

**Euro-Mediterranean Partnership**  
**EMWIS development strategy**

*(Version of 2005-11-02)*



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## Introduction

Recent developments in the countries confirm that the approach adopted by EMWIS, based on National Water Information Systems, is the right one to build a regional system. It offers the guarantees necessary for appropriation at the national level and for continuity of the System. The first results of the work completed during EMWIS phase II (2003-2006) show that all the countries of the Partnership feel the need for this type of system and favour its development.

The implementation of this type of system is in line with the modernization of public services by integrating new communication and information technologies, often summarized under the label of « electronic governance or administration ». The overall objective is to make the public services more efficient, more transparent, closer to citizens.

We must now join our efforts to benefit from a favorable context at the international level (e.g. promoting regional co-operation, need for reliable indicators, transferring results of the regional programmes financed by the EU) but also at the national level (e.g. raising the awareness of and mobilizing the stakeholders of the water sector supported by EMWIS).

## 1 Key elements of the strategy for the next ten years

EMWIS should be considered within a long-term prospect, as its implementation must be supported by an evolution of the operating methods of water sector stakeholders in the concerned countries. Thus a gradual approach, taking local contexts and objectives into account, is needed. It is however necessary to define the main objectives and overall principles for federating the stakeholders. Its broad lines are detailed hereafter:

- To continue the creation of **National Focal Points in all the Mediterranean countries** and to strengthen the existing Focal Points by relying on National Water Information Systems.
- To position EMWIS as **the node of a global water information system**.
- To consolidate EMWIS as **a reference medium** in the field of information on inland waters in the Mediterranean region, working together with groups of specialized experts.
- **To incorporate a component dealing with a regional water information system** facilitating follow-up of progress made in the international initiatives.
- To strengthen EMWIS role as a tool for **transfer of knowledge and know-how**.
- **To develop an advisory network of institutional decision-makers**, able to comment on the cooperation policy of the EU in the water sector and recommend development lines.

## 1.1 Focal Points and National Water Information Systems

In order to effectively meet the needs for regional cooperation in the water sector, all the Mediterranean countries should be able to create an EMWIS National Focal Point (NFP). Thanks to these additional NFPs, the international community will have a homogeneous network to answer the requests from initiatives external to the Euro-Med Partnership (for example: the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative – Med-EUWI; or the Mediterranean Action Plan of the United Nations - MAP). The lessons learned from the operation of the existing NFPs will enable a significant reduction of the time needed for their creation in new countries.

At the same time, it is necessary to accompany the development of the existing NFPs and to help the countries implement their National Water Information System (NWIS) so that each country can, at its own pace and according to its priorities, populate the site of its NFP with relevant and quality contents. A participative approach will be emphasized, gradually involving all the stakeholders concerned with the water sector in each country.

## 1.2 Towards a global water information system

Today, the main world-wide organizations manage centralized information portals, which reference existing systems (e.g. the World Water Council, UNESCO, GWP). This approach makes it possible to obtain results quickly, but updating these systems requires a significant effort and the impact (in term of capacity transfer) towards the regional or national levels is reduced.

With the development of systems; similar to EMWIS; in other areas of the World (SIAGUA in Latin America, AWIS in Africa), we can consider that, in the long term, all these regional systems will feed an entirely distributed global system providing unified access to water information in all the countries participating in regional initiatives.

This implies adopting common standards for a mutual enhancement of the services offered.

## 1.3 Towards reference water information media in the Mediterranean

Any information service shall be focused on the end-user. People looking for information on the Internet wish primarily to get a "single step access" » to **all the existing sources of information** in the Mediterranean water sector. But this should not be detrimental to quality. It is likely that several quality levels shall be defined in order to adapt the principle jointly adopted by EMWIS Member States: « the information disseminated by EMWIS national sites has been approved by the relevant authorities, which is a guarantee of quality ». The

participation of institutional partners in the development of the contents of the national sites is progressing in most countries. Extension to the civil society can now be dealt with, especially based on the analysis of good practices and experience sharing between countries (Palestine is an exemplary case of cooperation and coordination between the authority in charge of the water sector and NGOs).

At the regional level, these media will have to allow for better coordination of implemented actions (e.g. directory of on-going and planned actions), the development of synergies, collaborative work spaces for new initiatives and resource sharing and enhancement.

