

Webinar on Digital Transformation of the Water Sector in the Mediterranean

Hosted by the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)

Date: Dec. 05, 2023 Time: 16:00 CET

Introduction:

Digital transformation has become a key enabler for optimizing processes, enhancing efficiency, and improving service delivery across various sectors. The water sector in the Mediterranean is no exception and can greatly benefit from embracing digital technologies to address challenges, enhance water management practices, and ensure sustainable development. This concept note outlines a webinar day aimed at discussing the digital transformation of the water sector in the Mediterranean.

The Mediterranean's water sector faces numerous challenges, ranging from aging infrastructure to water scarcity and increasing water demand. In an era of rapid technological advancement, digital transformation offers a beacon of hope for overcoming these challenges and transforming the water utilities sector. By leveraging digital solutions, Mediterranean's water utilities can improve operational efficiency, enhance service delivery, and ensure sustainable water management practices.

Digital transformation holds immense promise for water institutions and utilities in the region, offering solutions to the challenges they face. By embracing digital technologies, the sector can overcome limitations imposed by aging infrastructure, enhance operational efficiency, improve customer service, and ensure sustainable water management practices. The digital revolution presents an opportunity for water utilities to leapfrog into a future where data-driven decision making, advanced monitoring systems, and smart metering enable efficient, transparent, and resilient water resource management. Embracing digital transformation is not only vital for the sector's success but also a crucial step towards achieving UfM water Agenda and sustainable development.




The Webinar on the digital transformation of the water sector will serve as a valuable platform for stakeholders to exchange knowledge, share experiences, and explore innovative solutions.




Objective: The webinar on "Digital Transformation of the Water Sector in the Mediterranean" aims to bring together stakeholders, experts, and policymakers to explore the current state of digitalization in the water sector, its potential benefits, challenges, and its transformative impact in the Mediterranean region. This event also serves as a platform for co-designing policy recommendations to accelerate digital transformation within the UfM agenda.



The webinar aims to:

- a) Provide a platform for key stakeholders to discuss the potential of digital transformation in the water sector.
- b) Share best practices, success stories, and lessons learned from other countries or similar initiatives.
- c) foster collaboration and partnership between relevant authorities and international companies experienced in digital solutions for the water sector.
- d) Identify challenges, gaps, and opportunities for digital transformation in the water sector and explore possible solutions.

e) Formulate recommendations and strategies to guide future initiatives and policies for digital transformation in the water sector.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Almotaz Abadi	 A photograph of Mr. Almotaz Abadi, a man with a beard and mustache, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and red tie. He is seated at a conference table with flags in the background. A nameplate in front of him reads "The Union For the Mediterranean Secretariat".
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ms. Samira Shaban Pina	 A portrait photograph of Ms. Samira Shaban Pina, a woman with long dark hair, smiling.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. Pilar Conejos, Digital Twin Manager and former Head of Network Control and Regulation for Valencia Metropolitan Area Idrica & Global Omnium	 A black and white portrait photograph of Dr. Pilar Conejos, a woman with shoulder-length dark hair, smiling.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Hassan Aboelnga 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mme Conchita Marcuello 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E Dr. Hazim Elnaser 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Dragan Savic 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Omar Amawi 	

Agenda

- 16:00 - 16:05 Welcoming and Introduction, Ms. Samira Shaban Pina, Union for the Mediterranean, UfM
- 16:05 - 16:15 Opening Remarks by Mr. Almotaz Abadi is the UfM Deputy Secretary General in charge of Water, Environment and Blue Economy
- 16:15 - 16:30 Keynote Speech by Dr. Pilar Conejos, Digital Twin Manager and former Head of Network Control and Regulation for Valencia Metropolitan Area | Idrica & Global Omnium
- 16:30 - 17:30 Panel Discussion moderated by Dr. Hassan Aboelnga
- 17:30 - 18:00 Q&A (Doha Zammal - Expert - Union for the Mediterranean

Speakers

- **Mr. Almotaz Abadi**
 - UfM Deputy Secretary General in charge of Water, Environment, and Blue Economy

