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## **Conclusions of the 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Med EUWI Working Group**

Monday, 17 January 2005  
09:00 – 13:00 am

Premises of the Greek Permanent Representation to the EU  
35 square de Meeus, 7th floor  
1000 Brussels  
(Metro: Trône/Troon)

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### **Introduction**

The meeting was opened by the representative of Greece, Lead Country of the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative Working Group (MED EUWI WG) that presented the Meeting's objective and Agenda (**Annex I**).

The purpose of the 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the MED EUWI WG was

- to inform Mediterranean partners on the latest developments and progress achieved within the MED EUWI,
- inform new partners on the aims and objectives of the overall EUWI and the MED EUWI in particular,
- present and seek agreement on the Work Programme designed for the MED EUWI for 2005,
- discuss and agree on the Organisational Framework and Modalities of the MED EUWI as well as on its Modus Operandi from now on,
- exchange information on the immediate next steps and priorities
- identify opportunities for strengthening synergies between MED EUWI and other regionally led processes and initiatives.

Some 25 participants (**Annex II**) from Partner Countries, Mediterranean Organisations and Networks, EC DGs and the EIB attended the Meeting.

### **The EU Water Initiative: Brief overview and current stage**

The EC/DG ENV representative presented the overall aims, objectives and progress of the EU Water Initiative with special emphasis on the overall 'Organizational Framework and Modalities' document as agreed and finalized in July 2004 (final version 9.7.04). Clarifications were provided to participants on the role of the regional Working Groups and the participation of regional and national partners in the context of the overall EUWI as well as on the inter-linkages between the cross-cutting Working Groups, the EUWI Multi-stakeholder Forum, the Steering Group, the EUWI Secretariat etc.

### **The Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative: Brief overview on scope, organization, activities up to now, next steps**

The MED EUWI Secretariat presented the background, scope and basic elements and activities up to now of the MED EUWI. Presentation stressed that the MED EUWI gives emphasis on regional priorities, according to the needs and strategies defined by partner countries, regional and local stakeholders and actors actively engaged in the process. Presentation also made reference to the Focus Themes of the MED EUWI (i.e. (a) water supply and sanitation, with emphasis on the poorest part of the societies, (b) Integrated

water resources management, with emphasis on the management of transboundary water bodies, (c) water, food and environment interaction, with emphasis on fragile ecosystems and (d) Non-conventional water resources) as well as to its cross cutting Themes (i.e. technology transfer, capacity building and the promotion of education on water). The objectives of the MED EUWI are those of the EUWI but additional themes introduced in the MED EUWI reflect Med partner countries particular needs and requests, .

The presentation also made special reference to the Activity Plan 2004 -2006 of the MED EUWI that has been developed and finalized based on comments from partners, in spring 2004, describing the type of interventions to be undertaken, also taking into account areas of possible interest of donors. The Activity Plan builds on a modular approach containing 9 key/programmatic Objectives [4 thematic (1-4) and 5 horizontal (5-9)] with specific outputs under each objective. Objectives include initiation of programmes on (1) water supply and sanitation, with emphasis on the poorest part of the societies, (2) IWRM to support national and transboundary IWRM plans, (3) sustainable water use in agriculture and its integrated management for sensitive ecosystems, (4) non-conventional water resources, as well as, (5) strengthen underlying institutions and capacity building, (6) improve coordination between the actors involved in water resources management at country level, (7) enhance funding for supply, management and development of water resources and sanitation, (8) improve transfer of technology and the use of existing and new scientific knowledge to achieve water related MDGs and (9) promote education on water issues. The specific Outputs / Actions under each Objective of the Activity Plan were also described in detail so as to make concrete links with the proposed activities to be undertaken in 2005.

Following the presentation made by the MED EUWI Secretariat, the Commission stressed the fact that some Balkan countries covered by the MED EUWI (i.e. Bulgaria, Romania) have currently the status of 'acceding countries to the EU', a fact that should be taken into account when designing the funding priorities and needs under the MED EUWI. Moreover, North African countries participate in both the Mediterranean and the African Component of the EUWI, a fact that should result in creating additional benefits for these countries. Linkages have to be developed between the two geographical components to avoid overlapping or gaps.

The representative from Morocco stressed that more effort should be attained on effectively integrating MED EUWI scope with the Barcelona Process, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the New EU Neighborhood and Partnership Initiative (to start in 2007) objectives.