#### **1.4 National systems for a regional water information system**

The topic of a global mechanism for observing water and sanitation is promoted by the United Nations institutions and programmes in order to assess progress made and obstacles to be overcome to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in this sector.

Monitoring, institutional capacity building and support are also privileged cooperation lines within the European Union Water Initiative. Following the last meeting of the Commission of Sustainable Development (New York, April 2005), the European Commission proposed that the global mechanism for observation be based on regional and national mechanisms in order to improve the collection, processing and comparison of reliable information. In such a context, preliminary studies for the creation of regional information systems are under way in Africa.

This trend perfectly matches EMWIS approach, which aims to ensure the sustainability of such an information system and to guarantee its adoption by the countries while relying on national systems. For the Mediterranean partner countries, water is a rare resource but, above all, an element essential for their development, therefore they very often have a specialized Ministry, unlike EU countries. These institutions manage most of the country's water data. Thus, they must have the main role in the implementation of a water information system.

Such a system would allow the availability of reliable indicators to:

- Help the countries evaluate and improve their national policy in the field of water
- Evaluate the policies for regional cooperation in the region
- Comply with international commitments (MDGs in particular)

These great principles are:

- Relying on National Water Information Systems and to strengthen them whenever necessary (studies carried out in 2005 by EMWIS on NWISs offer

ideal bases for that). Indeed, these systems provide reliable data sources and promote capacity building at the national level.

- Separating data collection/formatting functions (measurements, statistics, enquiries, etc.) from analysis, audit and prospective work to ensure the integrity of the information system.
- Setting an adequate group of consistent indicators on a global (MDG), regional (for example the Water Component of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development) and national scale in order to meet the expectations of everyone and to guarantee the appropriation of the system at all levels.
- Setting up inter-institutional steering groups at the regional level and in each country.

## 1.5 Transfer of knowledge and know-how

EMWIS promotes the exchange of know-how between institutions and the dissemination of information on the water sector by providing, on the Internet, information validated by the participating countries. Within such a framework, the NFPs play an essential role as vector for the dissemination of water information at the national level.

During the Euro-Mediterranean Conference on Local Water Management in Turin (October 1999), the Ministers emphasized EMWIS role in the exchange of information and knowledge of the Action Plan. This role was institutionalized within the regional MEDA programme on local water management, within which the financed projects should disseminate their results via EMWIS. To become effective, this function must be fulfilled after the end of EMWIS phase II (2006) and of this programme (2007).

More generally, the transfer of knowledge and know-how must be carried out in a consistent and systemic way for all the EU programmes having a 'Water' component, which can interest the Mediterranean Countries (Research, Environment - LIFE, AidCo). Transferring the outcomes of the EU programmes in the water sector could be assisted by targeted actions, thanks to the support of EMWIS and its NFPs (in synergy with other initiatives - e.g. Med-EUWI- and actions carried out by regional organizations). These actions could also support a greater participation of the Mediterranean partner countries in Community programmes.

Transfers are often limited because of lack of knowledge formalized at project completion, especially with regard to lessons for institutional decision-makers. These transfers could be facilitated if partners had to prepare short summaries for decision-makers at the end of the projects upon donors' request. Owing to its role of reference media, EMWIS could manage a water-related **virtual library**, referencing, in particular, all the **publications issued from**

**projects financed by EU** and regional organizations/networks to provide access to the greatest number of people.

Another essential component of knowledge transfer, the exchange of good institutional practices between countries (NFPs and other institutions of the water sector) should continue and adapt to the needs of the partner countries. Within such a framework, the EU Water Framework Directive could be used as a guideline for these exchanges.

## **1.6 Facilitating an advisory network of institutional decision-makers**

The EuroMed Forum of the Water Directors, regularly convened by EMWIS, offers an adequate structure to meet the needs of various international initiatives (e.g. MED-EUWI, MEDA-Water, MAP) as an Advisory or Steering Committee for the definition of priorities, the validation of proposals, the follow-up of implementation, the evaluation of results.

To become effective, such a network should be continuously developed, with a Web space dedicated to the decision-makers in particular, and with more regular meetings (e.g. annual) to formalize the activities of this Forum of the Euro-Med Directors. The National Focal Points can also be used as relays between the main Directors' meetings.

This Forum is also an ideal body for a periodic follow-up of the regional information system.

