

**EU GUIDELINES FOR THE
DECLARATION OF THE IV EURO-MEDITERRANEAN MINISTERIAL
CONFERENCE ON WATER (UNION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN)
BARCELONA, 13 APRIL 2010**

The Ministers,

CONSIDERING

The Algiers Declaration (1990) and the Mediterranean Water Charter (Rome, 1992); The Barcelona Euro-Mediterranean Conference/Summit (1995); the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Water, (Marseille, 1996), the Declaration of the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial (Turin, 1999); The Declaration of the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Water (Jordan, 2008).

RECALLING

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio, 1992); The United Nations Convention on the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses (1997); The United Nations Millennium Development Goals (2000); The World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002); The Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative (launched in 2003); The Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (Portoroz, 2005); The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its COPs, in particular the Copenhagen COP15 (2009) as well as the assessment reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change; The United Nations Convention on Combating Desertification; The United Nations' Convention on Biological Diversity; The Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, in particular the Protocol on Coastal Zones adopted during the 15th COP of the Barcelona Convention in Almeria, (2008); The Paris Summit for the launching of the “Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean” (2008), the Horizon 2020 Initiative’s Action Plan, as adopted by the Euro-Mediterranean Ministers of Environment in Cairo (2006).

UNDERLINING

The importance of the Union for the Mediterranean to enhance cooperation between the countries of the Region and tighten ties among the European Union, its Member States and Mediterranean partners, taking into account existing strategies, policies, initiatives and frameworks such as the European Neighbourhood Policy, the EU Water Framework and Floods Directive, the EU White Paper on Adaptation, initiatives of the Arab League and the African Ministerial Council on Water, the new GEF Strategic partnership for the Mediterranean.

That water is a key factor for all socio-economic and environmental needs in the region and that cooperation in the water field is crucial to support sustainable development and to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Water scarcity, climate change and climate variability, extreme phenomena like droughts and floods, population growth, socio-economic disparities and unbalanced development, pollution, pressures to natural ecosystems and loss of biodiversity are among challenges faced in the Mediterranean that defy boundaries, calling for development of new strategies, framework programmes and projects to achieve sustainable development of water resources.

The important efforts made to achieve integrated water resources management nationally and regionally, incorporating all types of waters and uses, and the need to enhance action to ensure the implementation of such approaches at national, transboundary and regional levels.

The negative impact of political conflicts on the Mediterranean environment and its water resources, destroying water infrastructure, making proper water management even more difficult and preventing concerned countries from deploying the needed efforts towards achieving sustainable development.

NOTING

The situation of the Mediterranean Region that, while being biologically diverse and hosting unique ecosystems, has to meet important environmental challenges, requiring to make every effort to preserve and protect this legacy for future generations.

That climate change is to put at risk the fragile balance that exists between water supply and demand and the likely decrease of water availability, all that requiring the implementation of prevention, mitigation and adaptation policies to cope with the effects of climate change.

The Region's wide water quality and quantity problems faced in the Mediterranean Region as well as point source or diffuse pollution and overexploitation of water resources.

The large number of Mediterranean citizens whose access to adequate water supply and sanitation services still needs to be ensured, and the great efforts needed to this end.

The general increase of water scarcity, especially in areas where drought events are taking place, and the risk of growing desertification phenomena, also due to the effect of climate change.

The need to ensure that concerned administrations shift from crisis management to risk-based and planned approaches, also to deal with other additional extreme phenomena.

The need to prioritise water uses through participative approaches as essential for rationalizing water and improving its use.

TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THAT

Since 2008, and launched by the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Water held in Jordan, a “Long-term Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean”, in **ANNEX 1**, has been developed to agree on a common political, methodological, and financing framework to facilitate the implementation of regional policies in the water field.

The Strategy includes the objectives endorsed in by the Jordan Ministerial Conference; it addresses regional challenges such as those related to climate change impacts, extreme phenomena, such as droughts and floods, water scarcity and desertification. Moreover, it is structured in four major areas to cover the abovementioned challenges, 1) water governance, 2) climate change and extreme phenomena, 3) water demand management and non-conventional resources, 4) water financing.

