



REPORT ON THE 2ND SWIM-SM STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING 17th-18th October 2012

Preamble: The 2nd SWIM Steering Committee (SC) Meeting took place on 17-18 October 2012 in the hotel Marivaux in Brussels. The main objectives were to (1) report on progress in relation to activities realized by SWIM-Support Mechanism's (SWIM-SM) during its 1st year of implementation, (2) present the advancement in the implementation of the five SWIM demo projects (SWIM-DP) (3) present and discuss activities planned for the 2nd year of SWIM-SM implementation and (4) review and discuss further synergies with relevant on-going projects and initiatives.

DAY 1 – 17 Oct 2012

Opening Session

- Opening Remarks: Ms. Liselotte Isaksson, Head of Sector, Unit F.4 - Regional Neighbourhood South, EuropeAid, DG Development and Co-operation, European Commission
- Dr. Rafiq Hussein: Deputy Secretary General, Union for the Mediterranean
- Purpose and structure of the Meeting: Mr. Stavros Damianidis (Project Director) and Mr. Vangelis Constantianos (Technical Director), SWIM-SM

Main Outcomes of Discussions:

- The SWIM Program tries to respond to the urgent need for an integrated management of water resources with attention to issues such as participatory planning, equity, accountability and transparency and focus on Regional Cooperation in the South ENPI countries;
- In order to be more effective and deliver better results the scope of activities of SWIM-SM have been narrowed-down and given more focus;
- Synergies between SWIM and other on-going initiatives and projects are a very important element and should be encouraged to share experiences, best practices and knowledge on how to bring the IWRM further and also to achieve a better use of available resources ;
- The EC warmly supports the endorsement of the UfM Draft Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean (or any other appropriate regional water policy framework) as a key step towards promoting sustainable water integrated management in the Region and, on 1



its side, the UfM Water Division supports the strengthening of cooperation with the SWIM Program ;

- UfM and SWIM-SM should have a strengthened relationship. UfM secretariat has to acknowledge the changing and difficult situation in the Region (economic problems facing the North countries and revolutions and frequent changes of governments in the South) and seize all available opportunities to work better and more effectively in terms of resources to push the agenda of sustainable integrated water management.
- UfM projects are mainly of regional or sub-regional / trans-national nature with, exceptionally, National projects having a Regional impact (such as the Gaza desalination plant; with Egypt, Israel and oPt being the key players). Reference was also made to the GWP-Med / OECD project implemented by the UfM Water Division and directed to improve governance and the way water sector is financed with special emphasis on encouraging the private sector participation.
- The feed-back of the Steering Committee members is essential to take stock of the possible achievements of the SWIM program and of its added value for the countries in the Region and to tailor better the activities to respond to existing needs.

Session I: Overview of the progress of the SWIM Program: Dr. Hosny Khordagui, Team Leader, SWIM-SM

Main Outcomes of Discussions:

- Country representatives expressed their appreciation of the volume of work and the percent delivery of SWIM-SM project during its first year of implementation given the current challenges in the region.
- Countries expressed interest in demonstration activities with more on-the-job trainings;
- Measuring impacts of activities related to capacity development by going beyond a record of the number of trainees involved is a difficult task. The difficulty was attributed to the multitude of players in this field in the region, the very long time needed to implement SWIM-SM suggested policies options at the national level and the resources and time needed to develop and test these indicators to measure impacts. However, SM could try to introduce some appropriate indicators;
- Evaluation of both the trainers and trainees during capacity development activities is important and should be continued;
- SWIM-SM is developing a matrix to highlight the possibilities for interlinks and synergies with on-going initiatives and projects. In addition the project has identified in its 2013 work plan, the potential partners for each suggested activity.
- To ensure synergy, SWIM-SM will consider developing a mechanism to alert other on-going



initiatives/projects on its planned and on-going activities.