## **2 Four-year Action Plan (2007-2010)**

### **2.1 Coordination with political bodies**

The objective of coordinating with the national and international political bodies is primarily to maintain a high level of cooperation between the Euro-Med countries regarding the water sector, to increase the participation of the EU countries in EMWIS activities, to follow up the evolution of the EU regional programmes (e.g. MEDA-Water, in accordance with the conclusions of Turin conference), and to establish strategic alliances (e.g. with international initiatives dealing with similar issues).

Within such a framework, it is planned to:

- Organize a SC meeting every year (gathering the Water Directors of 10 countries of the Partnership, the organizations supporting the Technical Unit and an invited representative of the European Commission);
- Organize a meeting of the Partnership's Water Directors in the 4-year period;
- Regularly inform the Water Directors of the Partnership;

- Maintain regular contacts with the European Commission, the Partnership countries and the main international initiatives (specific meetings, participation in events);
- Negotiate effective cooperation agreements with the international initiatives dealing with similar issues;
- Coordinate between the political and technical bodies, through quarterly meetings (Presidency and organizations composing the TU).

The Technical Unit, under the authority of the President of the Steering Committee, will take care of this activity's secretariat.

## **2.2 Assistance to the NFPs**

In order to technically support the Mediterranean Partner Countries (MPCs) so that their NFP becomes operational, it is planned to:

- Build the NFP capacities: with a technical training programme (people in charge of the contents, IT managers or experts) and a coordinating meeting every year.
- Define and carry out the follow-up of the NFP work programmes. This will be accompanied by on-site follow-up assignments, assistance and organizational support.
- Financially support their operation regarding targeted actions, defined with each NFP according to a work programme: translation and supply of contents, dialogue and promotion at the national level (estimated at €20,000 per country over 4 years).
- Implement a hotline, which can be accessed via e-mail but also via video-conferencing on the Internet.
- Prepare case studies and promote exchanges of good practices (South-South in particular).
- Support the implementation of NWISs which can feed EMWIS.
- Organize national topical workshops to support the development of the NFPs and NWISs (1 per country over the 4-year period).

At the same time, the creation of NFPs in the Mediterranean countries, which are not signatories of the Barcelona Declaration (Balkan countries and Libya), will be attempted, by organizing, in each country, a presentation to the national decision-makers and a roundtable to identify the organization able to manage the NFP.

## **2.3 Management of regional reference media**

This mainly concerns the maintaining and improving of services offered by EMWIS according to recent news and technological advances:



- Facilitation and operation of information services in three languages (Arabic, English and French): monthly Electronic Flash, diary of events, news, national and international legislation, follow-up of regional programmes, etc.
- Extension of the topical directory on water to integrate the civil society at the regional level.
- Cooperation with regional projects and/or initiatives for the development of specialized sections (similar to what is done with the groundwater working group of the Joint WFD-MED EUWI Process).
- Promotion of the System: referencing, development and updating of promotional materials, participation in international and national events, preparation of press releases and articles in the technical press.
- Management and enrichment of a multilingual thesaurus-glossary on water.
- Implementation of a virtual library concept, based on the Open Archives Initiative (OAI) protocol: Referencing the publications of the regional initiatives.

## 2.4 Topical syntheses

Following the keen interest expressed by the countries for this kind of synthesis, it is proposed to continue by carrying out four topical syntheses covering all the Mediterranean countries. Each topic will include:

- drawing up of a topical file on EMWIS website,
- a bibliographical analysis,
- validating and collecting additional information from the NFPs,
- one or two on-site visits to study good practices, and
- providing results during an event already planned for in the region (international initiative for instance) or during an EMWIS event.

## 2.5 Knowledge transfer

In order to support the implementation of a systemic approach for enhancing the results of the existing and future initiatives promoting better water management in the region, it is proposed to:

- Assess a webcast service for eight conferences (over four years) in order to allow a greater number of people to profit from these events. Selection will be made by EMWIS Steering Committee after a call for applications.
- Define an overall approach for enhancing the results of the international projects to promote transfer towards the Mediterranean Partner Countries: choice of the topics, types of transferable results (contents, presentation, selection criteria), targeted public (industrial, institutional, academic, NGO, etc), incentive methods for transfer (financial assistance, case study, etc). This approach will be validated by a group of

experts made up of representatives from the European and Mediterranean partner countries.

