



## IPEMED's project for the World Water Forum 2012:

To consider the Mediterranean as the "Basin of river basins and major cities of the region", and to develop common governance and management tools

The Institute of Economic Forecasting for the Mediterranean World (IPEMED) wishes to contribute to the March 2012 World Water Forum in Marseille, to bring a concrete and operational program whose purpose is to confer greater coherence and effectiveness in implementing Mediterranean water policies.

This IPEMED project design is based on a brand new approach regarding the Mediterranean basin - the "**basin of all basins**" - that could help create more solidarity and synergies between stakeholders of Mediterranean water issues, while encouraging them to engage in more global commitments.

In this perspective, the Mediterranean basin, the common global basin, should be able to access global intervention instruments that could be inspired, in part, by tools (basin organizations) other countries have already implemented to ensure the integrated management of their river basins while adequately dealing with water resources, access to water, sanitation and pollution issues.

The IPEMED wants to pursue this vision through the World Water Forum, by leading a collective work to clarify its feasibility and implementation conditions and to present it publicly at the event.

### The project's substance

The IPEMED project comprises two components, one regarding governance and funding, the other relating to the tools needed to support the implementation of relevant policies and best practices. The first component could be considered as a "Mediterranean Water Agency", the second as a "Water Resource Centre in the Mediterranean". Even if these two components are not dependent on one another in their implementation, they answer to the same concern: developing common tools for integrated water management in the Mediterranean. Overall, these both components could be essential to the implementation of UFM's action.

- A- **A Mediterranean Water Agency** is a bold idea which implies a strong consensus at the political level - Such a proposal can appear illusive. However, it should be noted that the watershed style water management by means of ad hoc agencies has proved its worth in the region, and the European Framework Directive on water makes it a reference scale. In addition, the time is ripe as the democratic reforms underway in the countries of the south shore of the Mediterranean and the continued construction of the Union for the Mediterranean are converging to create a double opportunity in devising ambitious projects.

The Mediterranean Agency may rely on a possible "Water Charter" setting out the principles already defined, such as the Mediterranean Water Strategy. It would have the mission of supporting the basin agencies' joint actions to improve water use efficiency, reduce pollution in watersheds and coastal areas - and could also very well participate in financing concrete achievements, insofar as it benefits from financial resources based on the "polluter pays" principle.

- B- **A Water Resource Centre in the Mediterranean**, the project's second component appears to be operationally simpler to design and build. Several Mediterranean institutions, recognized in the field of water, are working to disseminate information, promote the exchange of experience and expertise, offer their knowledge and provide training tailored to the needs of countries in the region. However, pooling their know-how through a Water Resource Centre (the Mediterranean Water Knowledge Hub) would result in greater

synergies between their respective areas of know-how. Such a center would constitute a major hub to both study and implement regional projects.

The *Office International de l'Eau*, the EMI, the *Montpellier Méditerranée Technopole's* Water division, the *Plan Bleu*, EMWIS, the Global Water Partnership, etc., which have each their specialized fields of activity, and could help establish a "skills resource Centre", gathering: research and innovation, training, knowledge and know-how transfer, forecasting, information and best practices exchange, facilitation by water specialists stakeholders and citizen participation.

### **IPEMED's Role and Methodology**

In the past, the IPEMED organized several workshops on water policy in the Mediterranean and the means of their implementation. It has also participated in numerous international meetings on this issue while maintaining ties with public or private officials and with experts from Mediterranean countries. The IPEMED wishes, based on these previous works, to have the opportunity to fully develop the project proposal to be presented at the World Water Forum in Marseille and, through this event of great magnitude, to attract the decision makers' attention, while providing them with enough information to help them to make tough, yet promising key decisions.

The project development outlined by IPEMED in its two components needs to be the result of collective work. The IPEMED wishes to facilitate and guide this work involving policy makers, practitioners and experts from both sides of the Mediterranean.

Two workshops - three, if needed - will be held between July and October 2011. The workshops will bring together representatives of major Mediterranean coastal cities, basin agencies officials and regional experts on water issues, including some working in existing specialized organizations.

The first workshop will focus on defining objectives, assessing project feasibility and the tasks related to the proposed tools (Agency and Resource Centre).

The second workshop will focus on the practical modalities and means of implementing these tools, as well as their *modus operandi* and funding.

These workshops' findings will be presented - in late November 2011 - in a report signed by participants and presented and to the World Water Forum organizers. This report including project recommendations will be presented to the Mediterranean Water Forum in December 2011 and during the March 2012 Forum in Marseille, during a session or a side-event on the topic.

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