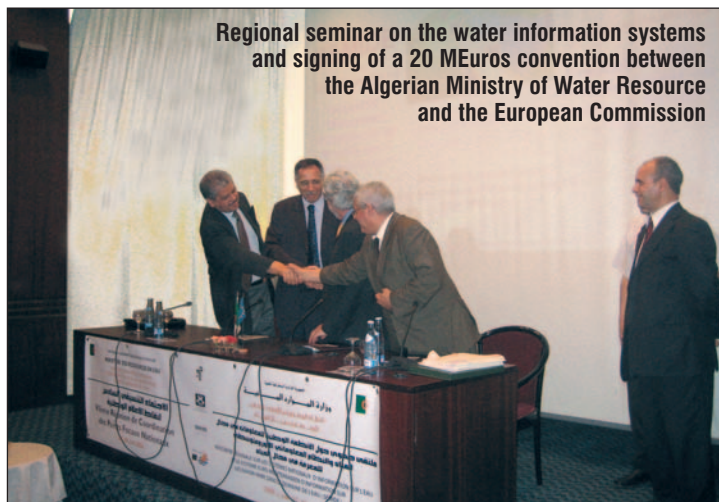


The Mediterranean

EMWIS: 20 National Focal Points exch



Operational since the end of 1999, the Euro-Mediterranean Water Information System - EMWIS - is an essential tool for dialogue and institutional exchange between the concerned Countries of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership. It fits in with the decisions made by the Ministers at the Conferences of Marseilles (1996)

and Turin (1999) on local water management.

The significance of the completed work was underlined by the Partnership Countries, which also reaffirmed their will to continue cooperating on the bases already defined during the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Athens in November 2006.

PREPARATION OF THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON WATER IN 2008

The Partner Countries and the European Commission agreed that convening a Ministerial Conference during the European Union French Presidency, in October 2008 in Amman, Jordan, was necessary to start again regional cooperation in the water sector.

EMWIS is preparing a contribution to this conference in the form of an assessment of and prospects for cooperation in the Mediterranean water sector for better coordinating all the initiatives for real effectiveness.

SYNTHESIS AND TRANSFER OF KNOWLEDGE

Three topics are being developed by working groups initiated with the **Water Framework Directive and Med-EUWI Joint Process** (Mediterranean component of the European Water Initiative):

- ◆ **Wastewater reuse,**
- ◆ **Drought and water scarcity,**
- ◆ **Monitoring networks.**

The first results of this work were presented to the Euro-Med Water Directors during their meeting on 10 and 11 December 2007 in Bled (Slovenia).

A WEB PORTAL IN FULL EXPANSION

One year after its launching, the new international portal of **EMWIS** receives about 50,000 monthly visits on the average: about 1,000 news and more than 500 events were published in 2007.

Its thesaurus on water is now available in **5 languages** (Arabic, English, Spanish, French and Italian).

The **electronic flash** (e-Flash) is sent every month to more than 14,000 readers in Arabic, English and French. It not only allows incorporating the information provided by the NFPs and various topical websites, but also providing flows of information in real time for other websites (e.g. Alliance for water monitoring, INBO, etc.).

It is a reference media for water information in the Euro-Mediterranean area and a collaborative working tool for the working groups of the WFD/Med-EUWI Joint Process.

Thanks to a toolbox based on free software, which enables to generate very powerful Web portals in a simple way, Jordan launched its new bilingual (English-Arabic) **EMWIS** portal in May 2007, in cooperation with the main national stakeholders.

SEMIDE EMWIS

The screenshot shows the EMWIS website interface. The main heading is "The 4th Euromed & South-East European Water Directors conference, Bled (Slovenia), 10-11 December 2007". Below this, there are links to "EMWIS National information seminar in Tunisia", "EMWIS Flash N°54-55, December 2007- January 2008", "EMWIS Newsletter N°4, 2007", and "The 5th World Water Forum, Istanbul (Turkey), 15 - 22 March 2009". A map of the Mediterranean region is displayed, with several computer icons indicating focal points. On the right side, there is an "EVENTS CALENDAR" for January 2008 and a list of "UPCOMING EVENTS" including "SIFP Polluter 2008: International Exhibition of Equipment and services for Water", "IRWa Project Conference: Challenges for Irrigation Water Management", "The First African Water Week (AWW-1): 'Accelerating the Water Security for Socio-Economic Development of Africa'", "3rd International Conference on Managing Shared Aquifer Resources in Africa", "SPI-Water workshop", "Knowledge Management for Decision Makers in the Water Sector", and "La 8ème édition HYDROTOP".

The Mediterranean

change their information on water

NATIONAL WATER INFORMATION SYSTEMS

At the end of 2007, **EMWIS** had **16 national websites** with the launching of the Egyptian website.

