



## CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

CONTRIBUTION OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES  
TO THE WATER STRATEGY OF THE UNION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN  
LYON - FRANCE / 23-24 November 2009



United Cities and Local Governments  
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UNION POUR LA MÉDITERRANÉE  
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط  
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LA MÉDITERRANÉE  
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط  
UNION FOR  
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CONTRIBUTION DES AUTORITÉS LOCALES ET RÉGIONALES  
À LA STRATÉGIE POUR L'EAU DE L'UNION POUR LA MÉDITERRANÉE  
LYON - FRANCE / 23 - 24 novembre 2009

مساهمة السلطات المحلية والإقليمية  
في الإستراتيجية المائية للاتحاد من أجل المتوسط  
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THE CONTRIBUTION OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES  
TO THE WATER STRATEGY OF THE UNION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN  
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## Foreword

Water is a precious resource. It is precious because without it life cannot exist. It is precious because it is becoming rarefied. Water is a fragile resource, it is not found everywhere, it is not spread evenly and it is not used with the same measure around the world. The populations in the Mediterranean region express the difficulties they encounter, their projects and their hopes; a realization has been made, the challenges have been identified and cooperation is developing. All that remains is to define how local authorities will work together with their citizens and their officials, as well as businesses to create "sustainable" solutions for water. How can local authorities contribute to the water strategies for the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)? After an analysis of the current situation, seven "exemplary" projects will be presented; then the question of funding will be raised.



## 1. Water: local solutions for a global challenge

Just a few days before the Copenhagen Climate Conference\*, Gerard Collomb, President of Greater Lyon, underlined the determining role local and regional authorities have to play in the Water Strategy of the Union for the Mediterranean.

*"We know that human activity is causing changes to the environment, imbalances in climate and affecting the water cycles. Failing to act would result in half of our planet suffering from drought by 2020. The premature thawing of ice means that we have more water than we can cope with. As for some coastal regions, such as the Nile Delta, there is a chance they will have to face rising sea levels and this in a context where the population is rising and the need for water with it. That is why every country must make efforts: a billion people do not have access to water and 2.6 billion do not have access to sanitation."*

When water is already a source of conflict, the risk of an imminent shortage could weaken political stability in numerous countries: this is another reason to protect it *"However, though this is a global emergency, the scope for action is also specifically local."*

Globalization comes with significant urbanization and so the importance of urban dynamics is an ever increasing element of national economies. Cities and regions are, therefore, strategic locations in which to implement sustainable development, in particular when it comes to water resources.

Thanks to many partnerships, Greater Lyon has become a centre of excellence in the field of water. The synergy between the Hydrology Field Study Observatory, the Rhône-Alpes Research Group on Water Infrastructures, the National Institute of Applied Sciences, and Cemagref (the environmental science and technology research institute) has led to considerable technical and economic progress being made. Some competitive clusters work on water matters, such as Axelera, which specializes in river depollution. *"We have created an international solidarity fund for water to finance our projects. We would like to export and share our technology. We also hope to expand our expertise by taking inspiration from successful innovations and experiments in other territories."*

*"And to conclude: it is because we hope to develop this tradition of cooperation that I am delighted this conference is taking place in the context of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM). A joint initiative between governments and local authorities: this is how we should act. Together, we composed the Istanbul Pact for local and regional authorities. Recommendations from our debates will be integrated in the Mediterranean Water Strategy, to be adopted in 2010. I hope that by our next meeting in Marseille in 2012, the heads of States will have made some progress in this dialogue for the Union for the Mediterranean. It is a fundamental issue for peace in all of these regions that surround our shared sea."*

**Gerard Collomb, President of the Lyon Urban Community.**

\* The conference took place on 23 - 24 November 2009, just a few days before the world climate summit in Copenhagen.



## 2. Sharing water, a symbol of peace in a region of conflict

The Mediterranean Commission for United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), a platform for discussion and exchange for local and regional authorities of the Mediterranean, their networks and associations, is increasingly acting and influential: the role of regional and local organizations within the UfM was recently been acknowledged by Heads of States and Foreign Affairs ministers, over the meetings organized in 2008.

Shortly after, the euro-Mediterranean regional and local assembly (ARLEM) was created and it will meet again next January to enable regional and local governments to be associated with the Euro-Mediterranean partnership.

*"This conference is a step towards a Mediterranean water strategy; a joint and operational strategy, with clear objectives and well-defined projects for which the funds can be mobilized. We must find a balance between a strategic approach and a concrete approach, between the local and State ambitions, and to and preserve this balance."*

The UCLG will contribute a draft text explaining the challenges of adopting a major strategy for water in a difficult context. The issue of dividing water between States and for separate uses, is potentially a source of tension, hence the importance of focusing attention on the issues of governance, financing and structuring the roles between centralized authorities and local bodies. *"The projects and the resources to be mobilized are considerable. It is regrettable that the UfM has no new funding initiatives in view. It will be crucial to ensure that major funding organizations fully grasp the challenges ahead. It is also up to us to better understand their mode of functioning in order to better define the projects for our territories. For their part, they should pay more attention to the concerns of local territories and, perhaps, change the way in which they fund projects."*

The contribution of local and regional authorities will also affect the projects, based on the fundamental principles of autonomy and international solidarity. The projects presented during the conference should make it easier to define selection criteria for fair and equal projects. *"The UCLG vows international and decentralized cooperation,"* Christophe Castaner stated, before adding *"Finally, sharing water must be the most beautiful symbol of peace in countries that are currently at war."*

**Christophe Castaner, Vice-President of Regional Planning and European Affairs at Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Regional Council.**



Egypt must rise to meet the challenges concerning water. Water is rare: resources are limited and threatened by irregular and weak rainfall. We now have arid, indeed very arid regions. In the year 2000, there were 45 million people living in countries with an insufficient supply of water. The south of the Mediterranean and the Middle East are among the most affected due to inefficient use and distribution of water.

Then there are the social problems: a population increase of around 70 million people is expected in the region by 2025, bringing with it an estimated 60% increase in water requirement.

The fate of numerous countries depends on the distribution of water. Egypt shares almost 100% of its resources. The Tigris and the Euphrates serve three countries: four countries in the region share the Jordan River Basin; Portugal and Spain share basins also. Water management is often a source of tension between the regions in these areas, aggravated by the issue of conserving the quality of the water. Cooperation between these countries is an absolute necessity in maintaining peace and stability in the region.

Although access to water and sanitary facilities are declared human rights by the international community, 13 million people are still without access to clean water and 27 million have access only to very basic facilities: every year, 14 billion cu. m of wastewater are discharged into the natural environment, and half of it into the Mediterranean.

Mohamed Motaleb would like for the conference to contribute to the preparation of a real Mediterranean strategy for water and answer the questions concerning future challenges: to create or consolidate public organizations and management delegations, to reinforce the roles of government organizations, to create an environment that lends itself to participation by the private sector.

**Mohamed Motaleb, Director of the Planning Department, at the Egyptian Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation.**



### 3. The major current and future challenges in water management in the Mediterranean

The UfM's water strategy is centered on climate and is divided into main sections:

- A strategy of adaptation, a consistent effort to clean up the Mediterranean, to implement sustainable agriculture and to construct a water strategy,
- A strategy of alleviation, involving developing sea transport, implementing a Mediterranean solar power plan and using information and communication technologies,
- A strategy that combines the two, for tourism, sustainable towns and innovative SMEs and SMIs.

The issue of water must be integral to each of these strategies in order to guarantee employment in the future and to prepare future training courses. Demographics is a an important issue since 20 years from now, the southern Mediterranean will see its population rise by 100 million. To meet the increased demand, electrical power stations and desalination plants will be necessary.

*"Inevitably, water will become rare and will have to be shared. 97% of the planet's water is salt water, three quarters of the world's supply of fresh water is relatively inaccessible. 73% percent if the tiny percentage of fresh water available is used for agriculture, and the rest for industry and domestic use. Furthermore, the consumption of this water is unequal: 400 liters/ person/ day in wealthy countries as opposed to 30 liters in poor countries. By 2030, two thirds of the population will potentially suffer from water shortage."*

In certain areas, 100% of the available resource is consumed. The equal sharing of ground water resources, many of which cross borders, can be problematic. Access to drinking water is not necessarily assured.

