

## **SWIM-SM Scope**

SWIM-Support Mechanism is a Regional Project funded by the European Union (EU) under the European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) – South Environment.

It complements and brings added value to other relevant activities, projects and initiatives undertaken with the support of the EU and other agencies/organisations either at the bilateral or regional (=Mediterranean) level.

At the bilateral level the EU policy in the Mediterranean region is guided by the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and the related Action Plans are agreed between the EU and each Mediterranean Partner Country.

The ENP is not yet fully ‘activated’ for Algeria, Libya and Syria, since those have not agreed Action Plans, but it is operative for Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, occupied Palestinian territory and Tunisia with whom Action Plans have been agreed and set out an agenda of political and economic reforms with short and medium-term priorities of 3 to 5 years.

The priorities identified in the Action Plans (including those related to water and environment sustainability), agreed with the authorities of each country and other relevant actors, also guide the bilateral programming of assistance to each country under different financial instruments.

The ENP, which is chiefly a bilateral policy between the EU and each partner country, is further enriched with regional and multilateral co-operation initiatives, the most important for the Mediterranean Partner Countries being the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) (the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, formerly known as the Barcelona Process that was re-launched in the Paris Summit on the Mediterranean in July 2008).

Removing pollution from the Mediterranean is among the priorities identified during the Paris Summit while the importance of water was also acknowledged. As such, both issues require exceptional and coordinated efforts from authorities at all levels, and also from the private sector, particularly financial institutions.

In compliance with the mandate given by the Heads of State, the Ministerial Conference on Water, held in Jordan on 22 December 2008 under the UfM framework, decided on the fundamental guidelines for a new Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean (SWM) and its subsequent Action Plan.

The main priority areas of this new Strategy are:

- Water Governance,
- Water and Climate Change,
- Water Financing and
- Water Demand Management and Efficiency, including non-conventional water resources.

However, in spite of the consensus reached on the content of the Strategy, due to the lack of political agreement among the parties, the 4th Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Water held in April 2010 in Barcelona failed to adopt a finalised version of the SWM. The adoption of the draft Strategy is still pending.

SWIM-SM addresses the four core themes that are reflected in the draft SWM supporting concrete measures that would arise from the draft Strategy - if eventually adopted - but are not conditional on its adoption to pursue concrete improvements at regional level.

It also targets water issues that are linked to the three main sources of pollution identified by the Horizon 2020 Initiative to De-Pollute the Mediterranean: municipal waste, municipal wastewater, and industrial. Through this initiative the Euro-Mediterranean Partners have committed themselves to increasing efforts to substantially reduce the pollution of the Mediterranean by 2020 through the "Horizon 2020 Initiative" (H2020).

Another important initiative with which SWIM-SM is operationally linked is the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative (Med-EUWI), whose objective is to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development Targets for water and sanitation through the adoption of IWRM policies and measures at national and regional levels.

Moreover, SWIM-SM is also linked to other regional processes, such as the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development, launched by the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development under the United Nations Environmental Programme Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) and the GEF/ UNEP-MAP Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Sea Large Marine Ecosystem.