Main Recommendations:

- Communication between the National FPs and the SM should be improved so that information about materials produced and on-going activities are received by the FPs in a timely manner;
- To the maximum possible extent, SWIM-SM should explore the identification, development and testing of selected indicators to evaluate capacity building activities in terms of their impacts. Synergies between SM and the evaluation component of H2020 could be developed in this context;
- Synergies with relevant initiatives should be encouraged. Specific mention was made to the MEDRC Center and the trainings conducted in its framework (trainings/field tours) as well as on the importance to focus on success stories;

Session II: Progress Report Presentation & Discussion

Work package 1: Water governance & mainstreaming

Main Outcomes of Discussions:

- The establishment of inter-ministerial committees has been led, as an activity, by the GEF Med-Partnership. SWIM-SM offered to provide its support wherever possible. However, little progress has been achieved. In the case of some countries (e.g. in Palestine and Tunisia) such committees might already exist or planned for by the countries themselves and other could be explored through the Arab League's Ministerial Water Council.
- The latest idea explored by the GEF Med-Partnership is to support National inter-ministerial committees related to coastal areas and to support this effort with a regional approach that could be undertaken by SWIM-SM project.
- It is important to replicate the good examples from WUAs and economic valuation on South-South basis and the means should be identified to achieve this aim.
- Ecosystems role in water management is perceived as a weak component of the activities implemented under SWIM-SM, particularly in relation to capacity development. Within such context, the important role of wetlands has been considered in the on-going studies and in the economic valuation of water degradation at the river basin level.



Main Recommendations:

- Replication of results concerning the activities on water valuation could be achieved via: a) policy studies summarizing the key findings, b) trainings (one in Maghreb and one in Mashreq), c) expansion to other cases, d) anchor economic valuation into institutions/universities that will continue providing such services and the use of the tools.
- Libya and Mauritania should be included in the SWIM-SM activities as they are part of processes uniting the region (including the most recent 5+5 Initiative). Mauritania can only participate as an observer.

Work package 2 : Capacity building activities

Main Outcomes of Discussions:

- Mainstreaming is an important objective of SM and therefore the involvement of other sectors in SWIM-SM capacity building activities is essential. National FPs have a major role to play in this respect, since they are the main reference point of SM activities.
- In some cases, National FPs experience difficulties in identifying suitable trainees for the planned activities, particularly due to the time needed for coordination with other institutions eligible for the trainings.
- Trainers are selected based on the identification and proposal of 2-3 appropriate candidates among which the EC selects the most suitable one. Feedback from the countries about the performances of trainers are appreciated;
- Evaluation of the training workshops is a substantial element in the planning process of SWIM-SM future capacity building activities to respond effectively to the needs identified during preceding activities. In line with this, more focus will be given on the organization of field visits and study tours during the second year of SM implementation;
- Environmental issues are considered in SM activities as an important component of IWRM. Environmental aspects of water management is also addressed in a dedicated pillar within the project “Economic Evaluation of Water Resources” and is also demonstrated by the institutional settings of the SC with the inclusion of environmental Liaison Officers representing the Ministries of Environment of the PCs.

Main Recommendations:

- National FPs, in addition to a regularly updated workplan which is uploaded at the project’s website, requested to receive a plan of upcoming activities well in advance so that they can have the time to facilitate effectively the nomination of the most suitable trainees and to coordinate with other relevant institutions;



- In order to identify the most suitable candidates, the PCs should receive detailed information about the required profile and the level needed for the targeted participants when the nomination request is sent to them;
- Concerning the impact of capacity building activities, internal follow-up by the countries is needed to monitor what has been accomplished in relation to the subject training theme;
- Trainees should present the key points acquired from the trainings to their colleagues. This would enhance both the monitoring/evaluation process and the sustainability of capacity building activities;
- Trainees should be actively involved in the capacity building activities, by requesting them to prepare in advance and present cases, examples and best practices from their National experiences;
- The importance of wetlands in wastewater treatment and the need to include such topic in training sessions and study visits needs to be stressed. This issue will particularly come into the picture through the ICZM/IWRM linkage.
- Countries need to be engaged in the preparation of the trainings so that priority themes can be identified more easily and activities catered better to their National needs. SWIM-SM can share the Concept Note (CN) of the proposed training activities with the FPs and gather their feedback before proceeding. Time is however a very important factor in implementation; which necessitates that feedback from the FPs is given within a week. Otherwise SWIM will consider there is an agreement on the CN.
- EU Delegations in the PCs should also be informed in advance about such activities in order to link better with the bilateral assistance projects that they are implementing at the national level;
- SWIM-SM should also progress on regional themes of interest and provide advice on particular issues such as those related to trans-boundary water management and good water governance.
- The private sector should be invited to join in capacity building events as this would be very useful for them. PCs can help in securing the private sector participation to events;
- Training of trainers should be given adequate attention by SWIM-SM to secure appropriate follow-up and sustainability of activities. SWIM PCs help would however be needed in identifying the right people from the administrations or national centers who could be trained;

