ONEWATER
EUROMEDITERRANEAN
WATER FORUM
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Water for All People: Equal Rights and Opportunities

2026 UN World Water Development Report

UNESCO World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP)

Euro-Mediterranean Water Forum 2026 · 29 September – 2 October · La Nuvola, Rome

KEY INFORMATION

Date	30 September 2026
Time	14:00-15:00
Room	Itaca
Format	Presentation / Panel discussion
Language(s)	English

SUMMARY

The 2026 edition of the United Nations World Water Development Report (UN WWDR), Water for all people: equal rights and opportunities, highlights the critical relationship between gender equality and sustainable water management. Across the Euro-Mediterranean region, women play a central role in water use and management, food production, family care, and community resilience. Yet, they remain underrepresented in water governance institutions, technical professions, policy processes, and investment decisions.

As the Euro-Mediterranean Water Forum aims to foster cooperation and collective action towards water security in the Mediterranean, this session will explore how gender-responsive policies and inclusive governance can contribute to more resilient, sustainable, and equitable water systems. The discussion will also examine how gender equality can strengthen water diplomacy, climate adaptation, and socio-economic development across the region.

AGENDA & SPEAKERS

Time	Speaker Name & Title	Organization	Role / Topic
14:00	**Opening**		
	Retno Marsudi, UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Water	United Nations	Speaker / Welcome remarks

Time	Speaker Name & Title	Organization	Role / Topic
	Luca Fraticelli, Head of the Space, Multilateral Scientific Cooperation and Intellectual Property Office	Directorate General for Growth and Export Promotion, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Italy	Speaker / Welcome remarks
	Miguel Doria, Coordinator	UNESCO WWAP	Speaker / Welcome remarks
14:15	**UN World Water Development Report 2026, Water for All people: Equal rights and Opportunities**		
	Laura Imburgia, Programme Specialist	UNESCO WWAP	Speaker
14:25	**Panel discussion: Promoting equality and inclusion through international cooperation**		
	Concepción Marcuello Ollona, Coordinator of International Affairs	Water Directorate, Ministry of Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge, Spain	Panelist
	Lesha Witmer, Senior expert	Human Rights to Water/ Women for Water Partnership / Multistakeholder Coalition for Water and Gender Equality	Panelist
	Gaia Proietti, Youth water professional	Università per Stranieri di Perugia	Panelist
14:45	**Presentation of the publication "Challenging the usual - Water assessments with a gender equality perspective" - UNESCO WWAP – University of Pisa**		
	Laura Imburgia, Programme Specialist	UNESCO WWAP	Speaker
14:55	Tanja Miškova, Ambassador-in-Charge of Water Diplomacy	Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Slovenia	Speaker / Closing remarks

BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

As elsewhere globally, Europe and the Middle East face unprecedented water challenges driven by demographic pressures, environmental degradation, growing competition among water uses compounded with the effects of climate variability and change. Achieving water security in the region requires inclusive and equitable governance systems that recognize the role of all stakeholders in water management and decision-making.

OBJECTIVES

Objective 1 — Present the key findings and responses of the UN WWDR 2026.

Objective 2 — Explore the critical links between gender equality, water security, and climate resilience in the Mediterranean region.

Objective 3 — Identify policy actions and partnerships that can strengthen gender-responsive water governance at regional, national, and local levels.

TARGET AUDIENCE

- Government officials and policymakers working on water, gender equality, social inclusion, climate adaptation, and sustainable development.
- Water-sector professionals and institutions, including water utilities, regulators, technical experts, and practitioners working to advance inclusive water governance.

- Civil society, and community organizations, particularly those promoting women's participation, leadership, and equal access to water resources and decision-making.
- Researchers, international organizations, development partners, and Euro-Mediterranean stakeholders working on water diplomacy, climate resilience, gender-responsive policies, and socio-economic development.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- **Increased recognition of the importance of gender equality** for sustainable, resilient, and equitable water management.
- **Identification of gender-responsive policies and inclusive governance approaches** that strengthen women's participation and leadership in water decision-making, institutions, and investments.
- **Exchange of good practices and experiences** demonstrating how gender-inclusive water governance can support climate adaptation, water diplomacy, and community resilience.
- **Concrete recommendations for collective action and cooperation** to advance gender equality and contribute to more equitable water systems and progress towards water security in the Mediterranean.