

## PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES INFORMATION SHEET

### **Name of the Partnership/Initiative**

Euro-Mediterranean Water and Poverty Facility (EuroMed WPF):  
A Tripartite Programme of Action

**Expected date of initiation:** 1 December 2002

**Expected date of completion:** 31 December 2010

### **Partners confirmed:**

Governments:

- **Egypt, Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation**
- **Greece, Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
- **Morocco, Ministère de l'Aménagement du Territoire de l'Urbanisme, de l'Habitat et de l'Environnement**
- **Tunisia, Ministère de l'Environnement et de l'Aménagement du Territoire**

*Algeria, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Italy, Libya, Spain (invited - to be confirmed)  
(with the intention to enlarge it to the entire Euro-Mediterranean region in a next phase)\*.*

Intergovernmental organizations:

- **Commission of the European Union,**
- **Organisation for Economic Collaboration and Development (OECD),**
- **Global Water Partnership (GWP)**
- **Blue Plan (Mediterranean Action Plan / UNEP)**
- **Centre for Environment and Development in the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE)**

Major groups:

NGOs

- **Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE),**
- **Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED)**
- **European Partners for the Environment (EPE)**
- **Institut Méditerranéen de l'Eau (IME)**

Local Authorities

- **International Council for Local Environmental Initiative (ICLEI)**

**Leading Partners:**

- **Egypt, Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation**
- **Greece, Ministry of Foreign Affairs**
- **Global Water Partnership –Mediterranean (GWP-Med)**

**Task Group and Steering Committee Chair:**

**H.E. Dr. Mahmoud Abu Zeid, Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation, Egypt**

**WPF is part of the European Water Initiative.**

\* depending on whether the proposal will be considered under the framework of the European Water Initiative, it will also include other non-Mediterranean EU countries as partners.

Name of the contact person/focal point:

Prof. Michael Scoullou, Chairman GWP-Med, Chairman MIO-ECSDE  
Address: 28, Tripodon str., 10558 Athens, Greece  
Phone: 003010-3247490, 3247267  
Fax: 003010-3225240  
E-mail: secretariat@gwpmed.org

## **Background and Main objectives of the Partnership/Initiative**

### **Background**

The majority of the population in the Mediterranean countries (particularly in the South and East) lives in rapidly expanding cities, with considerable proportions being at the lowest income brackets. In their everyday life, a large part of the urban population suffers from water quality and quantity inadequacies, serious sanitation problems and their dwellings are frequently endangered by natural disasters (e.g. floods). These problems are in turn responsible for improper livelihood conditions, serious deterioration of their health as well as the social and natural environment.

According to the target posed by the Millennium Declaration, we have to halve the proportion of people lacking access to safe drinking water by 2015. In order to be ample, this target should be complemented with a similar target on sanitation.

Recent draft reports of the World Bank and the GWP on water and poverty have emphasized the urgency and gravity of the problem and the need for proper investment. Investment in water projects either targeted to the poor or more general if properly designed and implemented could greatly contribute in the reduction or even eradication of poverty. Similarly, efforts in protecting the water resources and in capacity building and education may effectively contribute to poverty reduction. However, at present, many major water programmes fail to consider the needs of the poor and their contribution to poverty alleviation is by far less than it could be if proper provisions are build in during the design phase.

A Euro-Mediterranean Water and Poverty Facility (WPF) will strike to contribute in building in water projects the poverty eradication dimension and facilitate the achievement of the Millennium Target.

The key Chapters of Agenda 21 being addressed through the WPF concept are:

Chapter 1: International cooperation

Chapter 3: Combating Poverty

Chapter 7: Human Settlements

Chapter 8: Integrating environment and development in decision-making

Chapter 18: Freshwater

Chapter 24: Women

Chapter 27: NGOs

Chapter 28: Local Authorities

Chapter 36: Education, public awareness and training

Chapter 37: International cooperation and capacity-building in developing countries

Water and Poverty came very high in the political agendas of the 2<sup>nd</sup> World Water Forum (The Hague, March 2000) and International Conference on Freshwater (Bonn, December 2001). It is one also one of the major themes in the on-going global Dialogues in preparation of the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Water Forum (Kyoto, March 2003). It is obvious that Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) cannot be achieved in the Mediterranean and globally without tackling seriously the issue of Water and Poverty.

In the Ministerial Declaration for WSSD of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (Monaco, 14-17 November 2001) and in the Mediterranean and Arab Mediterranean NGO Declarations (Nice, 13-14 January 2002 and Tunis-Kairouan 28-30 March 2002, respectively), the Water and Poverty issue received the highest attention.

