6th Annual Conference on Water Finance and Investment - Water finance: regional priorities and the role of banks'

Session 6. Finance for water resilience: perspectives from the EU

Presented by: Octavi Quintana, PRIMA Director





# PRIMA: A partnership with a focus on the Mediterranean



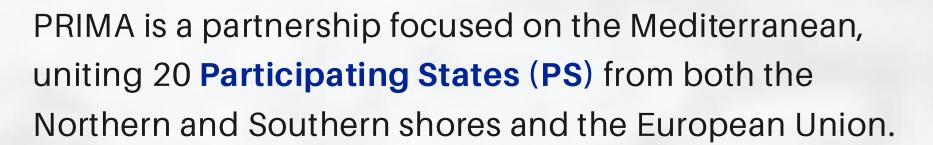
**Budget:** 

700M €



20 countries
with the active participation of
the European Union.





The partnership includes:

12 EU and 3 Horizon Europe associated countries and 5 third countries signing an international agreement for Science and Technology with the European Commission.

Through PRIMA, 20 countries join forces under a common research and innovation strategy to tackle the Mediterranean's most urgent challenges — from water scarcity, climate change and population growth to food security and the depletion of natural resources.

PRIMA also champions sustainable farming, agrobiodiversity, vibrant local value chains, and the rich Mediterranean lifestyle rooted in healthy eating, active living, and cultural heritage.





## Deploying innovative solutions in the Mediterranean



PRIMA's goal is to bring
Mediterranean countries
together to work on
research and innovation
that improves water
supply, farming, and food
production in a region
facing serious challenges
from climate change.



With a budget of EUR 700 million, PRIMA implements the Programme mainly through calls for proposals.

From 2018 to 2024, PRIMA has funded 269 projects across the region.



These projects bring together diverse partners from different countries—including universities, research centres, businesses, public authorities, and civil society organisations — forming international consortia



EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIP



# Programme thematic focus

PRIMA breaks down barriers between different fields in the Mediterranean, to tackle the connected challenges of water, energy, food, and the environment.

PRIMA funds projects that not only create real benefits for communities but also promote gender equality and address important regional issues.

By focusing on the links between water, energy, food, and ecosystems (called the WEFE Nexus), PRIMA helps reduce environmental problems and resource shortages caused by climate change, while supporting economic growth in the region.



## Water management

Integrated and sustainable management of water for arid and semi-arid Mediterranean areas.



## **Farming Systems**

Sustainable farming systems under Mediterranean environmental constraints



## Agri-food value chain

Sustainable Mediterranean agro-food value chain for regional and local development



**12**WEFE NEXUS PROJECTS

## WEFE Nexus

Water, Energy, Food and Ecosystems (WEFE) Nexus





# PRIMA-WATER Priority Areas



Water resources availability and quality within catchments and aquifers



Sustainable, integrated water managenment



Irrigation technologies and practices



Use of alternative water resources





## WATER TOPICS (2018-2025)

# **SECTION 1**

## 000

#### 2018

- Wastewater
- Technologies
- Reuse of treated waste water
- Desalination



#### 2019

- Groundwater
- Information system
- · DSS tools
- Earth observation



#### 2020

- Water
   Accounting
- IWRM
- Governance model
- Modeling



#### 2021

- Land management
- Desertification
- Ecosystem restoration



#### 2022

- Surface Water
- Storage
- Nature Based Solutions (NBS)
- Wetlands



2023

- Micropollutants
- Nutrient recovery
- Treatment
- Wastewater management



2024

- Irrigation
- Nexus
   Approach
- Ecosystems
- Modeling



#### 2025

- Nature Based Solutions
- sustainable water management to address extreme events



- Irrigation
- Water
   Governance
- Management models



#### 2019

- Irrigation
- Low quality water management



#### 2020

Irrigation
 efficiency for
 small
 farmers



2021

Water
 Governance



- 2022
- Water pollution and salinisation from agri-food wastes



- 2023
- Water
   Governance
   Models



2024

Water accounting





- Water
  Footprint and
  Virtual Wate
- National policies on water management



SECTION 2



# Clustering of Water Management Projects – vs PRIMA SRIA







# Clustering of Water Management Projects – vs Projects Portfolios







Prevention of Water Pollution and Salinisation from Agri-Fod Wastes



7 Wastewater Treatment and Desalination



Decision Support Systems for Groundwater Management



4 IWRM, Water Accounting



Water Management Models for Rainfed and Irigatedgrculture



Sustainable Water Storage

















## Water management

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## WEFE Nexus

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## Egypt

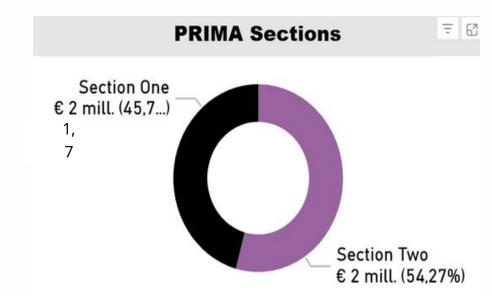
## Water management

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# Question 1. How are actions to achieve water resilience financed in EU Member States?