The National Focal Points (NFPs) do not spare their efforts to revise their site and produce contents useful for the national stakeholders of the water sector. The know-how acquired by Algeria, Spain and France in the technical and organizational implementation of their **National Water Information Systems** enables to facilitate the actions of the other countries.

TOWARDS THE CREATION OF A MEDITERRANEAN WATER INFORMATION MECHANISM

According to the mandate given to **EMWIS** by the Euro-Mediterranean Ministers during the Turin Conference on Local Water Management, the Euro-Mediterranean Water Directors agreed to study, with the voluntary countries, the feasibility of "**a Water Information Mechanism in the Mediterranean**".

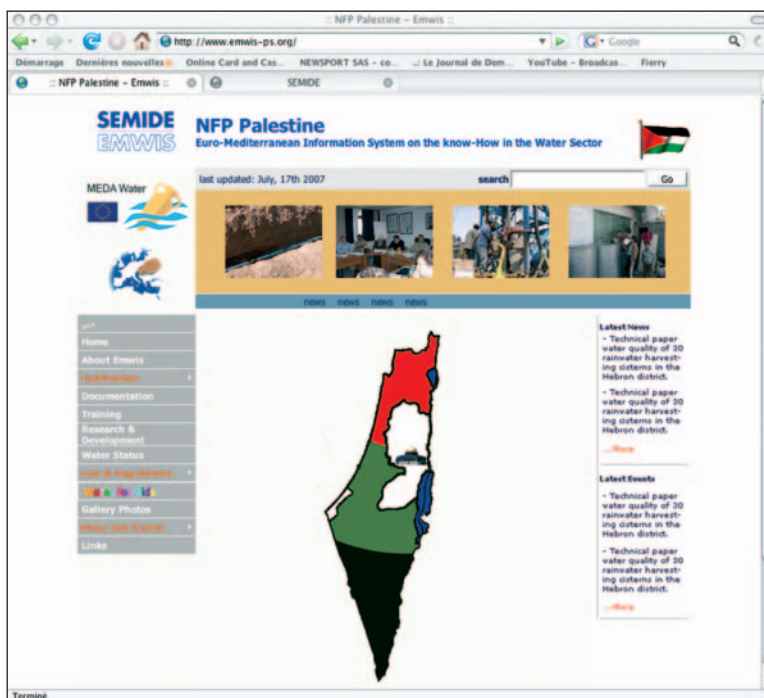
This study is coordinated by **EMWIS** Technical Unit and the Water Directorate of the French Ministry of Ecology and Sustainable Development, and carried out with the technical support of **IOWater**, owing to its expertise in the field of shared water information systems.

The first phase of the study, aiming at identifying the objectives and the main prospects of such a mechanism, was carried out in 2006 and its first results were presented during the Water Directors' Conference in Athens (November 2006).

The second phase, which was completed at the end of 2007, enabled to identify detailed proposals for the implementation of this mechanism.

Work confirms the main conclusions of the studies and enquiries carried out in 2006 involving many regional and national organizations:

- 1 One of the characteristics of the Mediterranean region is to be in the middle of many national, regional and global political processes, including an important component with activities related to water resources management (Millennium Goals and Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development, Barcelona Convention, environmental policy of the European Community, Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, European Neighborhood Policy, "Horizon 2020" Initiative, African Water Policy, etc.);
- 2 To implement these policies, many stakeholders intervene at the national and regional levels, through many initiatives, programs or projects, some of them based on very thorough work programs;
- 3 Most data and information, used at the regional and/or global level, are above all processed with data produced at the national and/or local level;
- 4 Most stakeholders, whatever their level of action (regional, national, local), are faced with problems related to the availability, quality, organization, accessibility and sharing of the water information necessary for achieving the goals laid down in these programs.



The study results were presented during the Water Directors' meeting in Bled (December 2007) and enabled to specify:

- ◆ The objectives and overall principles of the mechanism;
- ◆ The main common measures to be adopted for promoting the production and enhancement of interoperable water data;
- ◆ The possibility of building the national capacities of data services, especially for the production of data of common interest, which meet national expectations while being compatible with the expectations at the regional level;
- ◆ The priority topics such as the production of "Millennium Water Indicators", the indicators of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development, etc.;
- ◆ A program for the mechanism implementation with an estimated budget.

FOR HARMONIZING WISE AND EMWIS

EMWIS work on the Mediterranean Information Mechanism and the National Water Information Systems raised the interest of the **European Environment Agency (EEA)**, with which an agreement is being drafted. It especially concerns the harmonization with the **Water Information System for Europe -WISE-**launched in March 2007, and the monitoring of the Horizon 2020 Initiative (pollution removal in the Mediterranean Sea) for which the Agency is responsible.

SEMIDE EMWIS

www.emwis.net