Work package 3: Application of water management plans

Main Outcomes of Discussions:

- It was stressed on the advisory role of SWIM-SM in relation to desalination and that relevant activities are implemented having in mind that desalination should be considered⁵



after all other options have been exhausted by the countries. In this respect, SWIM-SM undertook a study to examine the costs and benefits of supplying water through desalination compared with improving technical and allocative efficiency. Whilst this study is meant to provide guidelines for informed decision with respect to investment in the water sector, SWIM-SM project does not encroach on the sovereignty of PCs and on their decisions to promote desalination as a solution to their water problems;

- Israel stressed on the importance of keeping the deleted activity (Activity 3.3.3) under work package 3 regarding the development of a financial incentive system for saving water and on the need to support farmers through financial incentives as this could have significant impacts on sustainable water management.

Main Recommendations:

- The private sector should be involved in activities related to desalination as they have been around for 50 years and can provide useful advice;

Work package 4 : Identification of good practices & success stories in the region & elsewhere

Main Outcomes of Discussions:

- The identification of good practices is generally considered as a very useful activity, of an added value to the PCs.
- Aquifer recharge through treated wastewater is considered by some countries as an important issue to which SM should give more emphasis. However, other countries currently see it as a risky practice because water quality problems. Aquifers can be polluted irreversibly and therefore PCs are not committed to recharge. The scarce knowledge on hydro-geology of aquifers and groundwater bodies in some of the PCs does not allow planning properly for recharge, while the absence of appropriate legislation and enforcement in addition to lack of adequate awareness represent in many cases an obstacle to the practice.
- IMPROWARE demonstration project is addressing the issue of aquifer recharge with wastewater and good practices will hopefully come out to guide related activities. Eventually, combined efforts between IMPROWARE and SWIM-SM could be implied to respond to this request of the countries;

Main Recommendations:

- To involve NGOs as much as possible in activities related to this package and to identify possibilities for them to assist in moving things forward.
- Good practices in aquifer recharge from PCs should be considered for replication (e.g Israel using Soil Aquifer Treatment of secondary effluent) and other countries in the



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Mediterranean (e.g Spain). The role of SWIM-SM would be the provision of options and technologies but the final decision remains with the countries.

- SM to develop a study on the legislative framework regulating the recharge of aquifers with adequately treated wastewater.

Work package 5 : Development of a Communication and Awareness Raising Strategy

Main Outcomes of Discussions:

- Parliamentarians are perceived as an important group to be targeted by SM in the framework of its communication / awareness raising activities;
- NGOs also play an important role in promoting sustainable water management and would be considered amongst the main target groups;
- Prosecutors and judges are not well trained in addressing non-compliance with water laws and available enforcement mechanisms.
- The close cooperation between H2020 CB/MEP and SWIM-SM was stressed upon as well as the importance of promoting further synergies given the fact that some of the target groups are similar.

Main Recommendations:

- Training prosecutors and judges should be given the highest priority;
- Dialogue between MPs and journalists, others to also include NGOs should be given adequate attention;

Work package 6 : Support the Commission with the overall coordination of the program.

- No comments and /or recommendations were made.

Session III: SWIM Demonstration projects - Presentations & Update

Main Outcomes of Discussions:

- The SWIM-SM SC has no word/mandate over the Demos – this was clear from the previous SWIM-SM SC Meeting. Israel FP objected to the provision of any support from SM to the Demo projects and to the project “All across the Jordan River” in particular. This Demo has not been endorsed by the related countries and might jeopardise the Peace Treaty and, is ineffective due to the absence of Syria in discussions about the River.
- The EC pointed out that NGO projects do not need governments’ endorsement and while SWIM-SM steering committee is not responsible for the demo projects, it needs to be kept



informed.