The Mediterranean will be faced with decreased rainfall and a 5% increase in temperature by the end of the century. Hence, the demand for water will increase. Consequently, one of the solutions will be to recycle water by desalination and to define region-specific action plans according to the demand.

Therefore, all available water must now be charted, along with vulnerable areas to identify the possibilities for conservation. A significant global strategy is currently underway. *"However, that is not to say that local strategies will be wanting."*

Finally, the issue of funding is crucial: it is a matter of building ties between local authorities and funding providers, and securing the investments.

When asked about his decision to present the most pessimistic scenario, Gilles Pennequin said that it was to enable preventive policies to be drawn up thus avoiding a situation where tensions arise and regions are weakened. *"If we are to be pro-active, we must have a positive vision. One must be aware that without a positive prospective vision of water, things will only get worse. If we anticipate and address the issue territory by territory, we can create employment. I'm not a pessimist per se; I'm more like a proactive pessimist."*

**Gilles Pennequin, Mission for the Union for the Mediterranean, representative of the French Presidency.**



## Session 1 - The Water Strategy of the Union for the Mediterranean: What contributions do regional authorities make?

During the conference in Jordan, the ministers for water –members of the UfM- developed a long-term water strategy, in the aim of improving resource management. This strategy involves stabilizing the demand, coordinating water management, recycling wastewater, desalinating sea water and providing access to drinking water and sanitary facilities by creating partnerships and obtaining the participation of local and regional authorities. *"Cooperation between contracting authorities and operators, solidarity, the sustainable management of water and researching funding in the private sector must all be part of this strategy."* To attain this, the ministers created a group of experts in the field of water management, who have the dual role of providing technical solutions and guaranteeing an effective coordination.

The aim of this strategy is to address the problems of different countries, to develop regional cooperation, to preserve water quality, to avoid drought and to predict water shortages. Objectives of quality and quantity are to be developed for everyone's benefit with a view to finding a balance between the supply and the demand. Furthermore, it is accompanied by an 'Action Plan', a road map to harmonize policies and choices.

The final strategy, adopted in April 2010, during the Ministerial Conference on Water in Barcelona, focuses on the importance of the contribution made by local and regional authorities, which are among the best placed to control demand and to develop new solutions in the water sector.

**Mohamed Motaleb, Director of the Planning Department, at the Egyptian Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation.**

Mayors are at the centre of the implementation of the Union's Water strategy: it is their role to provide a good quality of life for the city's inhabitants. In the Souss Massa Drâa region, this is reflected by a continual supply of water, optimal irrigation and the recycling of wastewater to deal with the extreme variations in pluviometry suffered by the region. As mayor, I hope to improve living standards further with green spaces that are in flower all year long, and also by increasing the number of play areas. *"However, all this involves an increased demand for water."* Depending on tourism and the exportation of agricultural products, the region can generate around 300,000 jobs. A water shortage would have devastating effects at every level. Local representatives observe that, despite the efforts made in the region, water remains rare and unfortunately the option of desalination is limited due to the cost. The solution is therefore to research a more efficient use of the water in the system and to increase the use of wastewater.

**Tarik Kabbage, Mayor of Agadir.**



Aristides Carvalho spoke for **Fernando Campos, Vice-President of the Portuguese Association**, who was unable to attend, on the role of local authorities. He mentioned that *"water is an important resource in every region, although it may be a source of conflict in the world and at a local level, it is at the origin of policies to improve living standards."*

The Mediterranean could be in danger if faced with climate change. Entire regions in the basin, in which water is rare, could be confronted with extreme difficulties. He called upon political authorities to *"take responsibility and to take decisions to prevent the worst from happening."* Adopting international cooperation strategies based on water management solutions is, therefore, a necessity.

Although the first Forum on water invited local governments to play a major role in resource management, he does not think that the governments of developed countries have lived up to their promises, in particular as concerns the Millennium goals. Aware of these failings, he claims that it is indispensable to establish a control mechanism for monitoring results. He pointed out that Portugal had presented a project for a global monitoring platform to enable local authorities of the Mediterranean basin to audit their situation, set goals and choose the most effective policies.

**Aristides Carvalho, engineer and representative of the Portuguese national association of cities.**

#### Summary of the debate

**Tarik Kabbage** was asked about the choice of vegetation for public spaces which is suited to the local climate, with a view to improving water management by means of efforts to control demand. He was also asked how he managed to negotiate options for the city, knowing that Morocco is a very centralized country. For local authorities, efforts to control demand and reduce water consumptions are crucial, and it is important to maintain public awareness of the issue. As for decision-making at the local level, Morocco has greatly evolved and is now far less centralized than many other countries.

**Aristides Carvalho** suggested mobilizing funds for decentralized cooperation and to concentrate on the Millennium goals.

**Fadi Comair** said that he supported the idea of a monitoring platform, adding that Lebanon would participate in developing a tool for modeling waterways as mentioned earlier by Gilles Pennequin. This tool should primarily be used on the east bank of the Mediterranean. He asked if the UfM could finance the establishment of a regional information and training centre for water management, enabling territorial authorities to benefit from improved local skills in this field.

**Gilles Pennequin** felt that this modeling tool would be key to drawing attention to the local realities of water availability. He was delighted that Lebanon backs this project, though the idea would be to test the tool first in France.

Speaking for Barcelona, **Joan Parpal** reacted to the comments which called into question water management policies of urban areas. He said that the city has a long history of careful water management and that his city had built a desalination plant. The City of Barcelona wanted to cooperate with cities of the South in order to share experiences.

This first session illustrated the commitment of governments in the UfM and their technical agencies to involve local authorities and to give them the opportunity to express their opinions, technical and organizational suggestions, as an integral part of the UfM decision process. The representatives of local authorities, for their part, reiterated their desire to work with other actors and their government on the critical issue of water and sanitation in the Mediterranean region.



## Session 2 - The role of local and regional authorities in water and sanitation in the Mediterranean: How to develop and mutualize resources?

The challenges evoked this morning, especially those of urbanization in the south Mediterranean, concern all developing countries. *"The world is becoming more urban and, at the same time, more decentralized. I believe that local and regional authorities are gaining in management skills, and that their role is therefore better acknowledged."* There is however a paradox in this trend towards decentralization, in which *"funding organizations give greater recognition to the role of local authorities, whereas governments continue to supervise the management of services."*

The forum on decentralized cooperation, organized by Cités-Unies France in Morocco in 2008, showed that the local authorities of the North and South cooperate on projects and the international funding organizations and States are increasingly providing support to these projects.

Since the start of the Barcelona Process, hundreds of conferences have been held and studies conducted. With these studies in hand, we do not however necessarily see large-scale application of the principles of subsidiary which were promoted. It is time for the States to allow local authorities to demonstrate their know-how, especially in the field of water management.

**Hubert Julien-Laferrrière, Vice-President in charge of decentralized cooperation for Greater Lyon.**

*"We all tend to project our own definition of local authorities, based on what we know in our country, and therefore we have a set idea of their role in water and sanitation management."*

In short, *"For some, it may be entities managed by elected officials, with their own technical, human and financial resources. For others, they are emanations of the State, local agencies meant to be closer to people."*

We all agree, however, about the Union for the Mediterranean: responsibility for water management lies with the public sector and local authorities must participate in the process.

*"In most countries, we find three main actors in water management: local decision-makers, regional entities basin agencies and States."*

There is a range of resources available to local authorities for them to assume responsibility for managing this resource. They cover the dangers of water, its quality and conditions for ensuring access to drinking water for the largest number of people. The tools need to be understood and local authorities should be encouraged to use them.

Cities, urban areas, regions and provinces are territorial entities which have developed a set of skills available locally. These entities do not have the same expectations or the same skills.



*"It is important to remember the diversity of sizes, stages of economic development and priorities of territorial authorities, which results in huge differences in resources and capabilities for action, depending on the given entity.*

*Local authorities and cities want to develop their services for drinking water and sanitation, to directly benefit users, whereas regions and provinces are more inclined to work on integrated management of water resources and demand management, by implementing a process of participatory decision-making. A stable legal framework and technical, human and financial resources are the essential prerequisites for the development of local capabilities."*

But unless the inhabitants, the users get on board, all the efforts to provide the facilities will be in vain. It will take time for the human behavior and practices to adapt before local authorities can really meet these challenges. The three examples below demonstrate the diversity in the local authorities' approach, the role that they can play in wastewater treatment and drinking water projects and the way in which they benefit from national and international support to achieve their goal.

