ONEWATER EUROMEDITERRANEAN WATER FORUM
ROME 29.09-02.10.2026

CIHEAM BARI

“Advancing EU Water Alignment” – High-Level Roundtable on the EU Accession Process and Water Resources Governance in the Western Balkans

CIHEAM Bari / One Water Committee Italy / Arab Water Council

KEY INFORMATION

Date	1 October 2026
Time	11:30 – 13:00
Room	Atlante Room, La Nuvola Convention Centre
Format	High-level ministerial roundtable
Language(s)	English

SUMMARY

High-level ministerial roundtable bringing Balkan water and environment ministers into dialogue with EU and Mediterranean partners on EU water alignment and regional cooperation.

AGENDA & SPEAKERS

Time	Speaker Name & Title	Organization	Role
	Ms Alessandra Scardigno	CIHEAM Bari	Moderator
11:30–11:35	Mr Biagio Di Terlizzi	CIHEAM Bari	CIHEAM Bari Director – Opening Remarks
11:35–11:40	Representative of the Italian Government (MAECI)	Italy	to be defined
11:40–11:45	Mr Sofjan Jaupaj	Albania	Minister of Environment
11:45–11:50	Mr Staša Košarac	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations
11:50–11:55	Ms Fitore Pacolli Dalipi	Kosovo	Minister of Environment and Spatial Planning

Time	Speaker Name & Title	Organization	Role
11:55–12:00	Mr Vladimir Joković	Montenegro	Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management - to be confirmed
12:00–12:05	Ms Ane Laskoska	North Macedonia	Deputy Minister for Environment and Physical Planning
12:05–12:10	Ms Sara Pavkov	Serbia	Minister of Environmental Protection – to be confirmed
12:10–12:15	Mr Idriz Haxhiaj	Regional Focal Point - ONE WATER Project	Final Remarks

BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

The ONE WATER Balkan Regional Consultation Meeting brought together government representatives from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia around the theme “The EU Alignment Process as a Key Mechanism for Strengthening Water Governance in the Balkan Countries.” Discussions confirmed steady but uneven progress in transposing the EU Water Framework Directive, the Floods Directive and drinking water/wastewater standards, and identified persistent gaps in financing, institutional capacity and inter-institutional coordination. Participants recommended elevating these findings to political level and proposed the region’s participation in the Euro-Mediterranean Water Forum as a next step. This side event responds directly to that recommendation, bringing Balkan water and environment government representatives into dialogue with EU and Mediterranean partners.

OBJECTIVES

- Secure renewed political commitment from Balkan ministers to EU water acquis alignment and implementation.
- Strengthen cooperation between the Balkans, Italy and EU/Mediterranean institutions on transboundary water governance and financing.
- Advance the feasibility of a Balkan Region Water Forum as a permanent regional platform.

FORMAT & METHODOLOGY

High-level ministerial roundtable: introduction by the Director of CIHEAM Bari, Mr Biagio Di Terlizzi; intervention by the Italian government representative (MASE/MAECI); governmental interventions (one per country); moderated discussion on EU alignment priorities and regional cooperation, moderated by Ms Alessandra Scardigno (CIHEAM Bari); closing remarks and for the EMWF outcome document by the One Water Regional Focal Point for the Balkan Region Idriz Haxhiaj.

TARGET AUDIENCE

EU and Mediterranean institutions, Balkan government delegations, CIHEAM Bari, One Water Committee Italy, Arab Water Council, donor community, private-sector water stakeholders, and media.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- A political declaration of intent on EU water alignment for the Western Balkans.
- Reinforced regional and Italy–Balkan cooperation network on water governance.
- Concrete input toward the feasibility of the Balkan Region Water Forum.