

October 2006

Orientation Note for 2007-2010

During the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Rome in November 2005, the Water Directors observed the positive progress of EMWIS activities and wished to continue its implementation by formulating a set of recommendations. These were provided in the form of priorities and broad lines of horizontal actions introduced below with a financing schema for regional activities similar to current financing agreement and with bilateral financing for national structural supports.

In order to supplement these horizontal activities and to make the most of EMWIS, a set of major vertical topics shall be defined to undertake activities for the transfer of know-how **leading to tangible results** in the Mediterranean Partners Countries (MPCs).

The figure below depicts the overall approach with vertical and horizontal priorities selected by the members of the Steering Committee in May 2006:



Transfer of know-how

EMWIS is an essential vector for the **transfer of knowledge**, thanks to its broad dissemination and its institutional presence in the Mediterranean countries. Work was especially initiated regarding the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) through a survey involving the Water Directorates and the working groups of the Joint Process with the EU Water Initiative. It evidences the interest of the North and South countries for this type of activity and the validity of the support provided by EMWIS (technical platform, contacts in the countries, institutional support). This work shall be reinforced by focusing on a limited set of topics to promote methodological convergences (for example regarding Integrated Water Resources Management concepts from the WFD), transfers of know-how and concrete implementations in the partner countries.

Four vertical topics associated with operational objectives for the 2007-2010 period have been defined through dialogue with the water authorities of the Mediterranean Partner Countries (MPCs), by considering national priorities, the existence of know-how in the Euro-Med area, the National Action Plans of the European Neighbourhood Policy, and of priorities defined at the regional level (Millennium Development Goals, Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development, Pollution Control in the Mediterranean). These themes are:

- **Participative approaches** in Integrated Water Resources Management
- Prevention and risk management related to the extreme phenomena (in particular the **water scarcity and floods**)
- Non conventional water resources with two sub-topics: the **desalination** and the **re-use of waste water**
- The local management of sanitation services and the prevention of **domestic pollution**

The following activities could be undertaken regarding each topic:

- Creating a working group made up of country representatives and experts:
 - State of the art and analysis of major problems
 - Identification of good practices and formulation of lessons learned
 - Recommendations for implementation in the voluntary countries (including expected impact and follow-up indicators)
- Supporting experiments in voluntary countries
- Evaluation and experience sharing

The “water scarcity” and “waste water reuse” working groups will be carried out together with the Mediterranean Joint Process between the EUWI and the Water Framework Directive.

National Water Information Systems

During the Directors’ conference (Rome, November 2005), the Mediterranean Partner Countries expressed their interest in the implementation of **National Water Information Systems** (NWISs). This kind of tool is, indeed, essential for each country to track national policies and ensure the consistency necessary at the international level, in particular for the MDG 7¹, the water component of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development, the EU Neighbourhood Policy Agreements or the pollution control in the Mediterranean Sea (Programme Horizon 2020). Studies undertaken during EMWIS phase II (2003-2006) show that countries need assistance to implement their NWIS with significant contents, parts of which can be made public on EMWIS national web sites and shared with regional initiatives (e.g. Medstat). In addition, the NWISs are essential tools for the convergence process with the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD). Moreover, the Mediterranean Partner Countries have selected the « monitoring » topic developed in the WFD as a priority for exchange of experiences².

¹ Millennium Development Goal related to water and sanitation

² Outcome of survey on value of WFD concepts for the partner countries, carried out in 2005 with the Water Directorates réunions



Access to water information

EMWIS, as a **distributed web based information system**, is today very popular at the regional level and in each country. EMWIS shall ensure information and knowledge exchange of the Turin Action plan, as defined by the Ministers during the Turin conference (October 1999) and in the regional MEDA programme for local water management (MEDA-Water). This task should be continued beyond the end of the MEDA-Water programme (2007) and could be developed for a better use of results of the numerous EU-funded projects. Available in three languages, it is a unique tool for disseminating information among Euro-Med countries, especially for better information on European initiatives and programmes and to promote dialogue and exchanges between all the countries. Its architecture and contents shall continuously be enhanced to meet the needs of the Euro-Mediterranean stakeholders of the water sector and to maintain its federating role.

Water observation mechanism

The implementation of a **regional mechanism for following up the progress made in the water sector towards the Millennium Goals and the objectives laid down by the « water » component of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development** is in line with the work carried out by the UN Commission for Sustainable Development (New York, April 2005). It also fits in with the European Commission proposal regarding a global monitoring mechanism, which would be based on regional and national mechanisms in order to improve the collection, processing and comparison of reliable information. Such mechanism could take the form of a Partnership for water data and information open to all the relevant stakeholders (including the monitoring working group of the European Union Water Initiative, the European Environment Agency, FAO, Medpol,)

A Steering Group open to the interested countries and to the bodies directly concerned has been launched and a two-step feasibility study initiated: one part in 2006 resulted in a “concept definition with a few countries and regional/international organisations” (financed by the EC and the Member States of EMWIS Technical Unit within the existing contract) and one in 2007 “validation with all the countries” (financing under preparation).