**Pierre-Marie Grondin, Director of the Solidarité-Eau (Solidarity-Water) Program (pS-Eau).**

#### **Building on expertise in the North Lebanon Water Establishment**

The North Lebanon Water establishment manages drinking water, irrigation and wastewater treatment over a 2000 sq. km area for a population of 850,000 inhabitants. Lebanon has an abundant supply of water. However, several cities and regions do not have access to it. The Lebanese government and the parliament are aware of this situation and thus adopted their law 221 in 2000, which introduced important organizational changes. The 200 local entities have merged into 4 regional establishments, regrouping planning, investment and operational services. According to Jamal Krayem, the difficulties are institutional, technical, financial, but also *"the main problem is communication as well as the public's lack of confidence in public services. Our objective is to improve management in all of the pre-mentioned areas in a sustainable, efficient and rapid manner."*

Several international organizations, such as the European Union, the EIB, the AFD, the GTZ, but also regional organizations such as Rhône-Alpes Regional Council, Greater Lyon and the Rhone, Mediterranean and Corsica Water Agency, all contribute to the improvement of our establishment's capacity.

These initiatives concerned the institutional reform, the improvement of infrastructures, the supply of tools and materials, the implementation of a public-private partnership, technical assistance, and training and skills transfers. More precisely, the Rhone-Alpes interventions in North Lebanon began in 2003. They focused on the transfer of knowledge through personal training. Several workshops and conferences were organized, during which all water-related issues were addressed, namely to prepare the new regulation on wastewater treatment and non-collective wastewater treatment processes.

This Franco-Lebanese cooperation is still underway and will continue for another 3 years, on themes such as:

- the development of a system to aid decision-making
- the creation of and training in the management of drinking water and wastewater treatment infrastructures

**Jamal Krayem, President and General Manager of the North Lebanon Water Establishment.**



### **Feasibility of fresh water collection in the sea to provide drinking water along the Mediterranean coast (Spain)**

The community of Valencia is structurally deficient in water, this is accentuated by recurrent periods of drought, hence the necessity to find extra sources of water. The community of Valencia has all the necessary regulatory bodies and an effective water resource management system. The use of the fresh water sources is a new possibility that is worth considering at both a financial and environmental level.

There are underwater sources across the world, and especially in the Mediterranean. The main characteristic of these sources is that they are difficult to access and therefore to exploit. Their output can vary from 3 to 30 million per m<sup>3</sup> per year, with a salt level of less than 250 mg per liter. *"Even if the water has to be treated, it is still a competitive solution compared with the desalination of sea water, for example."* There are numerous water sources off Valencia's coast, most of them currently unexploited because they are difficult to identify, characterize and recover. *"We need to perform feasibility tests that would fit with the complex and innovative R&D studies, with environmental and legal restrictions."* The estimated budget for this study is 750,000 euro; they could be at the beginnings of the 1<sup>st</sup> project of this kind and, thus, serve as an example for all the other Mediterranean countries.

**José Vincente Benadero Garcia Morato, Head of the Department for the Environment, Water, Town Planning and Housing, Spain and Zsigmond Kovacs, Assistant Director at Aquaplan, SA, Spain.**

### **Enhancing and protecting an ecosystem in an urban environment. Case study: Bousselam Wadi (Algeria)**

The city of Setif, perched 800 meters high and located 3000 km from Algiers, is a regional metropolis. The Bousselam constitutes the main source of the Ain Zada dam, with a capacity of 120 million cu. m supplying some 1 million inhabitants. With the urban development, the Bousselam ecosystem has progressively gotten worse. *"Our project is part of Setif's master planning project and is designed to complement the SNAT."* (National Territorial Planning Scheme). The aim of this project is to protect the population's drinking water supply, prevent any potential contamination, and sanitize the Bousselam Valley and its tributaries by favoring wastewater treatment policy and protecting underground water reserves. All of this is sustainably developed ensuring a balance between irrigation, pastures, forests and tourist activities.

To succeed in this goal, a certain number of actions are necessary. First of all, the river has to be re-calibrated and its banks renovated along its 18 km. Then, the existing wastewater treatment station will be expanded. At the same time, the sources of industrial pollution will be identified and treated, and the plains will be defined in terms of their use (pastures, leisure etc). Zoubir Boulahbal drew attention to the two risks to evaluate beforehand, *"the negative reaction of the residents and the lack of coordination."*

**Zoubir Boulahbal, Director of Hydraulics, Wilayah of Setif, Algeria.**

This session highlighted that no matter the context, the development of initiatives depends on the support provided by local authorities, how autonomously the projects are run, and their ability to enter into negotiation with their technical, institutional and financial environment. It is this recognition of the local capacity to evaluate its own requirements, and to mobilize new energies, and to promote the solutions that they wish to implement, that is underlined here.



### Session 3 - The Mediterranean Water Strategy, representatives and technicians working towards a better system

Although water is a local concern, the effective management of it is part of a global approach, involving both public and private actors, on a national level and on infra and supra national levels. The first obstacle the OECD has encountered in the implementation of its recommendations (the concept of the 3 Ts -taxes, tariffs and transfers- and the implementation of support for public-private cooperation) is the extreme fragmentation of roles and responsibilities in ministries and agencies responsible for water, combined with the occasional lack of skills at an infra-national level. Hence, in 2009-2010, a decision was made to review the practices of governance in Latin American countries and the parts of Mediterranean region that fall within its organization.

So what is its objective? To determine the guidelines for making public water policies coherent and to develop a multi-level governance of said policies. *"Indeed, we can observe on the one hand that the challenges related to water vary according to territories and, on the other hand, that the actors are many and interdependent. This phenomenon is intensified by decentralization policies, which have allowed greater involvement at a local level to the development and implementation of public policies and, by implication, supra-national actors, such as the European Commission", Aziza Akhmouch commented.* In fact, the experts call for an integrated approach to water policies, a horizontal coordination between ministries (enabling the creation of synergies between the water policy and those of agriculture and town planning etc.) and between local actors and a vertical coherence through the various levels of government... *"They have already highlighted the main weaknesses in coordination between actors in terms of developing policies, funding, information...-and, these weaknesses do not affect developing countries alone!- and identified the mechanisms used by governments to rectify this.",* the specialist underlined.

For the OECD experts, therefore, it is a question of pronouncing the objectives of various different actors, promoting their organization and their coordination at a local level, improving their horizontal coordination at higher levels (ministries...). While knowing, **Aziza Akhmouch** warned, that *"there is no such thing as optimal governance, but a need for a territorial approach, good practices."*

**Aziza Akhmouch, Policy Analyst, Regulatory Policy Division, Directorate for Public Governance and Territorial Development, OECD.**



In France, we ask: what can we do in order for small scale, and large scale actors of the water industry to work together? How can we organize the presence and the representation of local actors (in charge of drinking water, wastewater treatment and irrigation) within water basins in order for policies to evolve and action plans to be implemented? How can the political desires of States, the European Union and local actors be combined?

10% of the price of water destined for irrigation is available for the operators to define and implement local policies in the basin. *"It is a lot and yet relatively little given the weight of the economy"* Jean-Marc Fragnoud commented. Even so, one must not imagine that these funds can be mobilized only for "private interest". *"In irrigation, one must consider the environment"*, stipulated the Vice President of the Rhone-Mediterranean and Corsica Water Agency's board of governors and of the Committee for the Rhone-Mediterranean Basin, which insists upon the necessary collaboration of all the participants: State, economic actors, representatives from environmental associations, and to ask oneself: *"For how much does private contribution account, given that it is not necessarily opposed to political or environmental motives, for example?"*

**Jean-Marc Fragnoud, Vice President of the Rhone-Mediterranean and Corsica Water Agency's board of governors and of the Committee for the Rhone-Mediterranean Basin.**

#### **Irrigation in the Deir El Ahmar-Btedhi region (Lebanon)**

Among the projects addressed by the Lebanese Secretariat for the Union for the Mediterranean features a Lebanese technical assistance project for a better management of the demand for water. A "water code" that Fadi Comair, Director General of Hydraulic and Electric Resources in Lebanon, said *"will bring economic value to water in [his] region."*

