

ONE WATER II: Turning Regional Dialogue into Collective Action

CIHEAM Bari / One Water Committee Italy / Arab Water Council

KEY INFORMATION

Date	30 September 2026
Time	9:30 – 11:00
Room	Nilo Room, La Nuvola Convention Centre
Format	Special session – institutional interventions and moderated regional dialogue
Language(s)	English

SUMMARY

Presentation of the consolidated outcomes of the ONE WATER regional consultation process across the Maghreb, Mashreq and Western Balkans, translating three years of regional dialogue into shared priorities and future cooperation.

AGENDA & SPEAKERS

Time	Speaker Name & Title	Organization / Country	Role
09:30–09:40	Dr Roula Khadra	CIHEAM Bari	Moderator – Welcome & Introduction
09:40–09:50	Mr Marco Rago,	Italy	Special Envoy of the Italian MAECI for International Water Policy
09:50–10:00	Mr Jauad El Kharraz,	Maghreb	ONE WATER Regional Focal Point – Maghreb
10:00–10:10	Ms Amal Azab	Mashreq	Arab Water Council / ONE WATER Regional Focal Point – Mashreq
10:10–10:20	Mr Idriz Haxhiaj	Balkans	ONE WATER Regional Focal Point – Balkans
10:10–10:30	Mr Emilio Ciarlo	One Water Committee Italy	General Director

BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

Water security remains one of the defining challenges for the Mediterranean region. Climate change, increasing water demand, environmental degradation and growing socio-economic pressures are

intensifying water scarcity and placing unprecedented stress on natural resources and communities. The enlarged Mediterranean holds only around 5% of the world's renewable freshwater resources while supporting nearly 10% of the global population. At the same time, the region faces an estimated annual water deficit of 6.5 billion m³ and is warming faster than the global average, with temperatures projected to exceed +2°C. Addressing these interconnected challenges requires strengthened regional cooperation, integrated approaches and sustained dialogue across sectors and borders.

Against this backdrop, the ONE WATER initiative has contributed to strengthening regional cooperation by providing a structured platform for consultation, knowledge exchange and partnership across the enlarged Mediterranean. Grounded in the One Water approach – which recognises the interdependence of all water resources and promotes cross-sectoral governance – ONE WATER supports integrated responses to the interconnected water, food, energy and ecosystem challenges that characterise the Mediterranean region.

Through this framework, the initiative has brought together 18 countries from the Maghreb, Mashreq and Western Balkans to identify shared priorities, exchange experiences and strengthen regional ownership of sustainable water solutions. Over the course of Phase I and Phase II, ONE WATER has implemented three parallel sub-regional consultation processes engaging Regional and National Focal Points, governmental institutions and thematic experts.

These consultations culminated in the Consolidated Regional Meeting held in Alexandria, Egypt (15–16 July 2026), where the outcomes of the three regional processes were consolidated into a coherent regional framework. During the meeting, the methodological framework for the Maghreb, Mashreq and Western Balkans Position Papers was agreed under the coordination of CIHEAM Bari and the Arab Water Council, while an initial portfolio of investment-ready project concepts was consolidated to support future regional cooperation and matchmaking initiatives.

The process enabled participating countries to converge around a set of shared priorities, providing a common basis for future regional cooperation, policy dialogue and investment. Beyond its technical outputs, the process has fostered trust, mutual learning and institutional cooperation across the enlarged Mediterranean, laying the foundations for sustained regional collaboration and future collective action.

Taking place within the Euro-Mediterranean Water Forum 2026, this session provides a unique opportunity to present the consolidated outcomes of this collaborative process to the wider Euro-Mediterranean water community and to translate regional dialogue into future cooperation, policy engagement and investment.

More than the conclusion of a project, it marks the convergence of three years of structured regional dialogue into consolidated regional priorities and recommendations that can contribute to ongoing Mediterranean cooperation, inform future policy dialogue and investment opportunities, and support the regional roadmap towards the 2026 UN Water Conference and the 11th World Water Forum in 2027.

