



Union for the Mediterranean  
Union pour la Méditerranée  
الإتحاد من أجل المتوسط

## Mediterranean Green Week

UfM/OECD

14-16 May 2024, Istanbul, Turkey



### UfM Mediterranean Green Week

#### CONCEPT NOTE for WEFE Nexus session

**“Implementing the Water–Energy–Food–Ecosystems Nexus in the Mediterranean : A new ambition for regional and local cooperation”**

**May 15, 2024 from 9:00am to 11:00am**

#### 1. Background :

Water, energy, food and ecosystems are essential resources for both human livelihoods and socio-economic development. The four sectors are intrinsically linked: Agriculture is the largest freshwater consumer in the region. Energy generation is dependent on water for extraction of fossil fuels, hydropower, cooling thermal power plants, biofuel crops, etc. Both the food and water sectors are energy intensive : around 1/4 of total energy consumption relates to food production and supply, while up to 1/3 of the operating costs of water and wastewater utilities are energy-related, including for desalination. Water, energy and food sectors rely and impact on the ecosystems.

The sustainable management of all four Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems (WEFE) components is fundamental to achieve the SDGs (14 goals out of 17 are directly linked to water, energy, food and ecosystems) and to reach peace, security and prosperity. However, because these sectors are heavily cross dependent such management cannot be effectively achieved unless it is done, from the design phase, in an integrated way allowing each sector/component to become, on equal footing, an “entry point” into the WEFE Nexus.

The twin challenges of biodiversity loss and climate crisis, in a region where the climate is changing faster than global trends, increases risks to the sustainable supply of water, energy, food and the functioning of terrestrial and marine ecosystems. This threatens both nature and human livelihoods, as well as social and political stability and development. Such risks are exacerbated by governance failures and socio-economic challenges, such as population growth, urbanization, economic activities concentrated heavily in coastal zones, unsustainable economic growth consumption patterns, migration, and conflicts.

Sectoral governance and the lack of adequate policy, management and implementation tools for integrated approaches among WEFE sectors and the spatial areas where the activities are implemented, present an inadequate framework for effective risk response. At the same time, innovative financing mechanisms to mobilize public and private capital, and new powerful tools, like digitalization, become available and offer new opportunities for regional, national and local action (at all levels).

The proper design of action addressing the challenges of WEFE components should consider the socio-economic and cultural continuum of the North-South, East-West interface, that characterises the Mediterranean. In this regard, coordinated action at regional, national and local levels is needed to reduce risks and increase combined benefits. The WEFE Nexus approach can help local authorities and communities to better adapt to climate change, managing water resources, ensuring food security, preserving ecosystems and encouraging integrated planning and better territorial management.



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## 2. Objectives of the the session

The session aims to propose a new ambition for all stakeholders, including local authorities and frontline communities to achieve the SDGs and address the climate and environmental crisis in the Mediterranean through the water – energy – food and ecosystem nexus approach. More specifically, it aims

- (i) to better inform decision and policy makers through solid scientific evidence about WEFE environmental, social and economic benefits,
- (ii) to enhance cooperation on the approach including through broad and inclusive participations of all stakeholders, regional, national and local, and;
- (iii) to enable the mainstreaming of system-thinking and the development of a WEFE strategic framework in the Mediterranean source-to-sea continuum for effective governance at different levels.

The session will build on recent work led by the UfM and its partners including WEFE pilot projects in several member countries, MedECC special report on the WEFE Nexus, WEFE workshops held at international event such as the MedCOP Climate 2023 in Tangier and the COP28 in Dubai. The session will also benefit from the on-going preparation of the “Water, energy, food and ecosystem (WEFE) Strategy in a Mediterranean Source to Sea Continuum”, which is a joint effort led by the UfM, the European Commission and UNEP MAP with the technical support of GWP Med, WES and PRIMA to assist countries in enhancing integration of policy across sectors and to promote leveraging of necessary funding. The draft strategy has undergone broad consultations at the 1<sup>st</sup> WEFE Nexus Regional Roundtable in 2023 in Rabat and the 2<sup>nd</sup> WEFE Nexus Regional Roundtable in 2024 in Tunis where regional and national players, representatives from local communities, financing institutions and academia have gathered to assess the added value of the WEFE nexus approach.

**3. Date and Venue :** OECD Istanbul Regional Centre, located in Istanbul Chamber of Industry, Istanbul, Türkiye

## 4. Agenda

9:00am – 9:30 am

### Opening

HE Walid Fayyad, Minister of Energy and Water, Lebanon, Ministry of Energy and Water, Lebanon

Almotaz Abadi, UfM Deputy Secretary General in charge of Water, Environment and Blue Economy

Grammenos Mastrojeni, Senior Deputy Secretary General in charge of Energy and Climate Action

Tatjana Hema, Coordinator, UNEP/MAP, Barcelona Convention Secretariat

Patrick Wegerdt, DG Environment of the European Commission

OECD Representative (TBC)



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9:30 – 11:00am

### Panel discussion on “Implementing the Water–Energy–Food–Ecosystems Nexus in the Mediterranean : A new ambition for regional and local cooperation”

**Moderator:** Frédéric de Dinechin, Senior Policy Advisor, Union for the Mediterranean, Water, environment and blue economy division

#### Setting the scene:

WEFE framework by Michael Scoulos, Team Leader WES Project. Chairman MIO-ECSD and GWP Med on the WEFE Nexus strategy and framework

MedECC special report on the WEFE Nexus: Mohamed Abdel Monem, Senior advisor of climate change and Rural Development

**Discussion panel:** During the panel, each panelist will reflect on how to scale up the WEFE approach, increase its impact and foster cooperation at regional and local levels.

Tassos Krommydas Senior Programme Officer at Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean (GWP-Med). Ecosystem perspective, source to sea continuum and role of regional and local actors in implementing the strategy

Jamila El Mir, Senior advisor to the UN Climate Change High-level champion, COP 28 H.E. Razan Al Mubarak on the UN water, energy, land and ocean breakthrough initiatives.

Jauad El Kharraz, Executive Director of the Regional Center for Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency. Energy perspective and role of private sector.

Yosra Albakkar, Senior Manager, South Asia and MENA, Pathfinder International. Role of civil society and local stakeholders and gender perspective

Sukru Esin, Mediterranean Youth for Water Network – MedYWat, from the water perspective and role of youth.

Ali Rhouma, Project Officer, PRIMA Foundation representative. Food perspective and impact evaluation of WEFE nexus (online)

## 5. Participants : open to all MGW participants



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