Euro-Med Forum of the Water Directors

The Euro-Med Forum of the Water Directors, convened by EMWIS in 1997, 2001 and 2005 provides an appropriate structure for meeting the needs of the various international initiatives (e.g. of the European Union: Med-EUWI, MEDA-Water; or of the United Nations Mediterranean Action Plan –UNEP MAP-) in terms of Consultative or Steering Group for the definition of priorities, validation of proposals, implementation follow-up and evaluation of results. At first, it is necessary to define its role in coordination with the Mediterranean component of the EU Water Initiative, then to ensure its implementation. A more sustained pace for these Forum meetings will have to be found as well as for the meetings of the EMWIS Steering Committee.

Annex:

Brief EMWIS presentation
EMWIS National Focal Points

réunions



Decentralised cooperation in the water sector

FIFTEEN COUNTRIES ALREADY ON-LINE

The **Marseilles Euro-Mediterranean Conference on Local Water Management (November 1996)** initiated EMWIS. Today, it is the only operational tool for co-operation between the 35 Euro-Mediterranean countries in the water sector. It aims to:

- Facilitate access to the information existing on know-how in the water sector, while prioritising the five following topics:
 - the institutions involved in the water sector and their representatives;
 - the documentation on water;
 - the training opportunities;
 - the research and development programmes;
 - the data administration.
- Develop the sharing of useful information;
- Prepare common outputs and promote the necessary co-operation programmes.

The information is made available by "**a National Focal Point**" (NFP) in each country and by a central "**Technical Unit**". The **National Focal Points** (NFPs) are small teams working in a public organisation responsible for water related-documentation and information. Their tasks consist in creating and developing a national information server, organising communication processes and access to vetted information, ensuring information availability in the working languages, developing access to the information and maintaining relations with the users in their country.

The **Technical Unit** is a permanent body which run the system with the National Focal Points. Its assignments consist in co-ordinating and providing technical assistance to the National Focal Points, being the International Focal Point, developing and managing EMWIS information portal. The Technical Unit is managed and financed by a group of water operators acting on behalf of their governments: CEDEX (Spain), Office International de l'Eau (France) and SOGESID (Italy).

Owing to its original approach to the "know-how" in the water sector, EMWIS is complementary to many international activities

While remaining accessible to any person interested in water management-related issues, **EMWIS is above all addressing the public and private operators of the Mediterranean water circle.**

From a technical viewpoint, EMWIS has set up a system of shared and vetted information which uses the Internet already available in the 35 countries.

