



Official presentation of the server of EMWIS Algerian Focal Point **Algiers, on 9 July 2001**

During the EMWIS information seminar which was held in Algiers on 9 July 2001, the server of the Algerian Focal Point was officially presented to the Algerian Minister for Water Resources, Mr. Aïssa ABDELLAOUI. This ceremony took place with many Algerian political personalities present: the Minister for Agriculture, the Minister for Co-operation, General Secretaries from the ministries concerned with water, the Water Manager and the Head of Delegation of the European Commission in Algiers and representatives from France, Italy, Lebanon, Morocco, Spain and Tunisia.

This seminar, which was jointly organised by the Ministry of Water Resources and EMWIS Management Committee, gathered more than 150 people, representing stakeholders in the Algerian water sector: public institutions, universities, research centres, associations and the private sector. A wide media coverage (written press, TV and radio) ensured that EMWIS and its Focal Point, managed by the River Basin Agency of Constantinois-Seybousse-Mellegue, are now known by all the organisations concerned and by the public at large.

The Algerian Ministry of Water Resources reminded that Algeria had committed itself to the implementing of EMWIS, at the national level but also at the international level, and of the Algerian policy on water. In his speech, the President of the Management Committee reminded the EMWIS approach, since its creation up to its present development stage, underlining the major role played by Algeria. Finally, the Head of Delegation of the European Commission in Algiers emphasised that EMWIS is a tool necessary for implementing the action plan initiated in Turin in 1999 and that Water-MEDA funds may be mobilised to complete the national investments. The Commission also confirmed its willingness to continue supporting this wide-scope and long-term initiative.

EMWIS technical aspects were then presented, together with the server of the Algerian Focal Point (www.semide.dz) and a regional server of water data, which might be integrated later on. The experience of the Spanish, French, Italian, Tunisian and Moroccan Focal Points was presented and enabled a discussion to take place during the round table of the closing session, generating many comments from the participants.

The main institutions involved in this event were very interested in the system and willing to collaborate in its development, by supplying complementary data and by working with the National Focal Point to add new topics.

By investing in its Focal Point, Algeria has confirmed its commitment to the Barcelona process and emphasised the new spirit of this process, in which every country actually contribute to the general interest with financial and human resources. The excellent results obtained by Algeria show, one more time, its willingness and interest in a common water policy in the Mediterranean.

By organising this promotion activity, Algeria, which holds the presidency of EMWIS Co-ordination Committee (a committee which regroups all the co-ordinators of the National Focal Points) has shown the way to the other partner countries so that EMWIS may be really successful.

This day ended with a meeting of the Minister for Water Resources with representatives from the foreign delegations (France, Italy, Lebanon, Morocco, Spain and Tunisia), followed by an official dinner, hosted by the Ministry of Water Resources, in which the Minister for Transports, the Minister for Fisheries and the Ambassadors of Italy, Lebanon, Spain and Tunisia participated.