



WADIS-MAR Interregional workshop on good practices for sustainable water resources management in arid and semi-arid environments
22 March 2016 - Tunis

Water scarcity and competition for water resource is a major regional issue in Mediterranean region where most of the territory has an arid or semi-arid climate. The seriousness of water and environmental issues led the European Commission to launch in 2011 a Regional Programme on Water called “Sustainable Water Integrated Management” (SWIM) to actively promote the extensive dissemination of sustainable water management policies and practices in the region in the context of increasing water scarcity, combined pressure on water resources and desertification processes in connection with climate change. The Initiative followed the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conferences on Environment (Cairo, 2006) and on Water (Dead Sea, 2008).

Within the programme, five Demonstration Projects have been approved by the European Commission and started their implementation in early 2012 with, among them, the WADIS-MAR Project “Water harvesting and Agricultural techniques in Dry lands: an Integrated and Sustainable model in MAGhreb Regions”, coordinated by the Desertification Research Centre of the University of Sassari (NRD-UNISS) in partnership with the Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS), the University of Barcelona, the Institute of Arid Regions (IRA, Tunisia) and the National Agency for Water Resources (ANRH, Algeria). Starting from local traditional experiences with the integration of innovative Managed Aquifer Recharge systems (MAR), the project aims at implementing a sustainable water and agriculture management system based on participative and bottom-up approach in order to enable local communities to manage groundwater resources, starting from a more efficient use of Water Harvesting Techniques (WHT) and the application of sustainable agricultural practices.

Following the closure of the SWIM PROGRAMME and the launching of the SWIM – Phase II, the WADIS-MAR project, in agreement with the European Delegation in Algiers, which strongly supported the initiative, intends to convey all the positive experiences of the SWIM Programme in a large event.

The conference, organized by NRD-UNISS, OSS and DesertNet International (DNI), aims at showing to the national and international authorities the effective implementation of projects in the field of sustainable water management taking into account the technical scientific results achieved by the SWIM DEMO projects and other relevant Institutions involved in water management in arid and semi-arid environments.

High level Tunisian, Algerian and other Authorities from Neighboring Mediterranean Countries Authorities have been invited besides international stakeholders such as representatives of focal points of Country Program, SWIM Support Mechanism, Financial bodies, local Ministries and delegate Agencies (CRSTRA-DGRE-CRDA), Water Management Institutions in SWIM countries, United Nation Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs



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(MAE) and other associations in order to strengthen and enhance south/south and SWIM program experiences and open new fruitful opportunities for future collaborations.

The International event, supported by the Mediterranean Universities Union (UNIMED), will be held in Tunis on 22nd March on the occasion of the World Water day.

The workshop will be the occasion for the national authorities to reflect on constraints related to integrated water management in order to identify intervention priorities that could be addressed in a frame of a more effective international cooperation taking into account that the South Mediterranean Countries still suffer from lack of effective operational strategies and fragmentation of responsibilities between authorities.



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