Main Recommendations:

- The oPt recommended that, for the case of the “All Across the Jordan” Demo project to form a trilateral inter-governmental committee as Governments are the ones taking the decisions. This is to ensure the endorsement and applicability of the findings of the project;
- Appropriate tools and methods should be applied in order to make visible the impact of SWIM two components in the countries in the coming years. In some PCs there are more than one SWIM activity and therefore it would be useful to show how SWIM-SM and Demos are carrying out the activities and synergizing. Organising joint but relevant workshops to share experiences within the country would be useful in this regard.

DAY 2 – 18 Oct 2012

Session IV: SWIM-SM Work-plan 2013: Presentation and Discussion

SWIM-SM Pillar A : Non conventional Water Resources

Main Outcomes of Discussions:

- Some of the financial figures presented in relation to desalination (UNEP/WHO 2008) are out-dated as there has been progress and technological improvements that have resulted in reduced prices. In any case the actual figures will depend on several factors including the scale of desalination and the utilised technology;
- Desalination using Concentrated Solar Power (CSP) was considered important by all countries, and was addressed during 2012 SWIM-SM work plan. Despite its high potential, the core desalination group formed by SWIM-SM supported the assessment of the cumulative impact of desalination projects in the Mediterranean Sea being of high priority. This was further confirmed by both H2020 and UNEP/MAP considering the impact that the findings will have on policy reform in the Mediterranean countries (with the impact of desalination in the Southern EU countries being dealt by UNEP/MAP and that of the South Mediterranean countries by SWIM-SM)
- In its training already conducted in 2012 on wastewater treatment and reuse, SWIM-SM has not focused on the standards related to the re-injection of treated wastewater in the aquifer because there are differences from country to country based on their hydro-geological parameters;
- Additional synergies between H2020 CB/MEP and SWIM-SM can be promoted to increase the critical mass in the countries. These relate, among others, to the cumulative approach to



desalination which is considered as very important and the preparation of compatible codes on desalination at the regional level;

- oPt requested support for the examination of financial mechanisms to help private sector involvement with regards to the construction and operation of desalination plants.

Main Recommendations:

- The State of Israel recommended the organisation of a capacity development workshop on modelling the cost of desalination in collaboration with MEDRC to predict the cost of desalination based on scale and technologies used. Many PCs supported the initiative;
- In all future work, the environmental costs of desalination should be valued and internalised in any cost estimations. Furthermore, the capital costs should also be an integral part of all cost estimates;
- Moreover, SWIM-SM could capitalize on the existing Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) undertaken for existing desalination plants and extract lessons learnt and to share it with the partner countries;
- When conducting the proposed desalination study, magnitude of pollution should be put in perspective for comparison with other sources of point pollution in the Mediterranean (e.g. from power plants, industrial wastewater discharges, etc.) This however will be subject to availability of data on other discharges that is made available to SWIM-SM;
- The proposed desalination study should build on the findings of other regional projects supported by the EU addressing the same topic. Specific notion was made to AQUA CSP study analysing the potential of concentrating solar thermal power technology for large scale seawater desalination;
- SWIM-SM to consider, for future work, the compilation of desalination codes/laws/standards in the PCs with the aim of enhancing their compatibility and/or harmonisation in the region;
- SWIM-SM to organize a strategic meeting including the FPs/LOs and a chief official from the relevant Ministries dealing with desalination together with the Core Desalination Group. NGOs should be invited in this meeting to follow closely the work; H2020 should also be informed to synergise follow up and adjust capacity building accordingly.
- Concerning wastewater re-use, SWIM-SM should focus further on strategic planning (and not only at the technological level) building on the findings and outcomes of activities organised in the framework of other EU funded projects, such as the MED EUWI Service Contract;
- The environmental impact of wastewater treatment should be considered and the re-use of effluent should be promoted and integrated during the planning phase of the treatment plant;



