

Coordination Committee Seminar Rabat – 6-7 July 2004

CONCLUSIONS

(2004-07-07)

The 4th meeting of EMWIS Coordination Committee took place in Rabat on 6 and 7 July 2004 under the presidency of Morocco and vice-presidency of Malta. 12 National Focal Points –NFP- were represented (Cyprus, Egypt, France, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey). Due to last minutes constraints the representatives from the European Commission EuropeAid Coordination Office, the Algerian and Palestinian NFP were unable to attend the meeting. The meeting was also attended by the President of EMWIS Steering Committee and representatives of the organisation members of the EMWIS Technical Unit (CEDEX, OIEau and SOGESID).

After the welcome address by the Coordination Committee President Mr. ZEROUALI and by the Steering Committee President Dr. Juan CANOVAS, the [conclusions](#) of the last Steering Committee meeting held in Malta last may were presented to the participants. The four themes selected in Malta for preparing synthesis of concrete field experiences, were presented in more details. The aim is to get significant results on at least 2 of them for the meeting of the Euro-Med Water Directors in early 2005:

- Use of non-conventional water resources (theme of the Turin Action Plan)
- EU Water Framework Directive and the Mediterranean Partner Countries: identification of interest and transfers of success cases of the EU Water Framework Directive –WFD- implementation in EU countries to the Mediterranean Partners Countries –MPC-
- Irrigation water management (theme of the Turin Action Plan)
- Integrated management of local drinking water supply, sanitation and sewage (theme of the Turin Action Plan)

An extensive discussion took place on the interest of the WFD for the MPC, it was felt that the approach and guidelines resulting from some working groups of the WFD could be beneficial for the Med partners such as: reporting and water information systems, participatory approaches, cost recovery, status of water bodies and management plans, etc. It was also suggested that NFP could publish the sustainable development indicators related to water and their calculation methods to evaluate commonalities and gaps with the indicators foreseen by the WFD.

The current status of EMWIS and its [work programme for the period December 2003 – November 2006](#) was discussed. This programme is based on the strategic plan adopted by the Euro-Med water directors in Madrid in November 2001 and on the technical evaluation of the Phase I contract (1999-2002). It was reminded that the evaluators highlighted that EMWIS should support the development of National Water Information Systems, should link



with the water related initiatives in the Med area and should foster the ownership of the system in each country.

The results from the survey carried out among the NFP were presented. On the basis of the 14 replies received, this survey gave an overall picture on NFP needs and current problems. It also introduced the afternoon round-table on self-assessment. After the discussions, it was decided that the NFP will have the opportunity to review their replies till the end of July 2004.

During the roundtable, Cyprus, Italy, Morocco, Jordan and Tunisia demonstrated the current development of their web sites, showing an impressive content, usually collected thanks to collaborations with other national water institutions. Each NFP had the opportunity to express his own view on his status, problems and plans. Some common issues have been pointed out:

- Harmonizing the wording used on the EMWIS web sites for the navigation and common presentation in Arabic, English and French (e.g. translation of EMWIS in Arabic)
- Re-use of the same content for publishing on different web sites while minimizing the updating process (e.g. Ministry and EMWIS national web sites)
- Multilingual water terminology

The last session of the first meeting day was dedicated to the discussion on the preparation of NFP annual work-programs and indicators to monitor progress. The Technical Unit will send a template to the NFP to help them to prepare their own work-program and indicators.

The concept of feasibility study of National Water Information Systems was presented and debated. The objective is to study the technical, economical feasibility of setting up a national information system in each MPC responding to national requirements while maintaining the possibility to establish the international exchange of selected parcels of information defined by the countries themselves. It was agreed that:

- A preliminary step for the definition of the scope of each national study will be included in terms of reference for the experts
- The draft terms of references will be circulated among the NFP for comments
- Before publishing the terms of references and selecting the experts, the approval of the water Director of each country will be required, especially to finalize the list of countries to be studied. A copy of the letter sent to the Water Director together with the terms of references will be also sent to the NFP.

The concepts for the revision of the EMWIS technical architecture were introduced with a demonstration of a prototype system for multilingual content management and content sharing. This presentation was followed by a review of common metadata that could be used for EMWIS. These metadata will have to be agreed by the NFP to facilitate the exchange of information.

On the basis of survey results and discussions, the following themes have been decided for NFP good practices case studies:

- Practical organization to build a National Water Information System and to organise the information network with the different partners,
- Promotion of a National Water Information System,
- Multilateral water information systems based on the experiences coming from initiatives such as WaterNet and [EXACT](#)

- Monitoring the developments of an EMWIS NFP

In terms of common training seminars for the NFP staff members it was decided to organise:

- a seminar for the data managers at the end of 2004 focusing on: the definition of common metadata, Content classification/organisation and thesaurus, Content production management and content quality
- a seminar for the ICT managers early 2005 focusing on: Open web architecture based on standards of XML suite, XML databases, Web services and the synchronisation of NFPs dairy of events as an application example.

The decision on the last training seminar to be held in 2006 will be taken at the next coordination committee meeting.

The direct financial aid will be targeted to the needs and requirements expressed by the NFP from MPC themselves. A first outline of the aid has been discussed on the basis of the replies to the NFP survey. The financial aid will be linked to the workprogramme and monitoring indicators of each NFP. This aid will cover:

- Investment costs (up to € 10 000)
- Web site translation costs (up to € 8 000)
- Running costs (services such as: promotion, local training, local technical assistance - up to € 10 000 per year)

According to the EC rules, the investment costs (hardware, software and related services) planned in the EMWIS contract are subject to an international call for tenders. This procedure may last up to 6 months and must be launched at the same time for all the NFP. In order to save time, the NFP will be invited to provide the necessary information as very late in early September. A template document will be sent by the EMWIS Technical Unit by the end of July 2004 to guide the NFP when necessary.

The Technical Unit will also provide the NFP with the rules related to local consultation procedures for the provision of services (e.g. local technical assistance, printing leaflet, etc.) by the end of July.

The last session was dedicated to an introduction to the Euro-Mediterranean regional programme for local water management –[MEDA-Water](#)- and a presentation of ADIRA (Autonomous desalination system concepts for sea water and brackish water in rural areas with renewable energies), one of the nine projects supported by this programme.

Finally, Mr. Juan CANOVAS thanked the Moroccan Authorities for their welcome, all the National Focal Points for their work and active participation. Mr. ZEROUALI closed the meeting by reminding the main taken decisions.

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