

# 04 ADDRESSING THE WATER CHALLENGE VIA A MEDITERRANEAN WATER AGENCY



F. Comair, E. Orsenna, H. Lainé, 2008

## ENSURING ACCESS TO WATER AND SANITATION

In the Mediterranean, water is an endangered collective resource since the region hosts nearly 60% of the world's population who does not have much access to water, that is to say having access to 1,000m<sup>3</sup> of water/inhabitant/year. SEMCs, characterised by a structural water stress situation, face increasing anthropogenic pressure. Water demand in these countries currently amounts to 300km<sup>3</sup>/year and should increase by 20% by 2025, many challenges must therefore be taken up: better access to drinking water and its quality, better efficiency in water uses, sewage (domestic and industrial) water collection and treatment, fight against diffuse pollution (80% of marine pollutions come from land pollution), adapting water resources management to climate change impacts, etc. These challenges, as well as the geographical characteristics of the re-

gion, gathering countries facing the same issues within a basin, call for an increased cooperation between all the concerned States and actors. Therefore, the reflections initiated by IPEMED in 2009 show the necessity of an integrated management of water demand and resources, and of a more efficient and comprehensive water governance in the Mediterranean.

## TOOLS AT THE SERVICE OF A RENEWED GOVERNANCE

IPEMED recommends regional collaboration and regulation tools in order to ensure the right to the water and sanitation in the Mediterranean:

- implementation of innovative funding mechanisms, or “solidarity micro-taxes”, in order to bridge the funding gap identified in the water and sanitation sectors and to guarantee Mediterranean populations access to improved water sources, sanitary facilities and hygiene;

- implementation of a Mediterranean Water Agency, structured around three bodies: a neutral and independent information system on water resources and pollution causes in the Mediterranean (“Mediterranean Network of Water Resources”), a decision-making general assembly gathering the stakeholders (“Mediterranean Committee of Water Actors”), and an executive body, which could manage the identified innovative funding mechanisms.

These recommendations aim at making of water the cornerstone of cooperation in the Mediterranean. They also highlight the central role of water, an invisible vector underlying the challenges linked to agriculture, energy, health and even touristic development, as shows the 2013 study on the quality of bathing waters and the improvement of sanitation in the Mediterranean basin.

Conference Suez-IPEMED, 2008



“In 2011, IPEMED and REMOB implemented a prospective work group for the hydro-political future of the region in order to propose the creation of a “Mediterranean Basin Committee” gathering all the actors and capable of defining the objectives and principles necessary to water policies in the region. Yet, the implementation of a Mediterranean Water Agency, a moral authority and a regional regulation body, is essential, given the various environmental threats facing the Mediterranean. A platform of dialogue, encounters and skills transfer, this agency could boost cooperation via the promotion of a “water culture”. For all the leaders of the Mediterranean, the objective IPEMED and REMOB tried to achieve and keep pursuing is to settle and strengthen solidarity among nations around the motto “together for quality water in the Mediterranean.””

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MAIN PUBLICATIONS



*Construire la Méditerranée*  
 « Eau et assainissement des villes et pays riverains de la Méditerranée »  
 June 2009



*Projets pour la Méditerranée*  
 “A Mediterranean water Agency to move from strategy to action”  
 May 2010



*Construire la Méditerranée*  
 “Financing access to water and sanitation. Is innovative funding a solution or an illusion?”  
 June 2014

KEY FIGURES



10 EVENTS



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