- Manage a database of the projects financed by international donors, by indexing the projects according to the main Mediterranean topics (and not with those of the donors programmes).
- Select reference projects (100 projects) which can include specific enhancement actions.
- Reference publications of the projects financed by the EU in the water sector in coordination with the EC services.
- Select projects for presentation to the Mediterranean countries during national or regional half-day workshops, incorporated into more significant events (20 projects over 4 years, each workshop gathering 3 to 4 projects).

A synthetic document, summarizing the lessons learned from this experiment, will be produced to improve this kind of process in the region.

## 2.6 Initiating a regional water information system

This activity will be based on the outcomes of the feasibility study launched by France for the creation of such an information system (see appended discussion paper) and on the work undertaken by the Mediterranean Commission of Sustainable Development. It will especially deal with:

- The preparation and validation, with a group of experts and the NFPs, of a summary document in three languages (English, French and Arabic) presenting the information system, the main indicators chosen at the regional level, the main stages and the steering committee and the analysis/assessment committees at regional and national levels;
- The definition of an agreement protocol with the organizations and/or individual experts of the Steering Committee and Analysis/Assessment Committee (could be used as a model by each country);
- The organization of a steering group (including the key stakeholders of the NWIS in particular) in each country in order to define the national objectives, the indicators and raw data necessary for the information system (with the identification of data that require on-site surveys whenever needed) and a prototype for on-line dissemination. It especially concerns the translation of regional objectives and indicators (e.g. MCSD-Water) issued from global objectives (e.g. MDG 7) into national objectives/indicators with the authorities of each country (with a possible addition of specific national indicators for following up the national policy);
- The definition of data collection and processing protocols with the national stakeholders to generate the selected indicators in a reprocessible format. The results of the initial work undertaken with the national steering groups could be detailed;

- The definition of an alternative mechanism until the NWIS is created or analysis of its integration into the NWIS when the latter exists;
- The definition of a cluster protocol for integrating the national indicators at the regional level;
- The development of a first regional prototype and presentation of the results during a regional workshop.

The following will have to be implemented during the entire process:

- Separating collection/preparation and supply of data/indicators for the analysis/assessment
- Organizing exchanges of good practices with similar initiatives (Africa, Central Asia)
- Involving the national stakeholders in the whole process to favor appropriation
- Associating the Analysis/Assessment Committee in all stages. It will sometimes assist in the implementation (especially in the definition of national indicators)

## **2.7 Preparation of the system to interregional operation**

With the aim of creating a global water information system, based on lessons learned, EMWIS will work on the definition of the concepts of a global system in collaboration with international organizations in particular, such as the World Water Council (especially within the Alliance for a global water information mechanism), GWP (Tool box), UNESCO (world water portal). This definition could be supplemented by an analysis of System's "hosting" possibilities by an international organization.

## **3 Organization, Responsibilities**

In order to fulfill these functions, it is proposed to adapt the structure of the Technical Unit to reinforce communication and content development. Thus the following profiles are necessary for the technical unit, as a minimum:

- Coordination
- Contents and documentation
- Communication for promotional actions and publication aspects (website and Flash, newsletter)
- Information technologies that are part-time responsible for the evolution and overall maintenance of the system
- Administrative assistance and multilingual logistics

Regarding the focal points, the profiles are similar but the workload can be differently distributed depending on the countries and according to the established partnerships:

- Coordination

- Information technologies that are responsible for the evolution and overall maintenance of the system, the implementation of new tools (a part-time employee)
- Publication design, documentation and content development

The water directorates of each country shall confirm the existing Focal Points and ensure the provision of resources necessary for their future development, based on the work completed and their action plan.

## 4 Financing

The study of EMWIS economic viability, carried out at the end of 2001, showed that, owing to the political and technical significance of EMWIS, merchant services or private patronage can only contribute in a marginal way.

Due to the planned objectives and activities, financing by **public authorities remains essential** to ensure a strong involvement of the countries. However, an analysis of alternative financing for some services (sponsoring for the organization of conferences, dissemination of selective information), will be carried out taking into account EMWIS specificity.

According to the subsidiarity principle, that has been adopted until now, it is necessary to reassert the commitment of each country to finance their NFP's operation. As done in the previous phases, it is proposed that the regional activities and technical assistance to non-EU countries be borne by the Member States of the European Economic Interest Group – EMWIS-TU-EEIG - and the European Commission. It is proposed to widen the composition of the Technical Unit to new European Union countries.