The Deir El Ahmar-Btedhi region (in the district of Baalbek) sits at an altitude of 950 to 1150 meters. It is home to 30,000 people, among them 8000 farmers who suffer 5 months of drought per year. Drinking water comes from the source located 19 km from Deir El Ahmar, and the irrigation water comes from a source located 12 km away and irrigates only 700 hectares during the rainy season. In addition to these sources are private drilling occurs. The irrigation project will benefit 800 farmers from the region. *"We wanted to give them the responsibility so that they could manage their own project and so we grouped them into irrigation associations,* explained Fadi Comair. *We knew that we had to work on the technical and governance aspects at the same time. That is why, at a national level, we have merged the 350 irrigators commissions into four new water establishments, which will manage major irrigation areas (over 5 or 6000 hectares) whereas the local farmers will manage smaller areas through irrigators associations."* This project will provide for the construction of four basins to collect water and enable irrigation during the dry season. The first (15,000 meters cubed) basin will serve to irrigate fruit trees, the second (10,000 meters cubed) for potatoes and onions. The two others (both 80,000 meters cubed) will be used for cereal crops, vegetables and tobacco. *"The aim of this project is to satisfy techno-economic and social goals, to improve production and to dissuade the migration of rural populations. Local economic development and improved living conditions are achieved by implementing integrated water resource management policies."*

**Katia Fakhry, Agriculture Engineer.**

**Fadi Comair, Director General of hydraulic and electric resources in Lebanon and Katia Fakhry, Agriculture Engineer, representative of the technical du Department of Deir El Ahmar.**



### **Project for a master plan to mobilize and manage multi-usage of water resources in northwest Syria**

The project will be conducted in the framework of a partnership grouping companies and NGOs in the Paca Region (southeast France), the Water Agency, the Mediterranean Institute for Water, the pS-Eau and the regions of Lattakia, Hama, Idlib and Aleppo.

Syria has 21 million inhabitants concentrated in the west part of the country, half of whom live in Damascus (5 million) and Aleppo (4 million). Syria is dependent on its neighbors for water: the Euphrates, which provides 50% of its resources, has its source in Turkey, and the Orontes (20%) in Lebanon. Rainfall varies greatly, from 500 to 1000 millimeters/year in the west, and from 250 to 50 millimeters/year in Damascus, while climate forecasts predict a 40-millimeter decline in rainfall by 2050. Each inhabitant currently has access to less than 1000 cu. m/year.

From 1960 to 2001, Syria made large investments in infrastructure (68 dams) and developed irrigation... insofar as possible, given its dependence on foreign sources of water.

In addition to limited water resources, Syria has a problem in the number of management entities, the inefficient infrastructure and networks, and water quality issues.

*"In this context, the project for a master plan to mobilize and manage the water resources in the Aleppo, Hama, Idlib and Lattakia regions aims to define a global strategy for water management in the northwest of the country, to launch projects for management and supply to be completed by 2030, and to develop a Franco-Syrian partnership", explained François Brelle.*

This requires taking stock of the current situation, then analyzing future water needs, the resources which can be mobilized, and management: the idea is to establish management plans compatible with long term needs and to set goals, from both an institutional and technical standpoint. Then, specific local projects could be chosen (priorities, impacts, socio-economic and environmental stakes, questions of policy and governance). Finally, the selected projects can be studied for their feasibility, financing and partnerships.

Syria's situation is special in that its water resources come from rivers originating in other countries or from cross-border water tables. Hence the issue of governance... currently is being studied by the OECD *"with a view to identifying best practices which may serve as an example."*

**François Brelle, Technical Director, Société du Canal de Provence - France.**

### **The coordinated response of a Moroccan territorial authority - the Region of Souss Massa Drâa - to accommodate and anticipate the long-term effects of climate change (Morocco)**

The region of Souss Massa Drâa has 3.2 million inhabitants in an area of 70,000 sq. km.: it is the 10<sup>th</sup> region in terms of population and size, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> richest, thanks to agriculture, tourism and fishing.

Intensive agriculture makes the region one of the top producers of tomatoes and citrus fruits for export (90% of Syria's exports in tomatoes and 50% of citrus fruit come from the region). The downside is that 95% of the water is devoted to agriculture.



In 2002, a water basin agency was established, making it possible in 2005 to evaluate the situation and develop hypotheses for the future, knowing that the water tables used for the vegetables and citrus fruits are already in deficit, respectively 60 million and 240 million cu. m... *"In light of this, the local and national players gathered under the auspices of the Regional Council of Souss Massa Drâa, joined by representatives of trade associations, farmers and consumers. The Commission for a water table contract was thus established, in 2006"*, said Brahim Hafidi, who was now President of the Commission. It was decided to stop expanding the irrigated zones, and a framework agreement was signed by 16 partners.

The Commission works in four areas:

- systematic use of drip irrigation on 30,000 hectares, especially for valuable crops;
- development of alternative solutions (desalination, wastewater recycling) and optimizing existing systems (guided irrigation);
- search for new, deep water tables;
- exploitation of surface water (construction of some 20 small and medium dams).

The recycling program is 60% financed by the State, 20% by the basin agency, while the regional council set up a guarantee fund to enable small farmers to obtain loans to complete the financial package. The total value is 900 million dirham, i.e. 90 million euro, and the participating farmers pay more than the standard fee.

Initial results indicate savings of 60 million cu. m thanks to guided irrigation for citrus crops (the program was financed by the regional council, whereas farmers pay for the operating costs), and a 50% reduction in consumption for tomato crops.

The Souss Massa Drâa region, which has been working for six years with Hérault County (France) and with the Rhone-Mediterranean-Corsica Water Agency, is still seeking support to deploy its program (through 2015). It is also seeking support to implement the first program of the integrated water management plan (Sage) in the small town of Tarrasa. Finally, it is hoping to continue its work with Val'Horiz (Montpellier) which is offering to manage the water base on the texture and composition of the soil.

The actors present are exploring the possibility of desalination plants (a project for a 60 million cu. m. plant is under consideration) and cloud seeding: it remains to be seen if this could be interesting for the Souss Massa Drâa region.

The question raised by implementing this type of program, in this type of extreme situation, is to know who decides what and how ...

*"In our region, the problem is urgent and the choices few: either we take up these options or the entire economy of our region will disappear. The basin agency monitors the dams in consultation with the local authorities and the regional development office. We try to ensure that there is no new drilling and we support new technologies to monitor the usage of water"*, explained Brahim Hafidi.



*"There can be a conflict between the different usages, which is why, where water is scarce, the decisions must come from the State, emphasized Jean-Marc Fragnoud. The same is true for enforcing compliance with the rules of usage, which becomes natural if all parties have understood the stakes. And yet we must keep in mind that nothing is written in stone, as concerns the approach to the problem or the given context. In France, for example, water management laws were passed in 1964 because the problem of pollution was harming economic development. This is where the Chinese stand today. I believe we can reconcile economic growth with better usage of water resources, on the condition that we allocate volumes of water (and not percentages of available water) and that we entrust the sharing to users. For this to become efficient, it will take time."*

**Aziza Akmouch** highlighted that, in her view, the role of regulatory bodies: *"when they are lacking or have no financial and political autonomy, can spell failure for projects, as has been seen recently in Latin America."*

**Brahim Hafidi** added: *"Our experience has shown that the use of new technologies allows us to make better use of water, not only to maintain agriculture, but also to improve yield."*

**Brahim Hafidi, President of the Regional Council of Souss Massa Drâa.**

### **Improving water governance in Jericho, in the Palestinian territory of the West Bank**

The draft water management plan in Jericho associates that city with the city of Paris, the Palestinian Water Authority (PWA), the irrigators' association, the French Development Agency and the Palestinian Hydrology Group.

The issue of water management is not and has never been set in stone in Palestine. This has meant that the project underway in Jericho is based on a dialogue between the various stakeholders, due to the history and political past of the territory. Different laws and various systems of allocation of the resource and several owners of springs regulate the use of water in the city...which doubtless makes Jericho a special case, not to mention the fact that forecasts are made on an uncertain basis.