SWIM-SM Pillar B : Economic Valuation of Water Pollution

Main Outcomes of Discussions:

- All data / statistics used in the studies are provided by the PCs;
- The studies consider groundwater degradation and relate not only to degradation due to pollution but also to other causes, including climate change;

Main Recommendations:

- Synergies with Arab Center for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry lands (ACSAD) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA in Lebanon) should be ensured. Both the Ministry of Energy and Water and Litani River Authority (LRA) should be involved to provide guidance.
- SWIM-SM should consider using the results of the cost of degradation in the shared river basins to promote joint management of the shared water resources between the riparian countries (particularly in the absence of a joint management committee, or bilateral agreements on water allocations). In this regard SWIM-SM will carry out a joint workshop to discuss the results with both riparian countries, and provide a summary to the EU delegation in the respective countries to initiate policy dialogues based on the results.

SWIM-SM Pillar C : No Regret Actions for the Adaptation of the Water Sector to Climate Change

Main Outcomes of Discussions:

- There is good experience in the State of Israel on drought management – including the preparation of a master plan, risk assessment and environmental assessment of drought in addition to adaptation and mitigation issues - that could be shared with other countries as a contribution to the proposed SWIM-SM work;
- Indicators elaborated in the framework of Euro-Mediterranean Information System on know-how in the Water sector (EMWIS) activities related to the joint MED EUWI-WFD Drought Working Group could be useful for SM work;
- The SWIM Demonstration project ACLIMAS offered its collaboration with activities undertaken under this pillar as it will be compiling good practices in relation to the adaptation to droughts;
- Cooperation between SWIM-SM and relevant organisations (e.g. the Observatory for Sahara and Sahel (OSS) to build on their experience and with the demo projects (e.g.



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ACLIMAS and WADIS MAR) will be pursued including making use of the project for outreach in the demo countries. In this regard, it was mentioned that OSS is a member of the consortium in Wadis Mar

- SWIM-SM to provide a drought policy framework that takes into consideration the different specificities of the project countries.

Main Recommendations:

- Tunisia recommended including flood management to the no-regret scope of work planned for 2013.
- Drought management should be approached as a whole package bringing in also agriculture and the environment and to consider both crisis and risk management.
- SWIM- SM to deal with the overall management of extreme events and prepares a set of rules and/or contingency plan that would be included in its 3rd year Work Plan.

SWIM-SM Pillar D : Water Governance

Promoting Best Practices In Support of Priority Areas for the Successful Establishment and Operationalization of Water Users Associations (WUAs) in the PCs

Main Outcomes of Discussions:

- It was specified by SWIM-SM that activities proposed under this Pillar relate to the establishment and operationalization of WUAs;
- Countries can benefit considerably from the best practices and lessons learnt from others. This should also extend to the legal frameworks. SWIM- SM specified that based on the outcomes of the Expert Group meeting held during 2012 first implementation phase, it was suggested that SWIM-SM project avoids dealing with WUAs legal frameworks;
- Concern was raised that other important issues of relevance to local water governance were not included in this pillar, such as changing crop patterns, tariffs, legislation and moving forward at the policy level.

Main Recommendations:

- Emphasis should not be given only to WUAs related to big irrigated schemes but also to those for small tenures since in some countries these small perimeters make up most of the irrigated areas;
- SWIM- SM should capacitate water legislators in SWIM countries, in order to facilitate putting in place the relevant legislations. This was nevertheless strongly debated



among the countries, with some of them favoring the adoption of step wise approach; building first success stories in WAUs establishment and empowerment and adapting legislations along the way.