Moderator:

- **Dr. Hassan Aboelnga**

- International Water Expert and Chair of Urban Water Security WG at International Water Resources Association

- Keynote Speech

- **Dr. Pilar Conejos,**

- Digital Twin Manager and former Head of Network Control and Regulation for Valencia Metropolitan Area | Idrica & Global Omnium

Panel Discussion:

- **Mme Conchita Marcuello**

- Directorate General of Water, Ministry for the Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge, Spain

- **H.E Dr. Hazim Elnaser**

- Chair of Middle East Water Forum and former Minister of Water and Irrigation for the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

- **Prof. Dragan Savic**

- CEO of KWR Water Research Institute
- Chair of the IWA Digital Water Programme Committee

- **Dr. Omar Amawi**

- Deputy Director - PRIMA Foundation

Webinar Objectives and Questions:

Objective 1: Provide an Overview of Digitalization in the Water Sector

- What are the key digital technologies currently being adopted in the water sector within the Mediterranean region?
- How can digital solutions enhance the efficiency and sustainability of water management in the Mediterranean?
- What are the major challenges and barriers to implementing digital transformation in the water sector?

Objective 2: Examine Digitalization in the Mediterranean Water Sector

- Can you share specific examples of successful digitalization initiatives in the Mediterranean's water and wastewater utilities?

- How has digitalization improved water resource management, quality, and accessibility in the region?

Objective 3: Co-design Policy Recommendations

- What policy measures are necessary to support and accelerate the digital transformation of the water sector in the Mediterranean?
- How can governments, international organizations, and stakeholders collaborate to holistically realize digital transformation within the UfM agenda?

Interactive Elements:

To support the UfM study on digital transformation of the water sector in the Mediterranean, the webinar will include 6 live polls and audience engagement session:

Join us for this insightful webinar, where experts, policymakers, and thought leaders will explore the digital future of the water sector in the Mediterranean and work towards sustainable, efficient, and accessible water management solutions.

Poll Questions

Poll 1: "What is the most significant challenge to implementing digital solutions in the water sector in the Mediterranean?"

Potential Answers:

- a. Lack of adequate infrastructure for digital technologies.
- b. Limited financial resources for digitalization projects.
- c. Regulatory and policy barriers.
- d. Resistance to change from traditional water management practices.

Poll 2: "Which aspect of water management do you believe could benefit the most from the implementation of Digital Twins?"

- a. Asset Visualization and Management
- b. Operational Optimization
- c. Predictive Analytics
- d. Future Needs Planning

Poll 3: "Which stage do you consider your country advanced in implementing digital transformation of the water sector?"

Potential Answers:

- a. Initial Stage: Exploring digital solutions, but no major implementations yet.
- b. Intermediate Stage: Some digital initiatives, but not widespread.
- c. Advanced Stage: Significant adoption of digital technologies in water management.
- d. Expert Stage: Pioneering advanced and cutting-edge digital solutions.

Poll 4: "How familiar are you with existing digital transformation initiatives that have been successfully implemented in the Mediterranean water sector?"

- a. Very Familiar - I am aware of multiple successful initiatives.

- b. Somewhat Familiar - I know a few but would like to learn more.
- c. Not Very Familiar - I am aware but not well-informed about successful initiatives.
- d. Not Familiar at All - I have no knowledge of successful digital initiatives.

Poll 5: "How crucial do you think the development of a roadmap is for the effective digital transformation of the water sector in the Mediterranean?"

- a. Extremely Crucial - A roadmap is essential for strategic planning and coordinated efforts.
- b. Very Crucial - It provides direction but may not be imperative.
- c. Moderately Crucial - Its importance depends on the context.
- d. Not Crucial - The sector can adapt without a specific roadmap.

Poll 6: "Would you be interested in a session showcasing best practices and successful implementations of digital solutions in the Mediterranean water sector?"

- a. Very Interested - I am eager to learn from successful implementations.
- b. Interested - I would like to know more about best practices.
- c. Neutral - It depends on the focus of the session.
- d. Not Interested - I prefer to focus on challenges rather than successes.