- Water resilience is at the core of the EU Green Deal, EU Climate Adaptation Strategy, Zero Pollution Action
   Plan ....and PRIMA.
- Financing mechanisms: combine EU-level instruments, national funding, and public—private partnerships (PPPs) to promote integrated water resource management, infrastructure modernization, and innovation.
- The shift is from grey to green and digital infrastructure, prioritizing nature-based solutions (NBS), smart irrigation, water reuse, and circular economy models.

## **Examples- Horizon Europe & PRIMA Programme**

- Fund R&I actions to develop innovative, sustainable, and region-adapted water technologies and governance models.
- PRIMA alone mobilized over €700 million (2018–2027), financing 60+ projects on water management, irrigation, reuse, and WEFE nexus.





# Question 1. How are actions to achieve water resilience financed in EU Member States?

## **Emerging Trends**

- Blending research, finance, and policy instruments (e.g., PRIMA + National Funding Agencies)
- Digitalization of water systems via AI, sensors, and smart metering.
- Water pricing reforms ensuring cost recovery while safeguarding affordability.
- O Growing emphasis on resilience accounting linking water investment to climate risk metrics and

SDG indicators.





# Question 2. How can EU institutions and EU Member States support the implementation of the UfM Recommendations on Water Finance in the SEMC?

- The UfM Recommendations provide a shared policy framework to bridge the finance gap and enable investment-ready water projects.
- EU and PRIMA play pivotal roles in connecting policy, research, and finance for joint Euro-Mediterranean water resilience.
- EU support should evolve from project-based to systemic, fostering enabling environments and bankable regional pipelines.

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### **KEY SUPPORT PATHWAYS**

### (A) ALIGNING EU AND UFM AGENDAS

- Integrate UfM Water Finance priorities into **EU–MED regional cooperation frameworks** (NDICI–Global Europe, Interreg NEXT MED, PRIMA, EIB Global).
- Use PRIMA's Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) AND Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) as a science-based tool to operationalize UfM water finance priorities (e.g., reuse, governance, resilience).

### (B) DEVELOPING BANKABLE WATER PROJECTS

- PRIMA contributes by maturing early-stage R&I results into investment-ready concepts (i.e. F4P Business Acceleration Program), which can be scaled through EIB, AFD, and Green Climate Fund pipelines.
- EU and UfM and PRIMA could co-launch a "Water Resilience Investment Facility" combining grants, blended finance, and technical assistance.

### (C) STRENGTHENING REGIONAL FINANCING CAPACITIES

- Build Water Financing Strategies aligned with UfM guidance, including cost recovery, PPP frameworks, and circular business models.
- Support **Capacity Building** for project preparation and access to finance (through F4P Accelerator, Horizon Results Booster, and UfM platforms).





# Question 2. How can EU institutions and EU Member States support the implementation of the UfM Recommendations on Water Finance in the SEMC?

### **Key Support Pathways**

### (D) MOBILIZING PRIVATE SECTOR AND BLENDED FINANCE

- Incentivize Public—Private—Academic Partnerships (PPAPs) via guarantees, tax incentives, and risk-sharing mechanisms.
- Encourage the creation of Green Bonds or Impact Investment Portfolios focused on water efficiency and reuse technologies.

### (E) ENHANCING DATA AND EVIDENCE-BASED DECISION MAKING

- PRIMA's R&I projects generate robust Datasets on water productivity, efficiency, and climate impacts essential for designing viable investments.
- Promote **Regional Observatories and Dashboards** (e.g., PRIMA–UfM synergies) to monitor the impact and return on water finance.





## Conclusion



## **Equal Footing**

Based on equal footing, shared interest and mutual benefit.



A strategic R&I Agenda coherent with global and regional challenges



## PRIMA: a solid instrument of Science Diplomacy

between Europe, Africa and Middle East



A well-balanced project portfolio with 269 projects' results to be capitalized





## Key successes in the region

## **SCIENCE DIPLOMACY**

PRIMA has proven to be an instrument facilitating cooperation between teams from North/South and South/South countries.

## ALIGNING NATIONAL REGULATIONS

Aligning national regulations and administrative procedures: PRIMA effectively fostered collaboration among countries that had not previously worked together.







www.prima-med.org @PRIMAPartnership



