From Data to Action: Digital tools for water-related ecosystem governance, management and restoration in the Mediterranean

Tour du Valat, Plan Bleu and MedWet

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

KEY INFORMATION

Date	*01/10/2026*
Time	*11:30-13:00*
Room	*Room Rodano*
Format	*Presentation / Interactive session and Roundtable*
Language(s)	*English*

SUMMARY

The session will present and demonstrate two regional platforms – the Mediterranean Wetlands Geoportal (Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory) and Plan Bleu Observatory's MapX platform, under "WESR: MEDITERRANEAN", followed by a roundtable with end-users at river basin, national and pan-Mediterranean level. The aim is to identify concrete recommendations on how digital tools and monitoring systems can better support evidence-based water governance, wetland restoration and climate resilience.

AGENDA & SPEAKERS

Session	Time	Speaker	Organization	Role
Introduction and Framing	*11:30-11:40*	• *Mr. Chris Rostron , MedWet Coordinator*	*MedWet*	*Keynote speaker*
Presentation and Live Demonstratio	*11:41-12:10*	• *Mr. Michael Ronse, Task officer for the Mediterranean*	*Tour du Valat & Plan Bleu*	*Speakers*

n of Regional Digital Platforms		*Wetlands Observatory* ● *Mr. Samson Bellières, Project Manager and GIS expert at Plan Bleu*	*(UNEP/MAP)*	
Q&A Session	*12:11-12:15*	-		
Interactive exercise	*12:16-12:25*	● *Mr. Samson Bellières, Project Manager and GIS expert at Plan Bleu*	*Plan Bleu (UNEP/MAP)*	*Moderator*
Round Table Session **" From Data to Action: River Basin, National and Pan-Mediterranean Experiences "**	*12:26-12:55*	1. *Mr. Eric Mino, Managing Director at Euro-Mediterranean Information System on Know-How in the water sector, EMWIS / SEMIDE* 2. M. Rostan Arnaud General Director Deputy, Eau d'Azur, Métropole Nice Côte d'Azur 3. *3rd Speaker*	*EMWIS/SEMIDE EAU d'AZUR, Métropole Nice Côte d'Azur AIDARA*	*Speakers*
Closing Remarks	*12:56-13:00*	● *Mr. Chris Rostron , MedWet Coordinator*	*MedWet*	*rapporteur*

BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

The Mediterranean is one of the most vulnerable region to climate change worldwide. It is warming at a rate approximately 20% faster than the global average, exacerbating droughts, water scarcity and increasing competition for water resources across the Basin. Today, more than 180 million people in Mediterranean countries (30% of the total population) already live under conditions of water scarcity, making water security one of the defining challenges for the region. As water security becomes one of the defining challenges for the Mediterranean, there is a growing need to strengthen the resilience of both natural ecosystems and human societies.

Wetlands play a central role in this context. By storing and regulating water, replenishing aquifers, reducing flood risks and improving water quality, they contribute directly to the functioning of the Mediterranean water cycle and provide essential ecosystem services for people and economies. Yet these critical ecosystems are under increasing pressure. Around 56% of the historic wetlands in the Mediterranean basin have already disappeared, and up to 69–92% of the remaining coastal

marshes are at risk of being lost by 2100. This decline not only threatens biodiversity but also weakens the region's capacity to respond to growing water and climate challenges.

Recent advances in geospatial, Earth Observation (EO) and open-source technologies provide decision-makers and local managers with new knowledge platforms for water and wetland resources monitoring and management. Systems such as the Mediterranean Wetlands Geoportal, developed by the Mediterranean Wetlands Observatory (MWO), and Plan Bleu Observatory's tool MapX, under the 'WESR: MEDITERRANEAN' offer detailed information on water-related ecosystems across the Mediterranean. These platforms contribute to improving the dissemination, accessibility and valorisation of environmental knowledge across the Mediterranean region.

Users can visualise and interact with georeferenced dataset on complex processes spatially and temporally (Land Use / land Cover, water availability, water quality, climate change impacts, rivers connectivity, biodiversity, etc.) and get detailed data analysis on the status and trends on water-related ecosystems; to inform decision-making at local, national and pan-Mediterranean levels. The Mediterranean Wetlands Geoportal and MapX platform are particularly relevant examples of innovative digital tools supporting evidence-based planning and governance. But how can these tools better connect scientific knowledge with decision-making processes and support more effective governance of wetlands and water resources?

This session will present some of the state-of-the-art digital tools available, showing the diversity and utility of information freely available. We will also explore how these tools can inform policy development and implementation of regional and global agreements and help meet recent restoration commitments made under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the Barcelona Convention and EU-related policy frameworks. A national case study from Egypt will demonstrate how the data, indicators and spatial information made available through regional monitoring and digital platforms can be translated into national-level assessments, wetland restoration priorities and policy recommendations, helping bridge the gap between knowledge generation and decision-making.

For participants of the Euro-Mediterranean Water Forum, this session will provide practical insights into how digital platforms and monitoring systems can support more informed water and wetland governance. Through regional tools and a national example from Egypt, it will demonstrate how data and knowledge can be transformed into concrete policies and restoration actions, unlocking the potential of wetlands as Nature-based Solutions for water security and climate resilience across the Mediterranean.

OBJECTIVES

OBJ.1. Showcase regional digital platforms, monitoring systems and Earth Observation (EO) products that improve the accessibility, dissemination and use of environmental knowledge for

water and wetland governance across the Mediterranean.
OBJ.2. .Demonstrate how geospatial data, monitoring indicators and EO products can be translated into actionable knowledge to support planning, management, conservation and restoration decisions by policymakers, managers and practitioners.
OBJ.3. Illustrate how digital tools and knowledge systems can support the implementation and monitoring of regional and international commitments, including the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD), the Ramsar Strategic Plan, the Barcelona Convention and relevant EU policy frameworks.
OBJ.5. Show, through regional experiences, how data and knowledge generated at local and national levels can inform wetland conservation and restoration priorities, policy recommendations, and Nature-based Solutions (NbS) for water security and climate resilience.
OBJ.5. Identify opportunities and recommendations to strengthen cooperation, interoperability and knowledge exchange among regional observatories, national institutions and local practitioners, and to scale up the use of digital tools and monitoring systems as enablers of evidence-based governance, ecosystem restoration and water resilience across the Mediterranean

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TARGET AUDIENCE

Policymakers and water governance authorities and any type of water related operators, technical experts, and other Mediterranean water resilience stakeholders. The content that will be delivered will bridge technicity to practicality.

KEY THEMATIC AREAS

- Digital platforms, Earth Observation and environmental monitoring systems for water-related ecosystems *(New Tech Blue Hope – Digital and AI: Water Innovation, T10)*.
- Evidence-based governance and implementation of regional and international commitments for water-related ecosystems *(Governance, cooperation and commitments to conventions and SDGs, T9).*
- Wetlands as NbSs for water security, climate resilience and ecosystem restoration, contributing to address the Mediterranean water trilemma *(Water quality, availability, ecosystem services and resilience, T1, T7 & T8).*

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

A set of practical recommendations on how digital platforms, Earth Observation and monitoring systems can better support evidence-based water governance, wetland restoration and climate resilience across the Mediterranean.

Exploring different type of collaboration between participant's institutions and the side-event organizers/speakers.