### **The Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative: Work Programme 2005**

The MED EUWI Secretariat presented in brief the MED EUWI Draft Work Programme for 2005 (document v.12 January 2005). The Work Programme 2005 is linked to the three-year MED EUWI Activity Plan, specifying activities that will be implemented or launched in 2005. It focuses on eight (8) specific Activities corresponding to five (5) Programmatic Objectives, out of the overall nine (9) Objectives elaborated in the Activity Plan. The identification of the priority Programmatic Objectives and the related Activities suggested in the draft Work Programme 2005 was made based on the defined MED EUWI priorities, as they are presented in the Activity Plan as well as on consultations held in 2004 with various stakeholders in the EU and the Mediterranean (e.g. EU and partner countries; EU Commission services, including DG ENV, AIDCO and RES; EU and non-EU funding institutions; and water stakeholders). The Activities included in the 2005 Work Programme are divided in Regional (ACT-2005-1 to ACT-2005-6) and National (ACT-2005-7 to ACT-2005-8) Activities. The 2005 Work Programme, includes, apart from a detailed description of each project/Activity to be undertaken, reference to the partners involved as well as a financial breakdown per Activity with the classification of funds 'secured', 'tentative' or 'under negotiation'. It was also mentioned that ToR have already been developed for four (4) Activities.

Following the presentation, some of the key issues raised and discussed can be summed up as follows:

- ACT-2005-4 on assessing the financial requirements to meet MDGs/WSSD targets related to WSS in the South & East Mediterranean and Southeast Europe and ACT-2005-7 on carrying out country dialogues for prioritization of national needs related to water ODA and identification of existing gaps, should be regarded and carried out jointly. The African Component of the EUWI has already commenced the process of country dialogues, therefore, strong links between the respective work should be developed since the procedure for country dialogues and for developing national Roadmaps should be coherent and shared throughout all the Regional Components of the EUWI. In particular, with regard to Egypt which is one of the countries nominated by AMCOW, a strong coordination has to be sought between the African component and the MED one. The country dialogue process should be a requirement by partner countries themselves. Contacts with the African Water supply and Sanitation Working Group leader( NL) will be developed in this respect.

- Background work has already been done or is underway in North Africa on IWRM (re: ACT-2005-1, ACT-2005-5), by institutes like the Arab Water Council / UNDP / CEDARE, World Bank, GWP-Med/CEDARE and therefore activities to be undertaken under the MED EUWI in 2005 should be linked to that. Work should be carried out in collaboration with NAMCOW.

- Effort should be made by the Component to support capacity building activities on shared waters also in the S.E. Mediterranean countries rather than only in S.E. Europe (ACT-2005-3) since to a large extent surface and underground waters are shared in S.E Mediterranean.

- There is need to assist countries in their national processes for implementing IWRM plans and not only in the development of such plans. MED EUWI should play a facilitator's role by linking partner countries with available funding (including from the EU Commission and EU Member States) for implementation of national IWRM plans.

- Political commitment for MED EUWI has been expressed several times in various high-level fora and meetings that embraced and adopted the objectives of the MED EUWI. However, implementation of specific Activities in 2005 and determination of key priorities for the region will require further and more targeted political support that should be sought as appropriate. Moreover, effective linking of MED EUWI with the New EU Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI), that will start in 2007 as well as with the Barcelona process is required. Political support is also required when identifying the countries to commence the country dialogue process.

- Agricultural issues have to be further promoted within the scope and Activities of the MED EUWI as well as in the overall EU policies; such activities should be included in the MED EUWI 2005 Work Programme.

- All proposed Activities for 2005 are closely interlinked. However, the Work Programme 2005 document should better demonstrate their operational links that might not be always readily visible due to their current presentation responding to the potential donor for each Activity. Due to the limited available financial resources for supporting the Activities of the MED EUWI, there is need to enhance and further promote synergies between the proposed Activities for 2005 as well as with the Activities implemented under other EUWI Components (e.g. country dialogues in North Africa).

### **Water Framework Directive / EU Water Initiative “Joint Process”**

EU Commission's representative presented the objectives, structure, links with the CIS process of the WFD and the MED EUWI as well as progress to date of the Joint WFD/EUWI that was launched for the MED Region during the Water Director's Meeting in June 2004.