The Strategy is built on integrated approaches, encouraging the progressive implementation of integrated river basin management policies that encompass all kind of waters, all uses and all users. In addition, it notes the use of available technological innovations, tools and research initiatives to ensure the achievement of agreed regional goals.

The Strategy acknowledges the need to work closely both at a regional and national level with any administration involved in water issues, as well as with those dealing with land-planning, environment, agriculture, coastal management, energy and tourism as well as with stakeholder organisations.

The Strategy aims at conserving and protecting water resources by urging countries to achieve balances between water supply and demand, giving particular emphasis on promoting water demand management. It sets common goals as well as the way to assess the follow-up, and invites countries to establish specific tangible targets and timeframes to achieve them.

The Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean should represent a framework to promote regional stability, cooperation and peace, by setting a cooperative framework where water related difficulties could be addressed and their intensity reduced.

The Water Expert Group, mandated by the Jordan Ministerial to prepare the Strategy text, has successfully delivered this objective through an intensive and inclusive process.

Regional stakeholder organisations including representatives of civil society, have played a favourable role in promoting and enriching the Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean process.

ADOPT

The **Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean**, attached in **ANNEX 1**, which addresses the main objectives agreed in the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Water held in Jordan, 22 December 2008, and reflects the water needs of populations and the future challenges.

And then,

CALL ON all stakeholders, including parliaments and the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA), to contribute, where appropriate and in a coordinated manner, to the implementation of the new Strategy as well as to mobilising appropriate means for future projects.

REAFFIRM the importance of gathering water information based on reliable data, to be made available to the general public to be developed, where possible, upon existing national, regional and international initiatives.

CONGRATULATE the technical work of the **Water Expert Group**, supported by the **Technical Drafting Group** and administratively and technically assisted by the **MED EUWI**, for the elaboration of the Strategy annexed, as a contribution to the success of the present Ministerial Conference.

WELCOME the contribution of stakeholder including the civil society, local authorities, private sector and donors to the Strategy development process, and **CONGRATULATE** them for the organisation of conferences, workshops, partnerships and projects discussed in the margins of the Conference.

Ministers **APPOINT** the **Water Expert Group**, which includes the **European Commission**, to be supported by the **Technical Drafting Group**, and technically supported by the Mediterranean component of the EU Water Initiative (Med EUWI), to follow up the implementation of the Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean, report to the Ministerial Conferences on Water, or Environment, and coordinate technical works with the Union for the Mediterranean Secretariat.

MANDATE the **Water Expert Group**, supported by the **Technical Drafting Group**, and technically supported by the Med EUWI, to develop, according to the Jordan Declaration, the subsequent **Action Plan** of the aforementioned Strategy by **[2011]** and, in doing so, continue to work in a transparent manner with partner intergovernmental organisations and civil society stakeholders to ensure that national water policies take account all relevant requirements, including the EU *acquis*.

SET [2013] as the target year where Mediterranean countries will be invited to present specific projects, following the common objectives and targets stated in the Strategy, and the modalities and selection criteria of the future **Action Plan**.

ENCOURAGE the implementation of future concrete projects in accordance with the Strategy contents and taking into account countries' own specific reference statuses, capacities, objectives and deadlines.

AGREE to work on the provision for appropriate financial resources and technical support to implement the Strategy and develop future projects.

PROPOSE to hold the 5th Euro-Med Ministerial Conference on water [in the second half of 2012/first half of 2014]; to, in particular, assess the advances towards the UN Millennium Development Goals set for in the Mediterranean Region, and the implementation of the Strategy common objectives.

INVITE the contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development to consider the Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean as a contribution to the priority “Improving integrated water resources and water demand management” of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development.

LOOK FORWARD to the presentation of the **Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean** in the next Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Environment to be held in Dubrovnik, and the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Agriculture to be held in Egypt, considering the tight links between water management, environmental and agricultural issues.

INVITE the Ministers, heads of delegations and participants to take note of the approval of the **Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean** and submit its objectives to the Summit of Head of Governments and States of the Union for the Mediterranean to be held in Barcelona, the 7th of June 2010.

THANK the Spanish Government for hosting the IV Euro-Mediterranean Conference on Water co-chaired with the Republic of France and the Arab Republic of Egypt as co-chairs of the Union for the Mediterranean.
