Water Resilience in the Euro-Mediterranean Region: from Policy to Action

Plan Bleu (UNEP/MAP) & MedCities

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

KEY INFORMATION

Date	30 September 2026
Time	14:30 – 16:00
Room	Room Giordano
Format	Workshop
Language(s)	English

SUMMARY

Interreg Euro-MED water projects share concrete solutions and inform draft policy recommendations to strengthen water resilience across the Mediterranean.

AGENDA & SPEAKERS

Time	Topic	Speakers
14:30 – 14:35	**Opening of the workshop** Welcome and introduction to the workshop	*Insa Behrens, Plan Bleu*
14:35 – 14:45	**The State of the SDG6 in the Mediterranean** Presentation of the Mediterranean situation regarding SDG 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	*Insa Behrens, Plan Bleu*
14:45 – 15:30	**Thematic projects roundtable: From challenges to solutions** Interreg Euro-MED projects will share their experiences in addressing water-related challenges, with a focus on practical solutions developed on the ground and the conditions needed to replicate, scale-up and mainstream successful approaches across Mediterranean territories. *Projects: WatHer, WATERISE, AQUAMAN, RedeeM*	**Moderator:** *Carolina Pérez Valverde, MedCities* **Panelists:** *Alida Cosenza (WATERISE)* *Fernando Nardi (AQUAMAN)* *Paola Nella Branduini (WatHer)* *Michael Schembri (RedeeM)*
15:30 – 15:55	**From projects to policy: Strengthening water resilience across the Mediterranean** Presentation and discussion of draft policy recommendations developed by the Mission community, building on project experiences and lessons learned	*Pedro Fernandez Bautista, MedCities*
15:55 – 16:00	**Closing remarks**	*Insa Behrens, Plan Bleu*

BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

Water resilience is becoming a major challenge across the Mediterranean as climate change, water scarcity and increasing pressures on natural resources affect both ecosystems and communities. Strengthening resilience requires integrated governance approaches that connect environmental protection, territorial development and climate adaptation. This workshop explores how thematic projects from the Interreg Euro-MED Natural Heritage Mission and Sustainable Tourism Mission are contributing to more sustainable and resilient water management, and how their experiences can help inform policies and governance frameworks.

OBJECTIVES

1. Present the state of SDG 6 in the Mediterranean
2. Share concrete experiences and solutions from four Interreg Euro-MED thematic projects addressing water-related challenges (WatHer, WATERISE, AQUAMAN, RedeeM);
3. Discuss draft policy recommendations building on project experiences, lessons learned, and conditions for replication and scale-up.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Policymakers and water governance authorities, Interreg Euro-MED project partners, technical experts, and other Mediterranean water resilience stakeholders.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Draft policy recommendations on water resilience; documented lessons learned and conditions for replicating and scaling up water solutions across Mediterranean territories.

ABOUT THE INTERREG EURO-MED MISSIONS

Natural Heritage Mission

The Natural Heritage Mission brings together Mediterranean stakeholders working to protect, restore and sustainably manage natural heritage and ecosystems. It supports cooperation, knowledge exchange and the development of practical solutions to strengthen the resilience of Mediterranean territories and their natural resources.

Sustainable Tourism Mission

The Sustainable Tourism Mission promotes more sustainable and resilient tourism models across the Mediterranean. It supports cooperation between public authorities, tourism stakeholders and other actors to address common challenges and develop solutions that contribute to more sustainable territorial development.

THEMATIC PROJECTS

The workshop brings together four thematic projects from two Interreg Euro-MED Missions, each addressing water-related challenges from a different perspective and territorial context.

WatHer

WatHer revives and restores centuries-old Water Heritage Systems (WHS) as nature-culture-based solutions for climate change adaptation and drought mitigation in rural Mediterranean areas, by combining traditional knowledge with contemporary tools (GIS and environmental sensors) and ecological standards. Through pilot actions, community engagement, training, and co-designed strategies, the project develops practical tools for mapping, assessing, restoring, monitoring, and ensuring the long-term management of WHS. With an international partnership spanning the Mediterranean from Portugal to Cyprus, WatHer promotes transnational cooperation and the sharing of tested heritage-based solutions through the Global Network of Water Museums.

WATERISE

WATERISE strengthens climate adaptation across Mediterranean tourist islands – Pantelleria, Lampedusa, Menorca, Corsica, Malta, Gozo and Cyprus – by combining ecosystem-based approaches with nature-based solutions that enhance water security and reduce pressure from seasonal tourism. Funded by the Interreg Euro-MED Programme, the project brings together local authorities and tourism actors to test low-impact innovations and blend traditional water-harvesting heritage with new technologies. Its ambition is to make water-smart tourism a shared Mediterranean standard.

AQUAMAN

The AQUAMAN project addresses one of the most pressing challenges of the Mediterranean region: water scarcity in coastal and island tourist destinations. The project aims to empower local and regional authorities to adopt sustainable water management solutions by valorising non-conventional water sources (NCWS) and reducing demand through innovative governance and communication approaches.

RedeeM

RedeeM addresses water scarcity in Mediterranean rural areas by combining nature-based and innovative technological solutions, including rainwater harvesting, riparian restoration, water-saving green infrastructure, drone monitoring and smart irrigation. The project also promotes climate-informed water governance through the WEFE nexus approach, strengthening the integration of water, energy, food and ecosystem management and supporting more sustainable and coordinated water use across the Mediterranean.