The Mediterranean reality, regarding specifically the interrelation between Water and Poverty (with emphasis to appropriate provisions when dealing with Water Valuing and Pricing) was assessed and suggestions to improve the existing situation have been discussed recently:

- at the Workshop on Water Valuing and Poverty in North Africa and Middle East (Cairo, 19-20 December 2001), organised by MIO-ECSDE / RAED / European Rio+10 Coalition, attended by 160 participants from 24 countries, and
- at a special session of the GWP-Med Regional Conference on Effective Water Governance (Athens, 19-20 March 2002), organised by GWP-Med / MIO-ECSDE, attended by 130 participants from 26 countries.

From all these consultations it became evident that to solve the problem of water for the poor is both feasible and necessary. It has to be urgently addressed as a priority issue irrespective of variations in water valuation methods. These variations worldwide depend upon water availability, local socioeconomic conditions, culture, etc. In the Mediterranean, these variations could be properly addressed given the existing expertise and Euro-Mediterranean tools. As it was emphasized by H.E. Dr. Mahmoud Abu Zeid, Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation of Egypt and Chairman of the Core Group and the future Steering Committee of WPF, "while it is vital to establish mechanisms to enable cost recovery, the needs of the poor have to be protected; providing that protection is a government responsibility. In addition, it is up to governments in co-operation with major stakeholders to choose the appropriate mechanisms to provide the funds necessary for sustaining the system and meeting the needs of the poor".

Key dimensions to be addressed by the WPF are: *improving livelihoods, improving health, mitigating vulnerability of the poor under extraordinary conditions and events such as disasters related to water (e.g. floods).*

The WPF will not handle or manage funding but it will elaborate, in collaboration with both donors and recipient partners and the competent authorities and bodies, common strategies and action plans and will support implementation mechanisms with the participation of a wide range of stakeholders. In addition, it will act as a multiplier for sustainable investment in the water sector securing, in parallel, to the extent possible, the introduction of poverty reduction components in water projects –particularly those financed by European sources. Finally, it may act as a match-maker between the supply and demand side in projects targeting water supply and sanitation for the urban poor.

## **Main Objectives**

The Euro-Mediterranean Water and Poverty Facility (WPF) aims to:

- Assist in improving the livelihoods of poor people in urban areas of the Mediterranean, particularly in relation to water and sanitation
- Contribute in designing guidelines on social performance of water pricing
- Develop guidelines and expertise in order to facilitate the integration of poverty reduction components in major water projects of the region
- Develop functional tripartite initiatives to facilitate regional and national investment on Water and Poverty initiatives

## **The WPF**

- will elaborate and implement a *Plan of Action*
  - for compatible economic instruments including subsidies and incentives for securing a minimum amount of safe water per capita in urban areas at very low price or even totally free (the feasibility of such a target for the Mediterranean has been preliminarily demonstrated through the relevant Cairo-2001 and Athens-2002 workshops).
  - for contingency plans and for reduction of risks from floods (elaborating schemes for safer dwellings, etc.)
  - for appropriate formal and informal education
  - for appropriate capacity building schemes
- will create a "*Partners Forum*" with active participation of cities, water utility companies and other actors and will promote active bilateral and multilateral schemes to secure proper access of the poor to safe water, sanitation and safer livelihoods.

## **Expected results:**

It is expected that the WPF will:

- Act as a regional "model" forum for synergies to promote development in the Mediterranean through investments and management in the water sector addressing the triple bottom line, fostering innovation and performance.
- Operate as a think tank to provide expertise and insight on evolving water management criteria addressing in particular the needs of the poor, risk assessment and facilitating mechanisms, building on joint analysis and evaluation of water management plans.
- Be an observatory of investments in the Mediterranean area and their alignment with sustainability indicators.
- Train decision-makers on sustainable investment in the water sector, sustainable development, integrated water resources management and governance practices focussing on poverty eradication.
- Assist countries to raise issues related to water and poverty high in their national agendas and will support sectoral triple bottom line benchmarking
- Raise awareness and build capacity (produce guides, best practices books, project opportunity directories, newsletters and other information material)

The concept of the WPF, after testing and proper adaptation, is expected to be replicated in the rest of the Mediterranean and other regions.

**Specific targets of the Partnership/Initiative and timeframe for their achievement:**

Primary target (2008): to contribute in achieving to halve the number of people without adequate access to safe water and sanitation service, with particular emphasis in cities.

1<sup>st</sup> Intermediate target (31 December 2003): Set up of the WPF, the Steering Committee, the Technical Committee, the Partners Forum and the Secretariat. Plans of action elaborated and agreed by partners. Donors engaged and funds mobilized. Initiation of activities. Simple monitoring system established.

2<sup>nd</sup> Intermediate target (31 December 2005): First set of activities implemented - tangible results in Mediterranean cities demonstrated. Expansion of the WPF in all Mediterranean.