The Governorate of Jericho has 42,000 inhabitants, knowing that the population of the West Bank is approximately 2.4 million. Jericho is the "lowest" city in the world, at an altitude of 400 m below sea level, and one of the oldest cities on the planet. The dilemma is how to manage the water resources while preserving the city's history and culture, maintaining agriculture and preparing for the future. *"What's more, we are dealing with uncertainty"*, insisted Abdelrahman Alamarah Tamimi. *"We are vulnerable to drought and to political, social and economic upheaval, and the unemployment rate varies between 20% and 60%, depending on whether the harvests are good or not. This means that Jericho can benefit from exchanges of experience, but there is absolutely no way that a standard model can be applied to this city."*

Jericho is in a crop-growing region (lemons, fruits and vegetables) where some 3,000 farms are located. Water comes mostly from natural springs, whose owners are private individuals, public actors, the municipality, cooperatives and user associations. Its quality is problematic because the desalination systems have been bombed and the surface water supply has been cut off by the Israelis.



In the project for Jericho, wastewater plays a key role: it is reclaimed and represents an important part of the overall system. At the same time, the goal is not simply to set up an integrated water management system, but to implement management based on a cost-benefit analysis, knowing that the costs and benefits are not always economic, but may be political. *"We have to deal with the question of drinking water, water for crops, industry and tourism and develop a model that meets everyone's needs, without mortgaging the future or the sustainability of the springs. And this has to be done while setting prices that are not just based on economic calculations, but that take people into consideration too,"* summed up Abdelrahman Alamarah Tamimi.

The question is now more about the governance than about the advisability of subsidies, if we want the money to go where we intend for it to go. Amongst the stakeholders, in addition to those we have already mentioned, we have to include the Israelis. The actions proposed aim to address the conflicts between the stakeholders. They also propose using reclaimed wastewater, setting up local institutions, reviewing the models for allocating water, improving the water management system and developing dams to collect rainwater.

**Abdelrahman Alamarah Tamimi, Director General, Palestinian Hydrology Group.**

### Summary of the debate

In light of the four priority themes put forward by the UfM, the various speakers were invited to take a position. *"In Lebanon, the ten-year strategy aims to cope with climate change and seeks to settle the issues surrounding the management of demand and governance, in order to reach a win-win situation so that technical progress does not take precedence over governance",* said **Fadi Comair**. For **Abdelrahman Alamarah Tamimi**, the priorities, in Palestine, consist of *"coping with the scarcity of water and considering water management as a building block of the territory's socio-economic development, within the framework of exemplary North-South cooperation between cities."*

*"We are trying to deal with climate change in the region of Souss Massa Drâa too",* added Mr. Habib. *"And we are taking action regarding demand by rationalizing the use of water so that the resource can be shared fairly."*

*"What characterizes the Syrian project is that it takes a cross-cutting approach",* observed **François Brelle**. *"The questions of governance are the consequence of demographic development and global transformations, such as climate change. The role of the local authorities is crucial."*

*"In the framework of the UfM, we have a parallel approach regarding issues surrounding water and sustainable urban development,"* emphasized **Yves-Laurent Sepoval (Minister of Sustainable Development - France)** *"which raises the question of pricing and that of the contractual processes between local authorities and States."*

*"The contractual processes between local authorities and States are part of the mechanisms of vertical coordination",* indicated Aziza Akhmouch. *"Some interesting examples have come up in France and Italy."*

*"In Syria, the water institutions are more local, but pricing is centralized. In the future, the idea is to leave pricing up to the competent authorities to apply it locally according to the special requirements of each local area."*



**Olivier Giscard-d'Estaing** mentioned the possibilities offered by the exploitation of submarine springs. *"In Greece, 90,000 cu. m of water are produced a day using this process, and this has transformed the economy of the local area that benefits from it. This is an experiment that we could try to apply elsewhere. For example, in Syria, this would reduce the problem of dependence. We could even imagine using this process, combined with desalination, in order to lower costs."*

**Zsigmond Kovacs** specified in this respect that the project run by the autonomous government of Valencia (Spain) hopes to receive funding from the UfM.

This is a subject that Lebanon is tackling as well. *"We are looking at submarine springs and we have included this theme in the ten-year strategy of Lebanon for 2025"*, noted **Fadi Comair**.

**Alain Dangeard**, a consultant and economist for raw materials and water, drew attention to the problem raised by the expansion of cities and artificialization, and even the destruction of the environment, a subject which concerns the OECD. Indeed, the organization is studying the stakes of metropolitan governance.

**Messaoud Terra** (Minister of Water Resources, Algeria) took stock of the situation in his country and the projects underway. *"The pricing of water is governed by law and follows a principle of selectivity depending on the users and how they use water (households, industry, services and government agencies), the volumes used - the more you use, the more you pay - and solidarity (a very low price for the lowest incomes). Since 2000, the country has built over 20 dams with a total capacity of 4 billion cu. m of water, which doubled the storage capacities, to 7 billion. What remains to be done is to interconnect these dams to create a strategic water reserve, for which we are requesting aid from the UfM."* And he asked the participants: *"when we raise the issue of water governance, do we distinguish between water as a resource and water as a public service?"*

For **Aziza Akmouch**, we have been making the mistake for a long time of distinguishing between service and resource. *"The advantage of this program is that it addresses the question of water with an across-the-board approach."*



## Session 4 - A summary of the day's discussions

Founded in 1991, MedCities works with METAP to coordinate environmental actions in the Mediterranean region. Joan Parpal, Secretary General of MedCities, reviewed the various topics covered during the day.

Initially, he observed that *"the political role of mayors is more and more important in water management."* The arguments developed by the various mayors attending the conference are prime examples. So it would seem that it is in their interest to develop a "water culture" and to inform citizens about the risks incurred by their behaviors. As a preliminary conclusion, he said he would like the people in charge of municipal financing to participate more in funding and governance.

Next, he tackled the issue of urban flooding, not mentioned in the projects presented, but which occurs more and more frequently. Indeed, cities that weren't previously flood-prone are now. So it seems important to deal with this question and come up with new projects focusing on preventing urban flooding.

Finally, he finished his presentation on the systems of rainwater and urban water harvesting and indicated that he is pleased that many of these programs promoting the sustainable use of water have been developed.

**Pierre Lefèvre** asked him how he felt about the difficulty of imposing a "water culture" on governance. He concluded by recalling that *"water culture must be developed [...] if there is no governance, there is neither information nor awareness."*

**Joan Parpal, Secretary General of MedCities.**

For Miodrag Gluscevic, *"local governments should be involved in water management."* Decentralizing the resources and skills, giving local governments the possibility of increasing their "revenues" and being more attractive to investors, having the option of negotiating and borrowing are important points in decentralization. He added to this the question of planning, which, according to him, has not been sufficiently discussed at the conference. He addressed the subject from the point of view of project engineering which requires several years of preparation (at least five years). In this regard, he thinks that local governments need to be supported in their work, their capacity to build and their knowledge.

To conclude, he emphasized issues surrounding climate change. He suggested working on links: links between water management and climate change, water management and energy management, water management and CO<sup>2</sup> reduction, and so on.

**Pierre Lefèvre** understood that, for Miodrag Gluscevic, progress is too slow and decisions need to be anticipated more and swift action needs to be taken to obtain relevant results for the future.

**Miodrag Gluscevic, manager of the working group on Waste and Water Management, NALAS in Serbia.**



Demographic growth, migrations or the provision of energy provoke social transformations. Water management, at local and regional level, makes it easier to adapt to these changes. Furthermore, it is the local and regional authorities that implement the general policies of the national authorities.

**Benadero Garcia Morato** came back to the conference's four major themes:

Governance and water: the participation of citizens and of the local and regional authorities in the decision-making process is essential for good governance, just as it is necessary to dedicate part of the resources to the creation of a structure for training water managers. The concept of collective and sustainable water management must be applied to the special characteristics of each local area. This means that a common organization across all local areas is crucial.

Governance helps establish a regional and interregional equilibrium. The local and regional authorities must thus be part of the decision-making process and the organization of water management systems. They are responsible for meeting the land-use planning objectives. Protecting the aquatic ecosystem, managing demand and using resources sensibly must all be part of their objectives.

The local and regional authorities must also find agreements on the management of water resources, in order to respect the environment, as well as agreements for irrigation, for instance.

The question of flooding (which is now more frequent and violent in the Mediterranean) must be addressed. Indeed, it seems important to identify buildable land according to the risks of flooding, and where necessary to limit urban development and activities that are incompatible with these risks.

Water and financing: the local and regional authorities must control the use of water to make it efficient. Access to water must be authorized for activities which, through their social or environmental impact, generate added value for all citizens. The financing of infrastructure dedicated to water management must allow for all the social, economic, environmental, geographic and climatic conditions of each local area. It seems necessary to set rates and prices that are differentiated between regions. The most economically developed regions should pay the highest taxes. Another factor for the success of good water financing: improving everyone's social awareness about the cost of the resource.