By bringing together institutional partners, Focal Points and key stakeholders from across the enlarged Mediterranean, the session will demonstrate the value of structured regional consultation in identifying common priorities, strengthening policy dialogue and fostering partnerships that can support future investments and collective action on water security.

OBJECTIVES

- Present the consolidated outcomes of the ONE WATER regional consultation process and the recommendations emerging from the Maghreb, Mashreq and Western Balkans Position Papers.
- Promote regional convergence around shared priorities for sustainable water management, strengthening dialogue, ownership and cooperation across the enlarged Mediterranean.
- Foster the translation of regional priorities into future policy dialogue, partnerships and investment opportunities supporting Mediterranean water security and resilience.
- Reinforce the role of ONE WATER as a lasting platform for regional cooperation, knowledge exchange and partnership, contributing to future Mediterranean and international water processes.

FORMAT & METHODOLOGY

The session will combine high-level institutional interventions with a structured regional dialogue to highlight the common priorities emerging from the ONE WATER consultation process across the enlarged Mediterranean.

Following the opening remarks by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI), the three Regional Focal Points representing the Maghreb, Mashreq and Western Balkans will present the principal outcomes of their respective consultation processes through a common reporting framework, highlighting regional priorities, key challenges and opportunities for future cooperation. This approach will facilitate comparison across the three sub-regions and identify areas of convergence towards a shared regional perspective. Building on these contributions, representatives of the Arab Water Council and the One Water Committee Italy will provide institutional reflections on the significance of the regional outcomes within the broader Mediterranean water cooperation landscape and future international processes.

A moderated discussion will then engage speakers and participants in reflecting on the pathways for translating regional priorities into strengthened policy dialogue, partnerships and investment opportunities. The session will conclude with a synthesis of the key messages and recommendations emerging from the dialogue, providing a contribution to the Euro-Mediterranean Water Forum outcomes and the broader ONE WATER Roadmap towards the 2026 UN Water Conference and the 11th World Water Forum in 2027. The session will be moderated by Dr Roula Khadra (CIHEAM Bari), who will facilitate the dialogue across the three regional processes, highlight areas of convergence and synthesise the principal recommendations emerging from the discussion.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The session is addressed to representatives of Mediterranean governments, the Union for the Mediterranean, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MAECI), regional organisations, development partners, financial institutions, Regional and National ONE WATER Focal Points, research and academic institutions, civil society organisations, and the wider Euro-Mediterranean Water Forum community, including media representatives.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- A consolidated regional perspective reflecting the shared priorities and recommendations emerging from the ONE WATER consultation process across the Maghreb, Mashreq and Western Balkans.
- Strengthened dialogue and cooperation among Mediterranean institutions, Regional Focal Points and strategic partners, reinforcing regional ownership and collaboration on water security.
- Enhanced visibility of regional priorities and investment opportunities, supporting future partnerships, project development and resource mobilisation across the enlarged Mediterranean.
- A substantive contribution to the outcomes of the Euro-Mediterranean Water Forum and the broader regional roadmap towards the 2026 UN Water Conference and the 11th World Water Forum.

BEYOND THE FORUM: THE ROAD AHEAD

This event is one step within the ONE WATER Roadmap 2025–2027 – a continuous journey of collaboration from regional priorities to global impact:

1. Regional Consultation – Cairo Water Week 2025-26: 3 sub-regional processes (Mashreq, Maghreb, Balkans) – 17 shared Mediterranean water priorities.
2. Regional Consolidation – Arab Water Forum 2026: Mediterranean priorities aligned (commitments & partnerships).
3. Commitments & Advocacy – Euro-Mediterranean Water Forum 2026: regional priorities elevated (consolidated Mediterranean Water Agenda).
4. Global Advocacy – UN Water Conference, UAE 2026: Mediterranean agenda elevated (global commitments & visibility).
5. Implementation & Impact – World Water Forum 11, Riyadh 2027: from commitments to action (investments & SDG delivery).

The ONE WATER II Final Event is therefore not an end point, but a pivotal step: the moment the network's shared priorities become a mandate to carry forward to Abu Dhabi and Riyadh.