Presentation gave emphasis on the outcomes of the WFD/EUWI Meeting during the 2004 Stockholm Water Week and the Regional-Med Workshop the took place in Brindisi (September 2004) as well as on the structure, objectives and work done under the 3 thematic Working Groups of the Joint Process (i.e. (a) Water scarcity, (b) Groundwater, (c) Linking rural development with water management). Presentation also made reference to the specific roles that could be undertaken by several Med partners/Networks and Organisations (e.g. MENBO to assist organization of an annual regional workshop on the JP, EMWIS to undertake activities on information exchange etc.) as well as to the possible financial and human support opportunities for the JP (e.g. Research projects, MEDA projects, LIFE Third Countries projects, ENPI from 2007, etc.). The Euro-Med Water Directors' Forum that will convene in November 2005 was also identified as a potential political body to carry the process forward and provide political backing.

A request was made to participants from Partner Countries and Organisations for nominating interested representatives for participating in the 3 WGs under the JP. Regarding the 'Linking rural development with water management' WG in particular, which is being led by the JRC, clarifications were given on the fact that it focuses on technical solution rather than on policies.

Finally, it was suggested that the work under the JP should be fully reflected in the 2005 MED EUWI Work Programme, as a specific Activity with a specific budget, partners involved etc.

### **Organisational issues and modalities of the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative, mechanisms to enhance partners' interest and participation at the Mediterranean Component**

The lead country – Greece, presented in detail the respective document entitled 'MED EUWI Organizational Framework and Modalities' (version 13 January 2005). The document is building on and integrating: the organizational framework of the overall EUWI, the practices and procedures followed so far by the MED EUWI aiming at having an open/multistakeholder process as possible, the practices and experience followed by other Components as well as the particularities of the Mediterranean Region where many related regionally led processes and initiatives are in place. The document aims to consolidate the organisational setting of the MED EUWI, creating an effective, accountable, realistic, interactive, transparent and clear framework. The structure will be progressively further evolved and concritised as experience is gained and new needs emerge. The responsibilities and interlinkages between the key units of the organizational scheme of the MED EUWI were presented in detail, i.e. (a) the advisory **Multistakeholder Forum**, (b) the guiding/operational/decision-making MED **Working Group** restricted in size to achieve effectiveness in function, (c) the **lead country** (Greece) chairing the WG and the 2 **co-chairs** (one from SE Europe and one from SE Med) with a role of focal points, and (d) the Secretariat of the MED EUWI (GWP-Mediterranean). A **higher political** level is envisaged, to secure political support and steering for the whole process.

The main comments raised on the approach presented could be summed up as follows:

- The organizational structure of the MED EUWI needs to be further elaborated and more clearly articulated, aiming at increased coherence, consistency, effectiveness, visibility and interaction with other important regional processes.
- There is a need to identify more concretely the criteria for membership to the WG so that participation is standardised and accountability of participants is increased.

## **Next steps for the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative**

The lead country – Greece, presented the key immediate priorities and the next steps envisaged for the promotion of the MED EUWI and implementation of specific, on-the-ground, horizontal and supplementary activities for the MED EUWI in 2005:

- to elaborate further the modalities of the MED EUWI,
- to screen needs and explore ways for mobilizing a new ad-hoc political platform/process or linking with an on-going regional process for carrying the MED EUWI forward concerning issues of political guidance, endorsements and political visibility.
- to further promote awareness and establish synergies for the development of MED EUWI within EU, regional and International Institutions, Member States and the EU Commission.
- to try begin the implementation of Activities under the MED EUWI 2005 Work Programme as early as possible with the active involvement of EU and non-EU partners, including international donors and Agencies, aiming at converging matching funds and concerted actions taken by other donors, institutions and partners.

