



**MEDITERRANEAN EUWI /WFD  
JOINT PROCESS**



***Water monitoring working group meeting***

Safir Heliopolitan Hotel  
Beirut (Lebanon), 6th October 2009

**CONCLUSIONS**

Version dated 2009-10-26

*Working Group web site*

<http://www.semide.net/topics/watmon>

These Minutes summarize the discussions and results of the Meeting of the Working Group on Water Monitoring of the Joint Process between the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative (MED EUWI) and the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD). It took place on 6 October 2009, from 14.30 pm to 18.15 pm, at Safir Heliopolitan Hotel in Beirut, Lebanon, linked to the International Conference on River Basin Management and Cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean Region (7, 8 & 9 October, 2009).

The Meeting was lead by EMWIS (Eric Mino) and was supported by Aquapole (BE). The meeting was attended by 25 participants representing 11 Euro-Mediterranean countries.

List of participants, the presentations and the survey synthesis are available at the web-site of the Working Group: <http://www.semide.net/topics/watmon>

## **Aims and agenda of the meeting**

This meeting focus was on the analysing of the first results of the survey carried out among Mediterranean Partner Countries on the status of water monitoring networks and the exchange of experiences based on country presentations.

The meeting was based on the following topics:

- Reminder on the Med Joint Process and the water monitoring working group
- Presentation and discussion of survey results
- Examples of water monitoring networks in non EU countries: Jordan, Algeria and Lebanon
- Examples of water monitoring networks from EU countries: Austria and Spain (Jucar river basin)
- Wrap-up and way forward

The English-French simultaneous interpretation allowed fruitful debates with an active participation of most of working groups members. As a result of this high level of interest and willingness to exchange, the duration of the working meeting was too short to cover all issues and participants suggested that such meeting should last a full day.

## Main issues discussed

Based on the presentations given and the related debates, the **main issues raised during the discussion** are highlighted below:

1. The working group mandate has been reviewed taking into account the current focus on water quantity indicators of the JP WG on WS-D, it is suggested that the water monitoring WG should focus on quality issues, water quantity monitoring being addressed when linked to quality issues.
2. The working group membership is being renewed following letters sent by EMWIS Steering Committee President to Water Directors of MPC. It was reminded that membership is opened to any organisation active on water quality monitoring, especially research organisations involved in projects at the Mediterranean level.
3. One of the objectives of the water monitoring working group is to describe the status of water monitoring networks and programmes in Mediterranean Partner countries. In this framework, between April and August 2009, a survey was carried out among water authorities in the Mediterranean Partner countries. 19 organisations from 9 countries (Algeria, Cyprus, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey) replied to this questionnaire. A synthesis was presented and discussed during the workshop. Participants agreed to review the reply for their country in order to clarify a misunderstood issues and to send the questionnaire filled-in when it was not delivered to EMWIS Technical Unit (Egypt and Palestine). Replies to the questionnaire and survey's synthesis will be completed by December 2009.
4. It was agreed to start working on the identification of potential common indicators for Med Partner countries based on existing monitoring data in the countries
5. Some challenges for Med Partner countries were identified:
  - a. It appears that in most countries, several institutions are managing water monitoring networks for various purposes. When it exists, the coordination may address various topics. This may result in difficulties in comparisons of data/analysis collected, a lack of a national overview of the current situation and opportunities to improve monitoring efficiency (including cost savings) as well as the validation and data quality check
  - b. While in the EU, discussions on transboundary water focus on coordination issues, for MPC international agreements usually include water quantity targets rather than quality ones due to water stress situations (the Nile being an exception on this matter).
  - c. Although public institutions are collecting a significant amount of information on water quality, its dissemination remains confidential or on request and usually based on annual publication
  - d. While save water campaigns have been carried out in most of countries, water users are not aware of water quality issues. There is a need for public awareness on one side on risks linked to the use of water directly abstracted from surface or groundwater resources, and on the other side, on efforts of public authorities to guarantee the quality of the resource
  - e. Cost efficiency of monitoring networks was not addressed by presentations from MPC while it was pointed out by EU examples, but all participants agreed quality monitoring campaigns are expensive (investment and exploitation) and for this reason they are usually limited in space and periodicity. Therefore, optimisation of monitoring networks is a must.
  - f. Finally the participants pointed out the needs for common definitions and harmonisation at least at the national level, as each country has its own water quality standards. It was felt that EU-WFD guidance documents on monitoring could be a good basis for MPC but without taking into account the specific



targets ([Guidance No 07 - Monitoring](#); [Guidance No 15 - Groundwater Monitoring](#); [Guidance No 16 - Groundwater in Drinking Water Protected Areas](#))

6. The preparation of a status report for 1st semester 2010 was briefly presented; a draft outline structure is included in annex as a basis for discussion and contribution.

## Conclusions and next steps

Based on above discussions, the following conclusions and next steps were identified:

- The working group mandate is to be revised and circulated to the working group members
- Working group members and participants should review the structure proposed for the working group report and propose contributions for chapter or case studies (at least for each challenge identified during the workshop and listed above)
- Electronic discussion will go on among members to report preparation and identification of potential joint indicators
- Survey synthesis will be finalised on the basis of complementary information sent by members
- An updated working group membership will be published on the website. Additional members are welcome to ensure the representativeness of quality monitoring purpose and to involve research and development project representatives
- Organisation of next working group meeting during first trimester 2010, if possible in relation with EU CIS-WG on monitoring



Chapter number	Chapter title	Aim of the chapter/ Topics proposed	Chapter coordinator	Contributors
I	<b>Introduction</b>	Purpose of report, links with other WG of the JP, the Med Water Strategy & projects of the Union for the Mediterranean, Regional & National Information systems, the CIS-Monitoring group,	<b>EMWIS</b>	
II	<b>Executive Summary</b>		<b>EMWIS</b>	
III	<b>Methodology/ Definitions</b>	Methodologies used for monitoring, definitions		
IV	<b>Monitoring under the EU-WFD: rationale, main requirements &amp; recommendations</b>	Objectives of WFD-monitoring, clarification of investigative, operational surveillance monitoring, protected areas monitoring Summary of recommendations of the CIS-monitoring guidance		
V	<b>Experiences with WFD-monitoring in EU-Member States</b>	Focus on technical, organisational and financial issues & experiences made Focus on water-scarce areas and monitoring		
VI	<b>The situation regarding monitoring in MPC</b>	Current status of monitoring networks & programmes, main difficulties faced, identifying priorities as regards to the WFD monitoring aspects Link to the activities of the MEDWIP, objectives of other monitoring requirements		
VII	<b>Improving water monitoring in Med countries</b>	Examples of best practice, specific recommendations on technical, organisational and financial aspects of improving monitoring for Med countries		
VIII	<b>Conclusions and Recommendations</b>	Key learning points, recommendations for actions, potential common indicators for regular monitoring	<b>EMWIS</b>	ALL