

Water Across Generations: Young Leaders and Senior Experts Shaping the Future of Mediterranean Water

CIHEAM Bari / One Water Committee Italy / Arab Water Council

KEY INFORMATION

Date	1 October 2026
Time	14:30 – 16:00
Room	Atlante Room, La Nuvola Convention Centre
Format	Interactive intergenerational dialogue
Language(s)	English

SUMMARY

An interactive intergenerational dialogue bringing young water professionals and senior experts together to shape a shared vision for the future of water in the Mediterranean.

AGENDA & SPEAKERS

Time	Speaker Name & Title	Organization	Role / Topic
14:30– 14:35	Ms Julie Pellizzari	CIHEAM Bari	Moderator – Welcome & Introduction
14:35– 14:40	Ms Daniela Dagostino	CIHEAM Bari	Speaker – Opening Framing
14:40– 15:00	Ms Yousra Bou	Morocco	Panelist – Round 1: Youth Perspective
14:40– 15:00	Mr Endi Biba	Albania	Panelist – Round 1: Youth Perspective
14:40– 15:00	Ms Salsabeal Mohammad Abo-Thrais	Jordan	Panelist – Round 1: Youth Perspective
14:40– 15:00	Ms Maryam Hamza Saied Abdelaziz Mohamed	Egypt	Panelist – Round 1: Youth Perspective
14:40– 15:00	Mr Aziz Selmi	Tunisia	Panelist – Round 1: Youth Perspective

Time	Speaker Name & Title	Organization	Role / Topic
15:00–15:07	H.E. Prof. Hani Sewilam, Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation – to be confirmed	Egypt	High-Level Guest & Respondent – Round 2
15:07–15:14	Ms Teresa Liguori, Water Diplomacy Expert	–	Senior Expert Discussant – Round 2
15:14–15:20	Ms Julie Pellizzari	CIHEAM Bari	Moderator – Focused Exchange
15:20–15:45	Young Leaders, Minister & Senior Expert	–	Open Dialogue – Round 3: Building Solutions Together
15:45–16:00	Ms Julie Pellizzari (Moderator), with all speakers	CIHEAM Bari	Closing – “Rome Intergenerational Water Statement”

BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

Water challenges are becoming increasingly complex, requiring not only technological innovation but also new forms of leadership, cooperation and inclusive governance. Climate change, water scarcity, ecosystem degradation, demographic pressures, digital transformation and the growing interconnection between water, food, energy and climate demand solutions that are technically sound, socially inclusive and economically viable.

While experienced professionals bring decades of technical knowledge, institutional memory and policy experience, a new generation of water professionals is emerging with fresh perspectives, digital competencies, entrepreneurial approaches and a strong commitment to sustainability, innovation and social impact. Rather than positioning youth as passive recipients of knowledge, this session recognises them as active contributors to shaping future water policies, innovation pathways and collaborative solutions, creating a space where experience meets innovation and different perspectives converge towards a shared vision for Mediterranean water security.

Taking place within the Euro-Mediterranean Water Forum 2026 and building on the ONE WATER II Final Event and the wider ONE WATER network across the enlarged Mediterranean, this session gives the next generation of water professionals a platform alongside senior experts, reinforcing ONE WATER's role as a lasting space for intergenerational dialogue, mentorship and shared leadership.

OBJECTIVES

- Foster an open and constructive intergenerational dialogue on the future of water management in the Mediterranean and Balkan regions.
- Explore how different generations perceive current and emerging water challenges from technical, scientific, policy, business and societal perspectives.
- Highlight innovative ideas, entrepreneurial approaches and digital solutions proposed by young professionals, connecting them with the practical experience of senior experts.
- Promote mutual learning between generations and generate a shared vision and concrete commitments for a resilient, inclusive and sustainable Mediterranean water future.

FORMAT & METHODOLOGY

The session is designed as a highly interactive intergenerational dialogue rather than a sequence of presentations, moderated to encourage genuine exchange between generations and active participation from the audience. It brings together five young leaders (approximately 20–35 years old) from different Mediterranean and Balkan countries, representing diverse geographical areas, gender balance and multidisciplinary backgrounds, and two senior contributors representing complementary perspectives, including high-level policy leadership and water diplomacy.

Following an introduction by Ms Daniela Dagostino (Education and the Next Generation of Water Leaders) and an opening framing by the moderator, Round 1 – Where Are We Heading? The Youth

Perspective (20 min) gives the five young leaders the floor to share how their generation perceives the future of water in the Mediterranean and Balkan regions, exploring emerging challenges, changing priorities and what gives them hope for the future. Round 2 – What Have We Learned? Senior and Ministerial Reflections (20 min) gives the floor first to H.E. Prof. Hani Sewilam for a brief ministerial reflection (5–7 min), followed by Teresa Liguori (5–7 min), before the moderator brings both into a focused exchange with the young leaders on what experience, policy and international cooperation can contribute.

Round 3 – Building Solutions Together (25 min) brings the young leaders, the Minister and the senior expert into an open dialogue on innovative and practical solutions, organised around three complementary dimensions: Technical and Scientific (innovation, digital transformation, AI, Earth Observation, climate resilience, nature-based solutions); Business and Societal (entrepreneurship, investment, financing, citizen engagement, social innovation); and Leadership and Governance (policy, institutions, diplomacy, cooperation, and new models of leadership).

Rather than closing with an open floor discussion, the session concludes with a dedicated closing moment (15 min) in which the moderator invites the young leaders, the Minister and the senior expert to distil the dialogue into five or six shared commitments, formally endorsed as “The Rome Intergenerational Water Statement” – a concrete, visible outcome and legacy of the session, consistent with the Forum's collaborative and action-oriented spirit.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Forum participants, including policymakers, researchers, practitioners, entrepreneurs, students, representatives of international organisations, civil society organisations and the private sector, who will actively contribute to the open discussion; CIHEAM Bari, One Water Committee Italy, Arab Water Council and the wider ONE WATER Focal Points network; and media representatives.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- A shared intergenerational vision for the future of water in the Mediterranean, formally endorsed as “The Rome Intergenerational Water Statement”.
 - A concise set of five to six priority commitments jointly developed by the young leaders and senior contributors on innovation, governance, cooperation and youth engagement.
 - Identification of opportunities to strengthen youth participation in regional water initiatives, policy dialogue and decision-making processes.
 - Enhanced networking among young professionals from Mediterranean and Balkan countries, and a tangible contribution to the outcomes of the Euro-Mediterranean Water Forum.
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