The key points raised during the discussion that followed include:

- There was a general consensus that the abovementioned points actually reflect the true priorities for the MED EUWI at the moment. These priorities should be incorporated in a constructive framework in order to achieve greater effectiveness. In this context, and since 2005 is the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Barcelona Convention, there is need to reinforce synergies between MED EUWI and Barcelona, bringing water higher in its Agenda. There is also need to strengthen the synergies between the Barcelona Convention and the Barcelona Process.
- Lead country announced that possibilities are being explored together with UNEP/MAP for hosting the annual MCSD Meeting at Ministerial level in Athens (mid June 2005). This occasion presents a good opportunity for holding the next MED EUWI Working Group Meeting (5<sup>th</sup> MED EUWI WG) in Athens in mid June, back-to-back with MCSD. The fact that during this forthcoming MCSD Meeting, the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development will be discussed represents an excellent opportunity to reinforce the synergies between MED EUWI and the water-related work under MCSD. Lead country and MED EUWI Secretariat stressed that efforts have already been made in order to make concrete links and reference to the MED EUWI within the MSSD.
- Care should be taken to base activities about to be launched under the MED EUWI on existing partnerships and initiatives and build on work that has already been undertaken by partner countries and organisations to avoid duplication.
- More work is required in terms of political support for developing the MED EUWI further; integration of the MED EUWI objectives in regional sectoral policies is still lagging behind also due to the fact that water is not a target sector as such in the EUC/AIDCO programme and Agenda. Therefore, and in order to achieve our objectives, water should be either closer linked to the regional agenda for sustainable development or to sectoral regional policies e.g. agriculture. However, as the MED EUWI is further developed through tangible results and credibility and visibility are progressively increased, the water sector will eventually receive greater impetus.
- The Mediterranean region is rich in knowledge, initiatives and experience; therefore the emerging opportunities are important. In this context, the MED EUWI could represent a starting point for stimulating the designing of national strategies and programming either on sustainable development with water as an integrated element or with water as a particular sector.

- In view of the New European Neighbourhood and Partnership Initiative, under the next financial perspectives, that will start in 2007, efforts should be made to further integrate and utilise within it the MED EUWI which represents a process that could contribute to the identification of concrete regional and national priorities to be taken into account during the design phase.

### **Wrap - up**

The main conclusions that have emerged from the meeting, as summed up by the MED EUWI Secretariat, are as follows:

- General agreement was reached on the proposed MED EUWI 2005 Work Programme. Activities to be implemented have to build on existing and on-going work undertaken by partners so that several 'baseline assessments' to be launched in 2005 are in fact in-depth assessments.

- More work needs to be done on capacity building for transboundary waters, not only in countries of SE Europe but also in SE Mediterranean countries.

- Reflect the work undertaken in the context of the Joint WFD/EUWI Process in the MED EUWI's 2005 Work Programme.

- General agreement was reached on the Organisational Framework and Structure of the MED EUWI. Future work should focus on concretising this structure further. Clear criteria for membership in the MED EUWI Working Group to increase accountability of participants should be developed.

- There is need to increase the visibility of the work undertaken under the MED EUWI and make it more understandable to partners.

- Further work needs to be carried out in order to mobilize an adequate political structure that will provide to the MED EUWI's work increased visibility and support. In this context, explore further the possibilities for the Euro-Mediterranean Water Directors Forum as a potential structure for providing to the MED EUWI the required political backing.

- Strengthen further the collaboration and synergies between the Barcelona Convention, the MCSD and the Euro-Mediterranean partnership with the MED EUWI.

- Some impediments are faced since water does not represent a target sector as such within DG RELEX programme and agenda. However and aiming to benefit from emerging opportunity, there is urgent need to ensure that specific regional and national priorities on water will be incorporated in the European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument in view of its adoption in 2007; the MED EUWI could play an important role in assisting the identification of such priorities.

- There is need to strengthen further the connections between the MED EUWI and agriculture.

- Next meeting of the MED EUWI Working Group will possibly take place in Athens, in June 2005.

## 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Med EUWI Working Group

Monday, 17 January 2005  
09:00 – 13:00 am

Premises of the Greek Permanent Representation to the EU  
35 square de Meeus, 7th floor  
1000 Brussels  
(Metro: Trône/Troon)

### **AGENDA**

1. The EU Water Initiative: Brief overview and current stage  
*Presentation by: EU Commission*
2. The Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative: Brief overview on scope, organization, activities up to now, next steps  
*Presentation by: Greece, MED EUWI Lead Country*
3. The Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative: Work Programme 2005  
*Presentation by: MED EUWI Secretariat*
4. Water Framework Directive / EU Water Initiative “Joint Process”  
*Presentation by: EU Commission*
5. Organisational issues and modalities of the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative, mechanisms to enhance partners’ interest and participation at the Mediterranean Component  
*Presentation by: Greece, MED EUWI Lead Country*
6. Next steps for the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative
7. Next Meeting
8. Any Other Business