3<sup>rd</sup> Intermediate target (31 December 2010): Full set of Mediterranean activities implemented. Transfer of knowledge and, after adaptation, initiation of WPFs in other part of the globe.

**Coordination and Implementation mechanism**

*Please provide a brief description of expected coordination/implementation mechanism of the Partnership/Initiative.*

A Core Group was set by representatives of Mediterranean Governments, the Commission of the EU and major players representing different sectors and Mediterranean regions. The Core Group is chaired by H.E. Dr. Mahmoud Abu Zeid, Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation, Egypt. The 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Core Group took place in Brussels, 21 June 2002.

As soon as the WPF will be inaugurated a Steering Committee will be formed with balanced representation between stakeholders. A small Technical Advisory Committee with an adjacent "pool of experts" "will be also formed.

The activities of the WPF will be developed in modules, led by different organisations, according to their capacity and expertise. A small Secretariat will be responsible for the coordination and administration of the WPF activities. In order to reduce administrative costs, the Secretariat will be hosted by one of the partner organisations.

The WPF will ensure integration of social, economic and environmental dimensions and a sustainable approach at all levels of planning and implementation of its activities, being coherent with the sustainable development strategies of the countries where the WPF will be active. The WPF is part of the EU Water Initiative and will participate in the Working Group on Water Supply and Sanitation, led by Denmark. It will be directly linked with the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the Turin process, as well as, the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development (MCSD).

**Arrangements for funding**

*Please describe available and/or expected sources of funding for the implementation of the Partnership/Initiative (e.g. donor government(s); international organization(s)/financial institution(s); foundation(s); private sector; other major groups, etc.)*

On-going contacts with bilateral and multilateral donors (eg. Greece, Commission of the European Union, other governments), private sector (eg. water companies), and other partners (eg. local authorities) who have expressed interest for the setting up and implementation of the WPF. Start-up funds are secured by MIO-ECSDE and GWP-Med.

### **Arrangements for capacity building and technology transfer**

*Please include information if the Partnership/Initiative provides for training, informational support, institutional strengthening and/or other capacity building measures:*

*Please also provide here a brief description of expected arrangements for technology transfer (if applicable).*

Capacity building and training, public awareness and transfer of lessons learned are an integral component of the WPF and will be supported through a variety of activities (courses, workshops, educational material, etc.). Further information will be provided about each one of the agreements reached through a special site in the internet. Cities and Water Utility Companies seeking advice or partnerships for arrangements to facilitate the access of poor will be addressed. Further support for institutional strengthening will be achieved through publication of alternative options for water valuing and pricing according to different legal backgrounds.

The WPF will not be directly involved with technology transfer but it will promote relative knowledge and contact for site-specific technology transfer and will focus on promoting solutions tested and successful in other parts of the Mediterranean and globally, as well as on innovative service delivery systems and advanced solutions.

### **Links of Partnership/Initiative with on-going sustainable development activities at the international and/or regional level (if any)**

*Please provide a brief description:*

Limited relevant initiatives exist in the Mediterranean, mostly at local level. Even where these exist, they are scattered and lack proper dissemination mechanisms and coordination. The WPF will be a totally new multi-partner initiative for the region while it will assist in promoting and multiplying the effect of the existing regional frameworks. Expertise gained and lessons learned in other parts of the world will be sought and taken into account.

### **Monitoring Arrangements**

*Please describe expected arrangements for monitoring of progress in the implementation of Partnerships/Initiative after it will be launched at the WSSD:*

*(e.g. frequency/modalities of preparation of progress reports; electronic updates, news-letters, etc)*

The Steering Committee is expected to meet two times a year. The Technical Advisory Committee will meet two times a year (one with the Steering Committee and one alone). A Partners Forum will be organized every 2 years to assess progress.

Annual activity and administrative reports will be delivered to all parties involved. Major reporting using indicators-against-targets will be undertaken every 2 years and will be presented at the Partners Forum. In addition, a biannual report will be produced, addressed to the Euro-Med Heads of States and Governments and to the MCSD.

Progress will be reported regularly through the WPF's web site and through electronic and brief hardcopy newsletters. The WPF partners will host special annexes and articles in their respective newsletters and web sites.

**Other relevant information:**

[www.mio-ecsde.org](http://www.mio-ecsde.org)  
[www.gwpmmed.org](http://www.gwpmmed.org)  
[www.epe.be](http://www.epe.be)

***Name and contact information of the person filling in this table:***

*Name: Prof. Michael Scoullas*  
*Position: Chairman, GWP-Med and MIO-ECSDE*  
*Address: 28, Tripodon str., 10558 Athens, Greece*  
*Phone: 003010-3247490*  
*Fax: 003010-3225240*  
*E-mail: [secretariat@gwpmmed.org](mailto:secretariat@gwpmmed.org)*