Water and demand management: it is also essential to take action on demand. The local and regional authorities must promote agreements with water users to encourage investments and upgrading of water treatment. In the Mediterranean, the treatment of wastewater must be considered as an integral part of the management of demand.

Adapting to climate change: the local and regional authorities must integrate the diversity of procurement sources, coordinate groundwater and surface water management and promote wastewater treatment.

**José Vicente Benadero Garcia Morato, manager of the Environment, Water, Land-Use Planning and Housing Department, Generalitat Valenciana in Spain.**



In this respect, **the president of the Regional Council of Souss Massa Drâa** mentioned one of the major power generation projects using solar collectors (capable of generating up to 38% of national consumption), which was recently set up in his region. Thanks to this “clean” energy, the production of greenhouse gases is reduced. He took advantage of his presence to encourage the UfM to reflect on the financial support it might provide for a reforestation project in the Moroccan desert.

In conclusion, **Joan Parpal** spoke again and added that it is essential to draw connections between the local governments, the themes developed by the UfM and the Millennium Objectives. The connection of all citizens to drinking water and sanitation systems is an objective to bear in mind. Furthermore, he emphasized the complementary nature of the work between regions and cities.



## Session 5 - Funding

The discussions focused on what funding is needed to carry out the various projects mentioned earlier. The floor was given to the funding organizations in order to consider what resources need to be used and combined to fund the projects of local authorities.

Like local authorities, water agencies are truly motivated by international, decentralized actions. They draw this motivation from the governmental policies they must follow, whereas local authorities invest when they have strong beliefs.

Decentralized cooperation is not only about a financial contribution for agencies and local authorities. It also represents a transfer of knowledge and an opportunity for exchanges between institutions and people, so as to better meet the challenges surrounding water management.

Remember that international cooperation projects are governed by the Oudin-Santini law of 2005, reflected in the French Law on Water and Aquatic Environments (LEMA), which helps avoid financial mismanagement.

This financing is the new mission of the Rhone-Mediterranean-Corsica Water Agency (AERMC), which has set itself the medium-term objective (2 to 3 years) of raising between 1 and 1.5 million euro a year. This amount will make it possible to conduct large-scale projects, while getting familiar with this new mission of raising funds from funding institutions.

The research zone: from the Jura to the Mediterranean, the latter being the principal territory of the AERMC.

For Laurent Fayein, *"mobilizing the local authorities is a duty."* They must be informed about the possibilities and sources of financing, and all the available competencies must be mobilized. But not all local authorities wait to be approached by the AERMC: some have been active for a few years on issues surrounding water management. This is the case of Greater Lyon. In order to foster collaboration, a tool, the Framework Treaty, has established a concrete link between the major local authorities and the funding institutions. It provides for intelligence activities, an agreement on the technical content and the organization of pooled financing.

**Laurent Fayein, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Rhone-Mediterranean-Corsica Water Agency (AERMC).**

Created with the Treaty of Rome, the EIB has just celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The bank finances projects that fall within the scope of EU policies. It offers its clients and partners a wide range of financial instruments. It co-finances all the projects, within a maximum limit of 50%, and collaborates with other funding organizations, commercial banks, the European Commission and governments (to cover the costs of financing a project).

In the sector of water management, the bank makes direct loans worth approximately 3 billion euros a year. This figure is rising constantly. In the Mediterranean region, the bank works with the FEMIP (Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership) which is funded by the Member States, the Commission and the bank. The EIB follows through with its clients throughout the entire project, from the moment it is identified until it has been completed. *"In terms of volume, in the sector of water management and the environment, for the period from 2000 to 2008, we are talking about more than 700 million euros"*, estimated Monica Scatata. *"In terms of technical support, for the preparation of the project and for the expansion of capacities, we are talking about 35 million euros."*



Concerning the water sector in the Mediterranean, the EIB has set itself three priority areas of focus: secured resources, improving access and services (in particular the maintenance and replacement of defective infrastructure) and the clean-up of the Mediterranean.

The EIB identifies three deficiencies that limit access to sustainable financing:

- insufficient resources: access to credit is limited and marked by the perception of risks for the funding organizations and other financial backers
- insufficient capacity: at every level, from governance to service providers
- insufficient preparation of projects and of the investment programs

Funding organizations do not seek ideal situations, but concrete ones. They look for coordination between the various participants and realistic investment programs. They also wish to see a framework of regulation and a vision of the objectives to be reached, be they economic, social, environmental or financial. The desired strategy is thus to have an overall vision: approaching the services and resources from a standpoint of both quality and quantity.

In terms of structure, the bank evaluates on a case-by-case basis the level of decentralization of each country. It also ensures that the recovery of costs is sustainable and that the coordination between the actors and especially their involvement are real.

Project management is something that needs to be organized on a long-term basis. The preparation phase is important; a national and local dialogue needs to be initiated right from the beginning so that the project is appropriated at local level. When projects and investment programs are defined, economic, financial and environmental sustainability aspects need to be integrated. The EIB checks if the borrower has reliable income and that he has operational and commercial efficiency, because funding organizations need a certain level of security.

The consultation of local and regional authorities is useful for setting the political and strategic strategies, because they know the stakes and constraints of the water sector. They can also have a decisive role in getting voters to see the necessity of certain reforms. Finally, they are capable of identifying and preparing decentralized cooperation projects, with Northern partners being able to provide long-term support. *"I think that a better mutual knowledge of the participants makes it easier to manage projects and identify new solutions."*

**Monica Scatista, Senior Economist, European Investment Bank (EIB).**



## Session 6 - Learning to work together to benefit from better support

**Maurice Bernard, Head of the Water and Sanitation Division of the French Development Agency,** introduced this roundtable by indicating that many projects of local and regional authorities are financed by international funding providers via loans granted to States. Next, he asked the panelists about the possibilities of international financing for these projects initiated by local and regional authorities.

After concurring with what **Monica Scatasta** said, **Jean-Louis Ville** stressed nonetheless that the action of *“Europe Aid is different from the EIB in that the former provides its contribution with grants, while the latter provides loans.”* Most financing goes through a bilateral channel (State-State), through sector-based support programs, for example. However, *“a small portion of the budget is allocated to regional programs, managed centrally; water, with energy and transport, is a perfect illustration of this.”* One of the priorities of EuropeAid now is to develop direct relationships with actors other than States: civil society and regional and local authorities.

Thus, in 2010, EuropeAid is dedicating a program to the theme of sustainable water management, targeting local authorities. Governance and demand management (to treat supply as a function of demand) will be the two main areas of focus.

**Maurice Bernard** underlined the importance of differentiating between grants and loans, the former being easier to channel towards the end beneficiaries, and in particular the local and regional authorities. Concerning loans, which are a significant portion of financing, the question comes up of the length and the terms of repayment, mentioned by **Monica Scatasta**. **Maurice Bernard** added that another point arises: *“the risk of exchange: the loans are issued in foreign currency, whereas local services manage financial flows in local currency.”*

**Jean-Louis Ville, Unit Head, “Centralized Operations for Europe, the Mediterranean and the Middle East, EuropeAid”, at the European Commission Cooperation Office.**

The intervention zone of the African Development Bank concerns the Mediterranean, the countries of North Africa, from Morocco to Egypt. The ADB provides funding either via the African Development Fund (ADF) for sub-Saharan countries, or loans which it administers directly, granted to middle-income countries, such as those of North Africa.

According to Belgacem Ben Sassi, the beneficiaries may be the local authorities, raising the question of sustainability and the ability to pay back the loan. He cited as an example a loan granted to Morocco: *“A law on water, dating back to 1995, gives the local authorities the prerogative, and a municipal charter gives the responsibility to the municipalities for the management of the water service. The main purpose of the project was to strengthen the water basin agencies, which had just been created and did not have any human resources or equipment to perform what was being asked of them. The aid could thus be allocated to the agencies, or support provided in their relations with the State.”*



The ADB also has a segment called the African Water Facility, which provides grants of up to 5 million euros, with the role of supporting the capacities of the local authorities. The PEERI Fund is another financial arm of the ADB, providing grants to middle-income countries to increase capacities.