Improving compliance and enforcement of water legislation in SWIM-SM countries

Main Outcomes of Discussions:

- The project will only provide guidelines on measures for improving compliance with water legislations.
- The problem mostly lies with enforcement and not availability of water legislation; and when available they are developed without any participation of the beneficiaries. Framework/guidelines on enforcement, coming from Europe for example, would be useful but the social elements and human behavior (in the region's context) need to be considered;
- The multiplicity of laws, their different origin and overlap are problematic issues in some of the PCs;
- Other actors should be engaged in the proposed capacity building activities. This would include but not restricted to environment police, inspectors, prosecutors, etc. It will be left to the focal points and liaison officers to coordinate nomination of the relevant expertise in their respective countries.
- There is significant role for the media to raise awareness for enhancing compliance with water laws;

Main Recommendations:

- Water users and stakeholders should take part in the preparation of water laws should be informed/aware on how they comply with these legislations. Bottom-up approaches and building consensus are essential towards the compliance with water laws;
- Work on incentives/disincentives for compliance should be included among the planned activities; an issue which is considered in the proposed activities;
- South-South cooperation and sharing practices on compliance and enforcement of laws should be promoted by SWIM-SM;
- Jordan and Palestine requested detailed investigation on the adequacy of water laws with the view of improving compliance and develop enforcement capacity.
- One suggestion was to revise the sequence of the training and assessment activities.



Communication, Support to the Demos & Horizontal activities

- Israel does not support activities that will be directed towards the Demos, specifically due to the existence of the FOEME project
- Demos could enhance the dissemination of information about SM at the local level;
- The general public is not a target group for communication because the cost would exceed by far the available financial resources.

Session V : Roundtable on synergies with regional organizations/ programs/ initiatives

The panel included representatives of the following organization/projects:

- H2020 CB MEP
- MEHSIP
- UNEP MAP/MED POL
- UfM Secretariat

Main Outcomes of Discussions:

- The UfM Secretariat can benefit considerably from the expertise/technical papers developed within SWIM; and requested that SWIM-SM helps develop criteria and guidelines for project selection (in relation to updated environmental hotspots) for potential funding.
- H2020/CB MEP can help in approaching stakeholders with whom they have strong linkages (Parliamentarians, NGOs, journalism, educators, and members of the CB/MEP consortium such as the UNESCO IHE, UNEP/MAP, ARC+, ACP. water and nonconventional water resources management.
- Financing the water sector appeared as an issue of importance and very high on MEHSIP agenda. SWIM-SM is recommended to synergize with MEHSIP on the water sector financing activities while avoiding socially and politically sensitive issues such as water pricing and tariff. Adequate consideration should be given to the creation of an enabling environment to attract the private sector investments in the water sector.
- A clear request for building additional synergies and interlinks with relevant projects and initiatives was expressed as follows:
 - Desalination, Capacity Building and Wastewater reuse with UNEP MAP/MED POL,
 - Reuse study on Israel and Spain by the Plan Bleu,
 - MEDRC cost modeling in desalination,



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- “Adapting to climate change in the water sector in the MENA region” commissioned by the German BMZ (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation & Development) for the Arab Ministerial Council; represented by ACSAD and ESCWA,
- The UNDP Water Governance Programme for Arab States (WGP-AS); Report to be available by the end of 2012.



LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Title	Name	Surname	Country	Institution/ Project	Position	e-mail	
1	Mr	Almotaz	ABADI	oPT	Palestinian Water Authority	Technical Advisor	mutaz.abadi@gmail.com
2	Eng.	Ahmad	ABU THAHER	oPT	Ministry of Environment	Director General for Projects and International Relations	ahmadabuthaher@yahoo.com
3	Dr.	Khaled	ABUZEID	Egypt	Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE)	Regional Water Resources Programme Manager	kabuzeid@cedare.int
4	Mr	Mohamad	AFANA	Jordan	Ministry of Environment	Director of Policy and Development	afaneh79@yahoo.com
5	Mr	Tahar	AICHAOUI	Algeria	Ministère des Ressources en Eau	Directeur des études et des aménagements hydrauliques	deah.meda@yahoo.fr
6	Dr.	Ismail	AL BAZ	Jordan	GIZ	Senior Project Manager	ismail.albaz@giz.de
7	Mr	Sherif	ARIF	Egypt	SWIM-SM	Non- key Expert	sherifarif59@yahoo.com



