. It will discuss challenges and opportunities related to the financing of transboundary water cooperation and basin development.

**FAO & OECD - Seventh meeting of the Roundtable on Financing Agricultural Water**

26-28 January 2021 - [More information](#)

The Roundtable on Financing Water provides a global public-private platform drawing upon political leadership and technical expertise, with the ambition of facilitating increased financing of investments that contribute to water security and sustainable growth. The 7th meeting will focus on agriculture water developments and investment needs.

**FWP PFE - Scientific Day "What Transitions for Water in the Face of Climate Change?"**

4 February 2021 - [More information](#)

The objective of this conference is to highlight the challenges generated by climate change on the hydrological cycle and resources, and also to present existing solutions and to share experiences from different regions.

Supported by Sida