## 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Mediterranean EUWI Working Group

Monday, 17 January 2005  
09:00 – 13:00 am

Premises of the Greek Permanent Representation to the EU  
35 square de Meeus, 7th floor  
1000 Brussels

### List of Participants

	Name	Organisation-Country	Position	Address	Tel - Fax	e-mail
<i>Partner Countries</i>						
1.	Mohamed AIT-KADI	General Council for Agricultural Development, Ministry of Agriculture, Morocco	President	BP 6450, Rabat-Institute, Rabat, Morocco	T : +212 37563234 F : +212 37563226	<a href="mailto:maitkadi@menara.ma">maitkadi@menara.ma</a> <a href="mailto:cgda2@menara.ma">cgda2@menara.ma</a>
2.	Fadi COMAIR	Ministry of Energy and Water, Lebanon	Director General	RE du Fleuce de Beyrouth, Lebanon	T : + 961 1 565013 F : + 961 1 576666	<a href="mailto:gdmher@inco.com.lb">gdmher@inco.com.lb</a> <a href="mailto:gdher@terra.net.lb">gdher@terra.net.lb</a>
3.	Mahmoud Hassan MAHMOUD	Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation (MWRI), Egypt	Director of the National Water resources Plan Project	Ministry of Water Resources and irrigation, Imbaba, Giza, Egypt	T&F: +202 544949192 Mob: +20 10 1438142	<a href="mailto:maly1@hotmail.com">maly1@hotmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:NWRP1@mwri.gov.eg">NWRP1@mwri.gov.eg</a>



<i>Networks – Mediterranean Organisations</i>						
4.	Michel SOULIE	Agropolis/Verseau, Head of ISIIM/ MEDA Project	Water Officer Head of Project	Agropolis, Av. Agropolis 34394 Mountpolieu, Cedex 5, France	T: +33 4 67047552 F: +33 467612940	<a href="mailto:soulie@agropolis.fr">soulie@agropolis.fr</a>
5.	Khaled ABUZEID	CEDARE	Water Program Manager	2 El Hegaz st., Heliopolis, Cairo, Egypt	T: +202 4513921/2/3/4 F: +202 4513918	<a href="mailto:kabuzeid@cedare.org">kabuzeid@cedare.org</a>
6.	Eric MINO	SEMIDE / EMWIS	Coordinator	BP 23, 06901 Sophia Antipolis, France	T: +33 4 92942290 F: +33 4 92942235	<a href="mailto:e.mino@semide.org">e.mino@semide.org</a>
7.	Spyros KOUVELIS	MEDWET	Coordinator	Lambraki 1, Kifissia 145 61, Greece	T: +30 210 8089270	<a href="mailto:kouvelis@medwet.org">kouvelis@medwet.org</a>
8.	Angel TUNON	Euromediterranean Irrigators Community (EIC)	Technical Department	P. Castellana M4, 28046 Madrid, Spain	T: +34 91 5636318 F: +34 91 5636253	<a href="mailto:atunon@fenacore.org">atunon@fenacore.org</a>
9.	Chris TYDEMAN	WWF International	Consultant	c/o WWF Meditterraen Office Rome, Italy	T : +44 1483 548429	<a href="mailto:ctydeman@lineone.net">ctydeman@lineone.net</a>
10.	Christophe BROSSE	pS-Eau	Charge de mission	s/c CARL, Rue du Courreau, 34 380 Viols-le-Fort, France	T : 33 4 67 556118 F : +33 4 67 55 7437	<a href="mailto:MED@PSEAU.ORG">MED@PSEAU.ORG</a>
11.	Hachmi KENNOU	Mediterranean Water Institute	Executive Director	Atrium 10.3., Les Docks, 10 Place de la Joliette, 13002 Marseille, France	T : +33 491598777 F : +33 491598778	<a href="mailto:info@ime-eau.org">info@ime-eau.org</a>