## 5 Provisional budget for 2007-2010

Provisional budget 2007-2010	Costs (in EUR)		
	Total	E.C Part	T.U. countries
<b>1. Human Resources</b>			
<i>1.1 EMWIS Technical Unit Staff</i>	1 300 013	780 008	520 005
<i>1.2 Staff from Technical Unit members</i>	264 000	158 400	105 600
<i>1.3 External consultants</i>	416 000	249 600	166 400
<i>1.2 Per diems for missions/travel</i>			
1.2.1 EU countries representatives	55 590	33 354	22 236
1.2.2 MEDA countries representatives	125 800	75 480	50 320
1.2.3 External experts	38 250	22 950	15 300
<b>Subtotal Human Resources</b>	<b>2 199 653</b>	<b>1 319 792</b>	<b>879 861</b>
<b>2. Travel</b>			
2.1. EU countries representatives	157 000	94 200	62 800
2.2. MEDA countries representatives	211 000	126 600	84 400
2.3. External experts	107 000	64 200	42 800
<b>Subtotal Travel</b>	<b>475 000</b>	<b>285 000</b>	<b>190 000</b>
<b>3. Equipment and supplies</b>			
Furniture, computer equipment central maintenance and upgrade	40 000	24 000	16 000
Webcast equipment for video conferencing	5 000	3 000	2 000
<b>Subtotal Equipment and supplies</b>	<b>45 000</b>	<b>27 000</b>	<b>18 000</b>
<b>4. Subtotal Local office/project costs</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>5. Other costs, services<sup>9</sup></b>			
5.1 External Auditing costs	16 000	9 600	6 400
5.2 Translation, interpreters	70 000	42 000	28 000
5.3 Translation of online information (Focal Points websites)	40 000	24 000	16 000
5.4 Financial services (bank guarantee costs etc.)	5 000	3 000	2 000
5.5 Costs of conferences/seminars/meetings <sup>10</sup>	113 000	67 800	45 200
5.6 Promotional material and services	18 000	10 800	7 200
5.7 Services for MEDA countries National Focal Points <sup>13</sup>	160 000	96 000	64 000
5.8 Conference webcast	20 000	12 000	8 000
5.9 Virtual meeting facility for technical support	8 000	4 800	3 200
<b>Subtotal Other costs, services</b>	<b>422 000</b>	<b>253 200</b>	<b>168 800</b>
<b>6. Subtotal Other</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>7. Subtotal direct project costs (1.-6.)</b>	<b>3 141 653</b>	<b>1 884 992</b>	<b>1 256 661</b>
8. Administrative costs (maximum 7 % of 7, direct eligible project cost)	219 916	131 949	87 966
<b>9. Total eligible project costs (7.+ 8.)</b>	<b>3 361 568</b>	<b>2 016 941</b>	<b>1 344 627</b>

## 6 Bilingual glossary

Français		English	
CE	Commission Européenne	EC	European Commission
GEIE	Groupement Européen d'Intérêt Economique	EEIG	European Economic Interest Group
UE	Union Européenne	EU	European Union
FAQ	Foire Aux Questions	FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
GWP	Global Water Partnership	GWP	Global Water Partnership
RIOB	Réseau International des Organismes de Bassin	INBO	International Network of Basin Organizations
CMDD	Commission Méditerranéenne pour le Développement Durable	MCSD	Mediterranean Commission of Sustainable Development
OMD	Objectif du Millénaire de Développement	MDG	Millenium Development Goal
MED-EUWI	Composante Méditerranéenne de l'Initiative Eau de l'UE	MED-EUWI	Med component of the EU water initiative
PPM	Pays Partenaires Méditerranéens	MPC	Mediterranean Partner Countries
IME	Institut Méditerranéen de l'Eau	MWI	Mediterranean Water Institute
PFN	Point Focal National	NFP	National Focal Point
ONG	Organisation Non Gouvernementale	NGO	Non Governmental Organization
SNIE	Système National d'Information sur l'Eau	NWIS	National Water Information System
OAI	Open Archives Initiative	OAI	Open Archives Initiative
CD	Comité Directeur	SC	Steering Committee
UT	Unité Technique	TU	Technical Unit
DCE	Directive Cadre sur l'Eau de l'Union Européenne	WFD	EU Water Framework Directive