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EUROMEDITERRANEAN
WATER FORUM
ROME 29.09-02.10.2026

Reuse of treated wastewater: a strategic lever for water security, in the context of climate change in the Mediterranean

Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Maritime Fisheries / Tunisia

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

KEY INFORMATION

Date	01/10/2026
Time	11 :30 – 13 :00
Lobby	Circe
Format	Panel discussion
Language(s)	French, with simultaneous translation into English

SUMMARY

On the example of Tunisia, this Side Event takes an in-depth look at the political, institutional, regulatory and economic conditions that are essential for a successful change of scale, moving from programmes and pilot projects to widespread macroeconomic implementation.

AGENDA & SPEAKERS

Time	Name and position of the stakeholder	Organization	Role / Theme
11:30 (5')	Aissa Hlaimi, Director General of Water Resources	Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Maritime Fisheries (MARHP)	Moderator - Welcome and Introduction
11:35 (5')	Sinan Bacha, Head of the Office of Planning and Hydraulic Balance	Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Maritime Fisheries (MARHP)	Speaker -Tunisia's Water Situation and Water Strategy 2050
11:40 (15')	Aida Jridi, in charge of the General Direction of Rural Engineering and Water Management.	Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Maritime Fisheries (MARHP)	Speaker - Overview of treated wastewater reuse (REUT) in Tunisia and main challenges and programs to promote the valorization of treated wastewater in agriculture
11:55 (15')	Stefano Carbonara	CIHEAM of Bari, Italian Cooperation	Speaker - Analysis of infrastructure and financing dynamics via the Tunisian-Italian bilateral TANIT program
12:10 (15')	Nesrine Kalboussi	Centre for Water Research and Technology (CERTE) in Tunisia	Speaker - Valorization of TMEs with local nature-based technical solutions
12:25 (10')	Moderator & Panelists / Q&A Session		
12:35 (20')	Moderator & Panelists / Discussion with the audience		
12:55 (5')	Moderator: Summary and Closing		

BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

The Mediterranean basin is one of the regions of the world most exposed to water stress. Faced with the depletion of conventional resources, diversification via REUT is a priority to secure agriculture in the long term.
In order to successfully move from the pilot to the macro-economic scale, the session will balance **current good practices against the difficulties in the field**, while exploring avenues for simplification and institutional and regulatory optimization.

Discussions will focus on two critical aspects:

1) **The quality of treated wastewater and the management of health risks.**
2) **The cost of using treated wastewater and economic viability.**

The aim will be to demonstrate how different innovative solutions can open up new opportunities for **the economic development of Treated Wastewater (TME).** This must target high value-added uses, such as industrial agriculture and urban agriculture.

OBJECTIVES

- **To position the reutilization of treated wastewater** as a pillar of the circular economy in the Mediterranean.
- **Highlight Tunisian particularities** by exposing local challenges, programs and successes, as well as opportunities to optimize implementation frameworks.
- **Discuss the viability of the techno-economic models**. To put the quality of the product as the main issue and the final objective to be achieved: to consider the entire REUSE chain in agriculture (from wastewater collection, the treatment system, reuse at the plot to the final product intended for human consumption), during the planning and implementation of projects, by defining the optimal distribution of financial burdens between investment and operation.
- **Introduce the WHO Sanitation Safety Planning (S.S.P.) approach** as a good practice in health risk management
- **Promote new partnership opportunities in terms of economic development** of the TME (high value-added crops, urban agriculture, etc.).

TARGET AUDIENCE

- Public decision-makers, senior civil servants and managers of water services.
- Scientific community, hydrogeologists and researchers.
- International financial institutions and development partners.
- International organizations and regional secretariats (e.g. Union for the Mediterranean).
- Water users' associations, agricultural representatives and civil society.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- **Production of operational and concrete recommendations** aimed at feeding into the official commitments of the 6th Euro-Mediterranean Water Forum, the SDGs and the Union for the Mediterranean Water Strategy.
- **Definition of clear trajectories** to create the enabling environment for a utilization at scale of treated wastewater in agriculture by 2050 in the light of extreme climate stress.
- **Creation of opportunities for regional partnerships around the Mediterranean** to promote and achieve the increased and sustainable use of treated wastewater in agriculture in order to make the shared region more resilient to climate change.