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Title	Name	Surname	Country	Institution/ Project	Position	e-mail
8	Dr.	Ahmed	Egypt	Delegation of the EU to Egypt	Utilities & Economic Development Specialist	ahmed.badr@eeas.europa.eu
9	Mr.	Fuad	Spain	Union for the Mediterranean Secretariat	Senior Advisor for Environment and Water	fuad.bateh@ufmsecretariat.org
10	Mr	NEJIB	Greece	MEDWET	Coordinator	nejib@medwet.org
11	Ms	BERGER	Belgium	Policy Officer	DG CLIMA	Lucie.BERGER@ec.europa.eu
12	Dr	Djahida	Egypt	UNDP Egypt	Project Coordinator	djahida.boukhalfa@undp.org
13	Ms	BROUMA	Greece	SWIM-SM	Technical Assistance	anthi@gwpmmed.org
14	Mr	CARNEVALE	Italy	Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea	Project Officer - EU Task Force	carnevale.matteo@minambiente.it
15	Ms	BARBARA	Belgium	Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea	Head Of The EU Task Force	chiappini.barbara@minambiente.it
16	Mr	VANGELIS	Greece	SWIM-SM	Technical Director	vangelis@gwpmmed.org
17	Mr	STAVROS	Greece	SWIM-SM	Project Director	stavros@ldk-gr



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Title	Name	Surname	Country	Institution/ Project	Position	e-mail	
18	Ms	Andrea	DE ANGELIS	Italy	Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea	Expert	deangelis.andrea@minambiente.it
19	Ms	Marta	DE TOTIS	Italy	Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea	Expert	detotis.marta@minambiente.it
20	Dr.	Celine	DUBREUIL	France	PLAN BLEU	Programme Officer for Water	cdubreuil@planbleu.org
21	Dr	Jauad	EL KHARRAZ	France	UT SEMIDE / EMMWIS TU	Information Responsible	jauad.el-kharraz@semide.org
22	Ms	Intsar	ELSBAAI	Libya	Ambassade de Libye Bruxelles	Deuxieme Secretaire	amb.delibye@yahoo.com
23	Ms	Mona	FAKIH	Lebanon	Ministry of Energy and Water	Director of Water	monafakih@hotmail.com
24	Ms.	Silvia	FAVRET	Algeria	Delegation UE Algerie	Gestionnaire Programmes de Cooperation	silvia.favret@eeas.europa.eu
25	Mr	Oded	FIXLER	Israel	Israel Water Authority	Deputy Director General	OdedF10@water.gov.il
26	Ms	Ulrike	GANTZER-SOMMER	Germany	GIZ GmbH	Head of Unit	ulrike.gantzer-sommer@giz.de
27	Mr	Giorgio	GHIGLIERI	Italy	WADIS- MAR	Prohect Coordinator	Ghiglieri@unica.it
28	Ms	Tatjana	Hema	Greece	MED POL	Programme Officer	thema@unepmap.gr



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Title	Name	Surname	Country	Institution/Project	Position	e-mail
29	Mr	Stephane	HALGAND	European Commission Unit F.4	Task Manager	Stephane.HALGAND@ec.europa.eu
30	Mr.	Nayef	HAMMAD	Jordan GIZ	Senior Technical Advisor	nayef.hammad@giz.de
31	Mr	Rafiq	HUSSEINI	Spain Union for the Mediterranean Secretariat	Deputy Secretary General	rafiq.husseini@ufmsecretariat.org
32	Ms.	Liselotte	ISSAKSON	European Commission Unit F.4	Head of Sector	Liselotte.Isaksson@ec.europa.eu
33	Ms.	Sondes	KAMOUN	Tunisia Bureau de Planification et des Equilibres Hydrauliques	Directeur General	sondeskamoun@yahoo.fr
34	Mr	Hachmi	KENNOU	France Institut Méditerranéen de l'Eau (IME)	Executive Director	hkennou@ime-eau.org
35	Dr.	Roula	KHADRA	Italy Cieham-Bari Institute	Officer/Land & Water Department	khadra@iamb.it
36	Dr.	Essam	KHALIFA	Egypt Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation	Sector Head	Essam@mwri.gov.eg
37	Mr.	Nader	KHATIB	oPT WEDO/FOEME	Director	nader@foeme.org
38	Mr	Hosny	KHORDAGUI	Egypt SWIM-SM	Team Leader	h.khordagui@swim-sm.eu