Belgacem Ben Sassi underlined that he is on the same wavelength as the other funding organizations, emphasizing that there is more a complementary relationship than a competitive one. He also noted that *"governments are sovereign in the choice of funding organizations and the allocation of funds is done in accordance with national strategic options."*

**Belgacem Ben Sassi, Senior Water and Sanitation Engineer, OWAS division of the Water and Sanitation Division of the African Development Bank (ADB).**

**Maurice Bernard** closed this first part of the roundtable concerning the terms and conditions of support by international funding organizations and *ad hoc* financing, such as the Water Facility of the EU or the ADB, which may be approached to directly finance the initiatives of local or regional authorities. In this particular case, as was the case in Agadir or Ouagadougou, the municipality must be autonomous in exercising its competency to repay the loan. When they are intended for regional authorities, through the States, these loans are subject to an exchange risk and conditions set in accordance with public policies.

The size of the projects is important too: small projects must be capable of being pooled or the loans paid to dedicated municipal funds or national banks. One purpose of this second option is to facilitate the financial autonomy of a country's public institutions.

### Summary of the debate

**Pierre Lefèvre** underlined a key point: the shortage of good projects, and hence of significant funds. *"How can we avoid a certain rush towards projects, admittedly supportable from a financial point of view, and enable a distribution of these major funds across all the projects and across the entire Mediterranean Basin?"*

For **Monica Scatasta**, from the EIB, who confirmed this scarcity of good projects, *"it is necessary to accompany the preparation and conducting of good projects, to contribute to the implementation of good policies in countries."* The financing can indeed be used, in part, to improve the quality of the projects submitted, inasmuch as the beneficiaries of loans can also choose the funding provider, by opting for a certain type of instrument. The major challenge is thus to coordinate the objectives around a vision shared by the partners, from the local to the national level, and to improve the response to real local needs and sustainability. The projects must thus be structured so that local initiatives are part of larger sized projects.

**Brahim Hafidi, Chairman of the Regional Council of Souss Massa Drâa in Morocco**, repositioned the debate by recalling that these questions are crucial, leading to an integrated approach between the partners, so that they can master the local stakes, which may be different from their own. The example of his irrigation project testifies to the need to cover all the bases. Because although the investors covered all the technical aspects and an additional public charge made it possible to have all the necessary equipment, this 5-year program nonetheless lacks human resources amongst other things, prompting the Regional Council of Souss Massa Drâa to apply for new dedicated subsidies.



**Jacques Oudin, the author of the Oudin law**, described the stakes: the financing of cooperation in the field of water management, is, first and foremost, the affair of States and of major international funding organizations, with financial mobilization being impossible at the local level. But the inability of the Northern States to reach the objectives set in terms of development aid has brought local authorities to the forefront. Concerning water and sanitation, the involvement of local authorities as managers is perfectly justified. However, the amount that can be mobilized within the framework of decentralized cooperation remains modest; Jacques Oudin recalls that it is, *"currently for France, 20 million euros."* The benefits of such a policy are numerous, however: *"close contacts between professionals who manage the needs of people on a daily basis, exchanges of experience and integration into an across-the-board approach, which is crucial for the relevance of projects."*

Jacques Oudin underlined that it was the French experience, promoted by the law of 2005, which in turn was motivated by a strong request of the French and other authorities, which had already set the process in motion. But with such a commitment, why, he wondered, *"don't the other European countries adopt this 1%?"* Another solution proposed by Jacques Oudin: the creation of a European Support Fund, as part of the UfM.

Maurice Bernard supplemented Jacques Oudin's comments by citing the English initiative Water Aid, and a strong commitment on the part of the Dutch.

**Mohamed Bany Mustafa, Jordanian Minister of Water and Irrigation**, suggested undertaking a concerted action *"by organizing a conference for funding organizations working in the Mediterranean region, including USAID and JICA."*

**Raffaella De Gennaro, representative of the City of Agde**, wondered about the position of the AFD regarding microcredit, as the projects of local authorities do not necessarily interest the major funding organizations. **Messaoud Terra**, from the Algerian Ministry for Water Resources, suggested streamlining the procedures for evaluating projects, which currently represent a stumbling block to financing, as they are so strict for developing countries. **François Brelle**, from the SCP, wondered if the sector-based organization of funding organizations is compatible with the integrated vision of local authorities.

For **Maurice Bernard** from the AFD, all these questions have a single answer in the responsibility of the beneficiary countries, which must make the effort of consensus-building and coordination.

**Mr. Talic, alderman of Sanski Most, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and NALAS representative** (Network of Associations of Local Authorities in South-East Europe), called attention to the need to think in terms of cross-border cooperation in the field of water management. He underlined, though, that *"sometimes grants or loans must be turned down because they involve a collaboration that is too costly in terms of obligatory... equipment."* And Mr. Talic expressed his concern about the effects of the crisis on the generosity of funding organizations.



**Thomas Ashwanden, Director of International Relations at the County Council of Hérault**, talked to the conference attendees about a project of the Latin Arch supported by EuropeAid, aiming to index the actions of decentralized cooperation conducted by the local authorities at the NUTS 3 level, that is to say, at EU level, with the south bank and the east bank of the Mediterranean.

Although this work is still ongoing, it has already revealed major trends: increasing capacities, water governance, structuring sectors, economic and local-area development approaches, and hence an integrated approach. The work also hints at certain conclusions, such as the existence of many good projects, the challenge residing in their vision and visibility, the coordination and knowledge between the funding providers and the local authorities. Thomas Ashwanden also considered that working with two visions, a sector-based one for the major funding organizations and an integrated one for decentralized cooperation, has made it difficult to coordinate the overall situation.

In view of this observation, **Pierre Lefèvre** wondered about the risk of missing out on good projects.

This is a situation in which **Monica Scatasta** said that mutual knowledge has improved, and in particular thanks to the UfM and its possible role as a go-between, linking good projects with suitable funding providers.

**Monica Scatasta** then turned to the point on which she had been questioned, concerning the identification of projects, recalling that these must be presented in accordance with formal procedures. The knowledge that enables access to the procedures is built up through experts, during on-site initiatives or conferences such as this one.

Asked about the existence of a horizontal approach to the theme of water at the EIB, Monica Scatasta responded affirmatively, as certain support initiatives for the water basin agencies include both water service and management.

Next, **Jean-Louis Ville** presented the way in which issues surrounding water are approached at EuropeAid, in an integrated manner, with a structure that is both geographical and theme-based. It is also considered in the broader context of the environment. He underlined that even though the relationship has long been strictly between funding organization and State, at present, European cooperation is evolving towards a relationship with local actors and civil society, with a budget of 1 billion euros. Even if a link is still missing in this chain, the concepts are evolving fast.

**Belgacem Ben Sassi**, from the ADB, confirmed an integrated position: all projects are presented to a commission made up of experts from all sectors, including those in charge of cross-cutting issues such as governance and the like. Regarding the question of financing, Belgacem Ben Sassi underlined that the needs exceed the resources. *"Still, the funds are not entirely depleted each year, which means that it is difficult to reconstitute the budget to be distributed from contributors. However,"* he said, *"the needs are real: governments must act, choosing regions, and the local authorities must present and sell their projects."*

**Laurent Fayein, for the Rhone-Mediterranean-Corsica Water Agency**, specified that, according to him, what matters is that the project that is presented be permanent and capable of creating the conditions for sustainability and the participation of the public sector.



**Pierre-Marie Grondin, Director of pS-Eau**, wondered about the representation of the local authorities in InfraMed, a group of funding organizations formed as part of the UfM, and, as the case may be, their participation in the discussions regarding financing.

The response is that for the time being neither the EIB nor the AFD are mobilized within this group, and the question of the participation of local authorities in the governing bodies of this fund remains to be explored.

**Jean-Paul Colin** next wondered about the diversity of the funding organizations and, for the institutional ones, about their ability to judge the importance of a project, and hence the presence of experts in their commission.

**Maurice Bernard** explained that, in his opinion, *"the teams are large and complete, and the worries caused have more to do with divergent points of view with respect to reality."*

**Monica Scatasta** specified that *"most of the EIB experts are engineers with 15 to 20 years of experience in developing countries"*; as for **Jean-Louis Ville**, he explained that *"projects are evaluated jointly with specialists of each field."*

**Pierre Lefèvre** expressed interest in the seven projects presented, which are to receive the UfM's seal of approval. Is this label an important filter, a guarantee of quality for the funding providers?