12.	Mohamed BLINDA	Plan Bleu / MAP	Programme Officer « Water and Sustainable Development»	15, rue Beethoven, Sophia Antipolis, F – 06560, Valtonne, France	T: +33 492387130/49 F: +33 492387131	<a href="mailto:mblinda@planbleu.org">mblinda@planbleu.org</a>
13.	Elisa VARGAS	MENBO-REMOC, Mediterranean Network of Basin Organisations	Programme Officer	Avda. Blasco, Ibanez 48, 5 46010 Valencia, Spain	T: +34 96 3938942 F: +34 96 3938801	<a href="mailto:remoc1@remoc.org">remoc1@remoc.org</a> <a href="mailto:elisa.vargas@chj.mma.es">elisa.vargas@chj.mma.es</a>
<i>European Investment Bank</i>						
14.	Eckart TRONNIER	EIB	Deputy Economic Advisor, Projects Directorate	100, blv Konrad Adenauer, L-2950 Luxembourg	T: +352 43792719 F: +352 437704	<a href="mailto:e.tronnier@eib.org">e.tronnier@eib.org</a>
<i>EU Commission</i>						
15.	Patrick MURPHY	EC DG ENV/D2	EUWI Secretariat	BU9-3/147, Brussels, Belgium	T: +32 2 299 8339	<a href="mailto:patrick.murphy@cec.eu.int">patrick.murphy@cec.eu.int</a>
16.	Sylvie DETOC	EC DG ENV/D2	EUWI Secretariat	Beaulieu, BU9, 3-132, Brussels, Belgium	T: +32 2 295 1176	<a href="mailto:sylvie.detoc@cec.eu.int">sylvie.detoc@cec.eu.int</a>
17.	Francois DELCUEILLERIE	EU DG ENV Unit E3	Administrator	Av. de Beaulieu, Brussels, Belgium	T : +32 22 99 2349	<a href="mailto:francois.delcueillerie@cec.eu.int">francois.delcueillerie@cec.eu.int</a>
18.	Martin WALSH	EC DG DEV B/5	EUWI Secretariat	Rue de Geneve 12, Evere, Brussels, Belgium	T: +32 2 2988625	<a href="mailto:martin.walsh@cec.eu.int">martin.walsh@cec.eu.int</a>
19.	Jean Marc RIEGEL	EC, DG Europe Aid (AIDCO/B/2)	Head of Section, Environment, Energy	54, Joseph II, Brussels, Belgium	T: +32 2 2990799	<a href="mailto:Jean-Marc.Riegel@cec.eu.int">Jean-Marc.Riegel@cec.eu.int</a>

20.	Murray BIEDLER	Europe Aid B/2	Program Coordinator	225/4, J-54 Rue Joseph II, Brussels, Belgium	T: +32 2 2987999	<a href="mailto:murray.biedler@cec.eu.int">murray.biedler@cec.eu.int</a>
21.	Yrjo MAKELA	EC, DG RELEX (European Neighbourhood Policy)	Administrator, Environment	CHAR 4/221, Brussels, Belgium	T: +32 2 2991729	<a href="mailto:Yrjo.Makela@cec.eu.int">Yrjo.Makela@cec.eu.int</a>
22.	Monika SZMIGIELSKA	DG RELEX, ENP Sector, Coordination Unit D2	Stagiaire	CHAR 4/247, Brussels, Belgium		
<i>Secretariat MED EUWI</i>						
23.	Micheal SKOULLOS	GWP-Med MIO-ECSDE	Chair	c/o MIO-ECSDE 12, Kyrristou str., 10556 Athens, Greece	T: +30210 3247490, +30 210 3247267 F: +30210 3317127	<a href="mailto:secretariat@gwpmed.org">secretariat@gwpmed.org</a>
24.	Vangelis CONSTANTIANOS	GWP-Med	Executive Secretary	c/o MIO-ECSDE 12, Kyrristou str., 10556 Athens, Greece	T: +30210 3247490, +30 210 3247267 F: +30210 3317127	<a href="mailto:secretariat@gwpmed.org">secretariat@gwpmed.org</a>
<i>Greece – MED EUWI Leader</i>						
25.	Maria PEPPA	Hellenic Ministry for the Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works	Head, Department of International Relations and EU Affairs	15, Amaliados str., 115 23, Athens, Greece	T: +30 210 6411717 F: +30 210 6434470	<a href="mailto:m.peppa@tmeok.minenv.gr">m.peppa@tmeok.minenv.gr</a>
26.	Maria PAPAIOANNOU	Hellenic Ministry for the Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works	Department of International Relations and EU Affairs	15, Amaliados str., 115 23, Athens, Greece	T: +30 210 6465762 F: +30 210 6434470	<a href="mailto:m.papaioannou@minenv.gr">m.papaioannou@minenv.gr</a>