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Title	Name	Surname	Country	Institution/ Project	Position	e-mail	
39	Ms	Chara	KOTSANI	Greece	SWIM-SM	Project Coordinator	cko@ldk.gr
40	Ms	Victoria	LAINA	Greece	SWIM-SM	Administrator	vs@ldk.gr
41	Dr.	Nicola	LAMADDALENA	Italy	Cieham-Bari Institute	Head of Dept	lamaddalena@iamb.it
42	Ms	Catherine	LAURANSON	European Commission	DG ENV E.1	Policy Officer	catherine.lauranson@ec.europa.eu
43	Ms.	Shannon	MCCARTHY	Oman	MEDRC	Deputy Center Director	mccarthys Shannon@yahoo.com
44	Mr.	Munqeth	MEHYAR	Jordan	Eco Peace Friends of the Earth Middle East	President	munqeth@foeme.org
45	Mr.	Andrew	MURPHY	European Commission	DG ENV European Commission	Enp Coordinator	andrew.murphy@ec.europa.eu
46	Mr	Essam	NADA	Egypt	RAED	Executive Director	e.nada@aoye.org
47	Mr.	Joan	PARPAL	Spain	Medicities	Secretary General	parpal@amb.cat
48	Ms	Florence	PINTUS	France	International Office For Water	Project Manager	F.PINTUS@OIEAU.FR
49	Mr	Bouzekri	RAZI	Morocco	Ministère de l'Energie, des Mines, de l'Eau et de l'Environnement	Chef de Service de la Coopération Bilatérale	bz.razi@gmail.com



Sustainable Water Integrated Management (SWIM) - Support Mechanism

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Title	Name	Surname	Country	Institution/Project	Position	e-mail
50	Mr	Charbel	RIZK	Lebanon	SWIM-SM	Environment Expert c.rizk@swim-sm.eu
51	Ms	Valeria	RIZZO	Italy	Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea	Director Of Division rizzo.valeria@minambiente.it
52	Ms	Cecile	RODDIER- QUEFELEC	Denmark	European Environment Agency	Project Manager Mediterranean Area Cooperation quefelec@eea.europa.eu
53	Mr	Karim	SAHNOUN	Tunisia	Ministère de l'Environnement	Sous Directeur à la Direction de la Cooperation Internationale et du Partenariat m.cab@mineat.gov.tn
54	Ms	Irene	SANDER	Jordan	Technical Adviser	German International Cooperation- GIZ irene.sander@giz.de
55	Prof.	Michael	SCOULLOS	Greece	H2020 CB/MEP	Team Leader info@mio-ecsde.org scoulllos@mio-ecsde.org
56	Mr.	Saleh	SEDDIK	Egypt	Delegation of the EU to Egypt	Finance & Contracts Officer saleh.seddik-aly@eeas.europa.eu
57	Mr.	Fadi	SHRAIDEH	Jordan	IUCN ROWA	Reward Coordinator/Search fadi.shraideh@iucn.org
58	Mr	Ali	SUBAH	Jordan	Ministry of Water and Irrigation	Team Leader Secretary General Assistant alisubah62@yahoo.com



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Title	Name	Surname	Country	Institution/Project	Position	e-mail
59	Ms	Suzan	TAHA	Jordan	SWIM-SM	Water Expert s.taha@swim-sm.eu
60	Prof.	Mladen	TODOROVIC	Italy	CHEAM - Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Bari	Scientific Administrator mladen@iamb.it
61	Ms	Barbara	TOMASSINI	Lebanon	SWIM-SM	Communications Expert b.tomassini@swim-sm.eu
62	Mr	Salvatore	VIRDIS	Italy	WADIS- MAR	Project Manager Virdis@uniss.it
63	Mr	Stelios	ZACHARIAS	Greece	SWIM-SM	Event Coordinator zas@ldk.gr
64	Mr.	Alon	ZASK	Israel	Israeli Ministry of Environmental Protection	Director, Water and Stream Division, AlonZ@sviva.gov.il
65	Mr	Dimitrios	ZEVGOLIS	European Commission	DG CLIMA A-1	Policy Officer dimitrios.zevgolis@ec.europa.eu