



29 OCTOBER 2012

SUSTAINABLE WATER INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT PROJECT LAUNCHES ANOTHER YEAR OF INTERVENTIONS IN THE SOUTH MEDITERRANEAN

PRESS NOTE

The EU funded Project Sustainable Water Integrated Management – Support Mechanism (SWIM-SM) presented to Partner Countries (PCs) the progress achieved during its 1st year of implementation and gathered their advice on activities planned ahead, during the 2nd Steering Committee meeting that took place in Brussels on 17-18 October 2012. Advancement in the implementation of the 5 SWIM-Demonstration projects was also presented in this occasion.

Participants in the meeting were representatives of the Ministries responsible for Water and Environment from eight (8) PCs, namely Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, occupied Palestinian territory, Morocco and Tunisia, serving respectively as the SWIM-SM Focal Points and Environmental Liaison Officers, and members of the Steering Committee, the advisory body of the project. Relevant EC Services and Regional stakeholder organizations, institutions and water programmes also participated in the meeting in order to facilitate interlinks between the project and their activities and avoid duplications.

Among the priority issues that will be tackled by the project during its 2nd year of implementation and have been approved by the Steering Committee during the meeting are: wastewater treatment and re-use, with focus on rural areas; cumulative environmental impacts of mega desalination plants conglomerating around the Mediterranean; cost assessment of water degradation in selected Southern Mediterranean countries; drought management as a no-regret action towards climate change; best practices in support to the successful establishment and operationalization of Water Users Associations (WUAs) and; compliance and enforcement of water legislation.

Activities fall under the four thematic pillars that have emerged as regional priorities for SWIM-SM intervention, namely: **1- Non-conventional water resources (including wastewater treatment and reuse and desalination) with emphasis on rural areas; 2- Economic valuation of the costs to remediate water degradation; 3-no-regret actions for the adaptation of the water sector to climate change and; 4- local water governance, with emphasis on the experiences of Water Users Associations.**

Ms. Liselotte Isaksson, from the Directorate General for Development and Cooperation of the European Commission stressed in her opening remarks on the added value of a Regional Programme like SWIM in enhancing participatory approach in planning, equity, accountability and transparency towards integrated water resources management in the South Mediterranean.

She also encouraged building further synergies between the Support Mechanism and on-going initiatives and projects to share experiences, best practices and knowledge and to achieve a better use of available

resources. This was also warmly recommended by all participants and concrete suggestions were made on how to achieve it.

Representatives of PCs stressed, among others, on the importance of consulting further with them especially when planning for the content of activities such as capacity building and trainings, so that these can be better tailored to their needs and existing gaps.

Additional opportunities for mutual strengthening and increased impacts of the Support Mechanism and the five Demonstration Projects were identified during the 2nd SWIM Coordination Meeting organized on 16 October 2012 in advance of the 2nd Steering Committee Meeting.

For more informations:

e-mail : info@swim-sm.eu

SWIM website: www.swim-sm.eu

Note to editors:

The SWIM Programme

Sustainable Water Integrated Management (SWIM) is a Regional Programme launched by the European Commission to contribute to the extensive dissemination and effective implementation of sustainable water management policies and practices in the Southern Mediterranean Region. This is in the context of increasing water scarcity, combined pressures on water resources from a wide range of users, desertification processes and in connection with climate change.

The Programme, with a total budget of approximately € 22 million, is implemented under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), following the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conferences on Environment (Cairo, 2006) and Water (Dead Sea, 2008).

SWIM Partner Countries are: **Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the occupied Palestinian territory, Syria and Tunisia.**

SWIM consists of two major Components, which are inter-related and complement each other:

- A Support Mechanism, funded with a budget of € 6.7 million and
- Demonstration Projects funded with a budget of € 15 million

SWIM – Support Mechanism (SWIM-SM)

SWIM-SM is the Component of the Programme that provides Regional Technical Assistance to the Partner Countries. This Component, of the duration of 4 years (2010-2014), aims at:

- Providing strategic assistance to the Partner Countries in designing and implementing sustainable water management policies and plans, involving inter-sector dialogue as well as stakeholder consultation and participation;
- Contributing to institutional reinforcement, to the development of the necessary planning and management skills and to know-how transfer;
- Raising awareness on the threats on water resources, the necessity to switch to more sustainable consumption models and possible solutions to face challenges.

Furthermore, SWIM-SM also:

- assists technically the Demonstration Projects implemented under the second Component of the SWIM Programme and;
- undertakes Capacity Building activities related to water resources management identified under the Horizon 2020 Capacity Building – Mediterranean Environment Programme (H2020 CB/MEP).

SWIM-Support Mechanism is implemented by a Consortium formed by a combination of nine international and regional companies and institutions:

- LDK Consultants Engineers & Planners SA: Leader of the Consortium
- Global Water Partnership - Mediterranean (GWP-Med): SWIM-SM Technical Direction
- Arab Countries Water Utilities Association (ACWUA)

- Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED)
- DHV B.V.
- Greek Ministry of Environment, Energy & Climate Change, Department of International Relations & EU Affairs
- Lebanese Ministry of Energy and Water, General Directorate of Hydraulic and Electrical Resources
- Tunisian Ministry of Agriculture and Environment, Bureau de l'Inventaire et des Recherches Hydrauliques /
Direction Générale des Ressources en Eau
- Umweltbundesamt GmbH - Environment Agency, Austria

SWIM Demonstration Projects

1-Adaptation to Climate Change of the Mediterranean Agricultural Systems (SWIM-ACLIMAS)

Leader of the Project's Consortium: International Center for Advanced Studies on Mediterranean Agriculture
– Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Bari (CIHEAM-MAIB), Italy

2-All Across the Jordan: the Trans-boundary Master Planning of the Lower Jordan River Basin (SWIM-Jordan River)

Leader of the Project's Consortium: Friends of the Earth Middle East

3-Innovative Means to Protect Water Resources in the Mediterranean Coastal Areas through Re-injection of Treated Wastewater (SWIM-IMPROWARE)

Leader of the Project's Consortium: Italian Ministry of the Environment, Land and Sea

4-Network of demonstration activities for sustainable integrated wastewater treatment and reuse in the Mediterranean (SWIM-Sustain Water MED)

Leader of the Project's Consortium: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German International Cooperation - GIZ) GmbH

5-Water harvesting and Agricultural techniques in Dry lands: an Integrated and Sustainable model in MAghreb Regions (SWIM-WADIS MAR)

Leader of the Project's Consortium: University of Sassari, Italy