The seven projects are on the list of projects submitted to the funding organizations by the UfM. The secretariat of the UfM will be in charge of promoting and presenting these projects to them. The road will be long, but a first step has been taken and the dialogue has been initiated for these seven projects.

**Walter Mazzitti, Chairman of the Steering Committee of the Sémidie**, emphasized the importance of knowing how to oversee the new relationship between the financiers, the countries and the European strategy. As for the identification of projects, Walter Mazzitti proposed that this conference be an occasion to set rules and implement a new relationship between the countries and the funding providers for the identification of projects.

**Joan Parpal** was very pleased about the quality of the session and pinpointed the absence of governance at regional level as the main obstacle to the effective progress of work.



## **Presentation of the contribution of local authorities to the water strategy of the Union for the Mediterranean**

### **Hachmi Kennou, Executive Director of the Mediterranean Water Institute.**

The contribution of local authorities, resulting from the work of the groups of local authorities mobilized within the steering committee of the conference, was distributed to the participants for amendments on the first day of the conference.

This contribution will be brought by United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) to the debate of the Water Ministers of the UfM, who will meet in spring 2010 in Madrid to adopt the Mediterranean strategy in the sector of water.

This contribution bears witness to the appropriation, by local and regional authorities, of issues surrounding water at the local level.

The main message to emerge from this discussion is the creation of a new synergy, and absolutely not of new financing mechanisms.

This contribution is in total synergy with the expectations and terms of reference set out at the UfM Ministerial Conference on Water that was held in Jordan in 2008. Much importance is placed on the Istanbul Water Consensus, a major step in the contribution process of local and regional authorities.

An amendment to the foreword was proposed and accepted: *"The local and regional authorities would like to see their projects taken into account within the framework of the UfM and to receive the institutional and financial support of the States and funding organizations."*

Also taken into account was the wish of **Jean-Paul Colin, Vice-Chairman of the Urban Community of Lyon**, to speak of "pooling" to express the initiation of synergy between local authorities of the Mediterranean countries on subjects in connection with water.

**Jean-Pierre Sabatier, Representative of the Mediterranean Water Institute**, specified that the *"consultative committees, mentioned in the draft contribution, exist more in major cities, in parallel with the water basin committees."* He would also like the link between the local authorities and the research institutes to be promoted, in order to separate them from the relationship with the State. This link, which is unusual, could be effective.



## Session 7 - Conclusions and Outlook...

Martine Vassal, Deputy Mayor of Marseille, summed up the catastrophic problems in connection with water: over a billion people deprived of drinking water, 2.5 billion without sanitation and 10 million deaths a year due to the absence of or the poor quality of water, half of which concern children. She proposed *"an international mobilization against this plague, in order to better manage, distribute and treat the resource."*

As a representative of the organizing city of the 6th Water Forum to be held in March 2012, she expressed her wish to already start working in collaboration with all the partners on its preparation and success. She observed that previous forums provided solutions to advance the cause of water, especially with respect to populations. For example, the last forum, which was held in Istanbul, was formalized by the Istanbul Water Consensus, a declaration by the local and regional authorities with the objective of bringing the infrastructures into line with the challenges faced.

The deputy mayor held that one of the main challenges for the stakeholders involved is to find financing and concrete solutions to spur change, as treating, purifying and maintaining water is an expensive undertaking.

A responsible role for the city and its elected officials on this question is especially important. The deputy mayor illustrated her remarks by presenting the City of Marseille as *"an example in water management, thanks to the quantity of equipment available to treat it."* She praised the virtues of Marseille, which she called *"the only major city to protect the Mediterranean and to have anticipated for years the potential river-related problems and propose its contribution to transnational cooperation in order to address drought and flooding issues with the population."*

Martine Vassal concluded her presentation by reiterating her wish to see solutions emerge from the 6<sup>th</sup> World Forum, so as to ensure the development of future generations.

**Martine Vassal, Deputy Mayor of Marseille for quality of life, public spaces, cleanliness, rainwater, parking and urban management.**



Jean-Paul Colin, Vice-President of Greater Lyon, thanked everyone again for the smooth running of the conference. He reminded the participants that Greater Lyon has shown its ability to manage the water cycle through its decentralized cooperation and by signing the Water Consensus. Greater Lyon would like to participate, alongside Marseille, in organizing the next forum.

The requests and needs have been numerous during the conference; he proposed that *"the local authorities bridge the gap between those seeking and those providing funds and create links to increase decentralized cooperation."*

The Vice-President ended his comments by recalling the importance of guaranteeing investments and reassuring the funding organizations, in order to ensure the durability of decentralized cooperation.

**Jean-Paul Colin, Vice-President in charge of water policy for Greater Lyon.**

Jean-Philippe Bayon explained his mission: working on the future as a representative of a regional authority. The States cannot manage everything, alone.

He raised the question of the disparity between the northern and southern countries of the Mediterranean, which is an issue to be considered with the help of the local powers. He added that the world is changing and that it is now polycentric, so it is crucial to get organized according to this new model, in order to fight climate change and inequalities and promote peace, development and stability.

*"The local powers have a role to play in the policies of the UfM, in order to make water a driver of development. The Rhône-Alpes region is a success story, because it dialogues with countries and over 1,500 jobs are connected to cooperation policies."*

Jean-Philippe Bayon ended his talk by recalling the importance of the local powers for the construction of a common future for both banks of the Mediterranean.

**Jean-Philippe Bayon, Vice-Chairman of the Rhône-Alpes region.**

Pierre Schapira mentioned the law initiated by Senator Oudin which enables local authorities to get involved in cooperation. In his opinion, it constitutes a genuine new source of financing for cooperation. He further underlined the necessity of taking into account the local authorities in the UfM, because they have relevant skill sets and know-how.

He proposed a four-point text for the contribution of local and regional authorities to the Water Strategy of the UfM: *"Public responsibility, local governance, the establishment of local consultative committees and the implementation of an operating agreement associating the central power, the local authorities and the financial and technical partners."* Pierre Schapira recalled the importance for the population to "buy into" a project: it is the key to the success of any initiative.

Furthermore, he qualified decentralized cooperation as a "powerful tool" and called for international solidarity. He concluded by saying he hoped to see the selected projects presented and financially supported by the co-presidency of the UfM.

**Pierre Schapira, representative of United Cities and Local Governments and Deputy Mayor in charge of International Relations and Francophone Affairs of the City of Paris.**



Underlining that “*promoting stability and peace in the Mediterranean is in the interest of all, and so sustainable water management is a priority*”, Marc Strauss explored the geopolitical impact of this question. He added that the objectives of the UfM are not only to meet people's expectations, but also to translate projects into action. The Mediterranean Water Strategy is being drafted: it will trace the path to the certification of concrete projects and should facilitate their financing. This is why he emphasized the value of the contribution of local and regional authorities.

Marc Strauss also wanted to see a reversal of the tendency to use resources irresponsibly. “*In addition to the extensive use of water for demographic, economic, agricultural and tourism purposes, there is climate change, which is threatening its availability. This means that countries must cope with this situation by adopting policies to improve it, as the ministers did in Jordan in 2008 by creating a new water culture, based on protecting the quality and finding a balance between supply and demand.*”

The diplomatic advisor continued by recalling the implementation of the “framework water directive”, adopted by the European Union in 2000, with the principal objective of managing the resource in a sustainable manner, by 2015. Furthermore, he informed the participants that more than 100 projects have already been identified, aiming to adapt to climate change, the search for a balance between supply and demand for water, the protection and rehabilitation of natural environments and the clean-up of the Mediterranean.

In conclusion, Marc Strauss ensured the audience that “*the French co-presidency of the UfM will respond to their contributions.*”

**Marc Strauss, diplomatic advisor to the French Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and the Sea, apologized for the absence of Mr. Jean-Louis Borloo.**

UNION POUR  
LA MÉDITERRANÉE  
الاتحاد من أجل المتوسط  
UNION FOR  
THE MEDITERRANEAN

CONTRIBUTION DES AUTORITÉS LOCALES ET RÉGIONALES  
À LA STRATÉGIE POUR L'EAU DE L'UNION POUR LA MÉDITERRANÉE  
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مساهمة السلطات المحلية و الإقليمية  
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TO THE WATER STRATEGY OF THE UNION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN  
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All information related to the conference can be found at:  
[www.ufm-water.net](http://www.ufm-water.net)

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