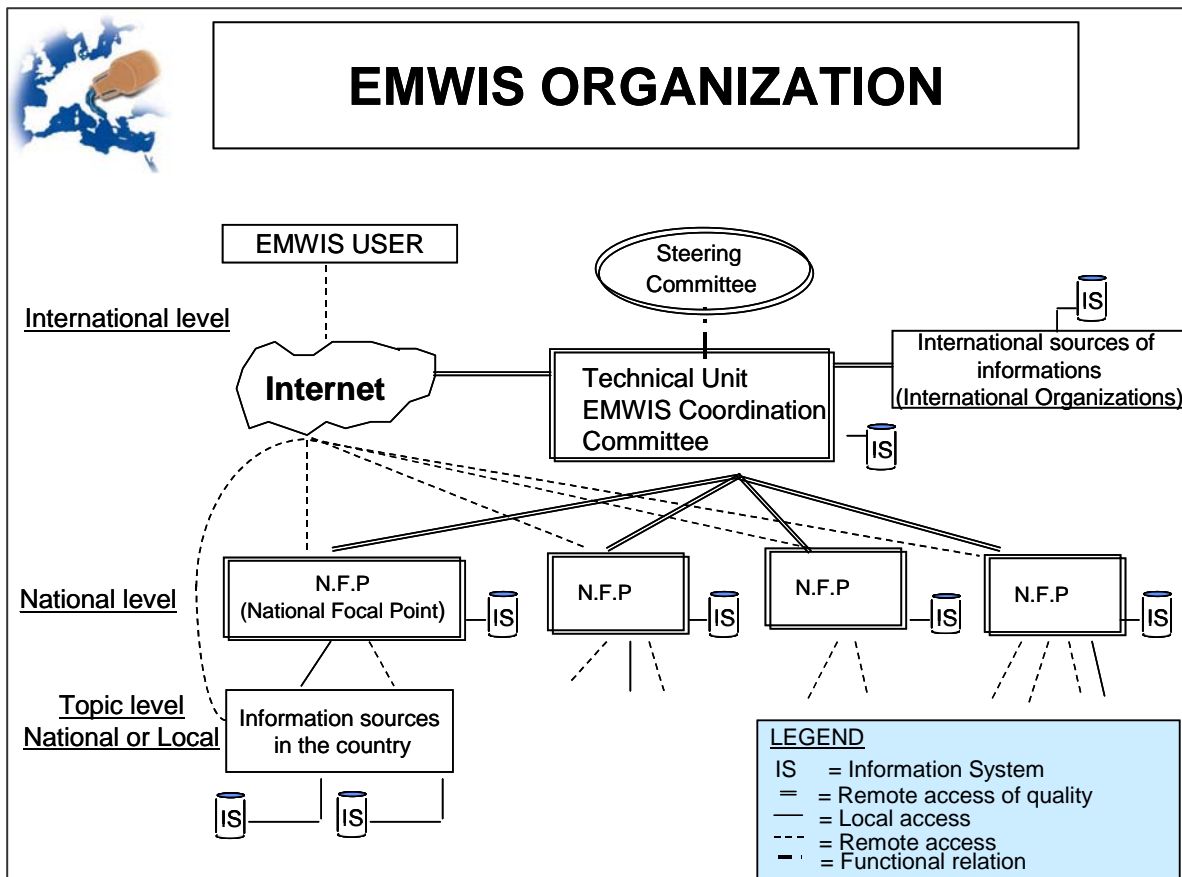
At the strategic level, EMWIS is directed by a restricted "**Steering Committee**" of 13 countries (with rotating rules). It formulates the main strategic orientations and validates the yearly budgets and progress reports. Under a French Presidency and Morocco and Lebanese Vice-Presidencies, it is made up of the Technical Unit's donors (Spain, France and Italy), of Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Turkey, and the Palestinian Authority.

The figure below shows the organisational and technical structure of EMWIS

Unité Technique du SEMIDE

EMWIS Technical Unit





Now, EMWIS has become exemplary. Twenty countries created a National Focal Point and fifteen countries have already launched their own Web site to present available water information in their country: Algeria, Cyprus, Spain, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Palestine, Portugal, Tunisia and Turkey.

EMWIS is to become the **Reference system on the inland water** in the Euro-Mediterranean area. The thematic directory on the water ("Who does what") is on-line and counts already more than 2500 organizations. It is considered by the European Commission as the cooperation tool for the Mediterranean Component of EU Water Initiative and for the MEDA Program on the local Water management

A consolidation and enhancement program has been validated by the Euro-Med water Directors in Madrid (Nov'01). The implementation of this program is supported by a grant of the **European Commission** over the period **2003-2007**. It focuses on:

- ☞ The political coordination
- ☞ Reinforcement of National Focal Points
- ☞ Operation and expansion of services delivered
- ☞ Technical upgrade of the info-structure (for better interoperability)
- ☞ Awareness raising
- ☞ Synthesis of experiences on the fields of the Turin Action Plan and on the Water Framework Directive
- ☞ Dissemination of results from EU programs
- ☞ Liaison and cooperation with international initiatives

EMWIS National Focal Points
Nominated by the respective water directors

Algeria	Agence de bassin Constantinois-Seybousse-Mellegue
Austria	Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management
Belgium	Aminal - Afdeling Europa en Milieu
Cyprus	Water Development Department - Ministry for Agriculture
Egypt	Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation (Main Information Center)
France	Service National d'Information et de Documentation sur l'Eau (SNIDE)
Greece	Central Water Agency - Ministry of Environment
Israel	Hydrological Service of Israel
Italy	SOGESID
Jordan	Ministry of Water and Irrigation
Lebanon	Ministère de l'Eau et de l'Energie
Luxembourg	Ministère de l'Environnement
Malta	Malta Resources Authority
Morocco	Secrétariat d'Etat Chargé de l'Eau - Ministère de l'Aménagement du Territoire, de l'Eau et de l'environnement
Palestine	Palestinian Water Authority
Portugal	Instituto de Agua (INAG)
Spain	Centro de Estudios y Experimentacion de Obras Publicas (CEDEX)
Syria	Ministry of Irrigation
Tunisia	Ministère de l'Agriculture – BIRH - Direction Générale des Ressources en Eau
Turkey	General Directorate of State Hydraulic (DSI)

