



**GREENPEACE**



**Position paper**  
**on the occasion of the Mediterranean Session**  
**to be held at the**  
**5th World Water Forum**  
**Istanbul, 16-22 March 2009**

**Freshwater Issues in the Mediterranean - Mediterranean Regional Process**

In December 2008, in Jordan, at the **Civil Society meeting** held on the day before the **Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Water** (December 22<sup>nd</sup>), Mediterranean regional NGOs had the opportunity to voice their views and concerns on freshwater issues in the Mediterranean as well as on the process of development of the **Mediterranean Strategy for Water**, which was officially launched at the Ministerial Conference.

To follow up on these recent events, the **Comité de Suivi (CdS)**<sup>1</sup>, representing **hundreds of environmental NGOs in the Mediterranean**, would like herewith to reiterate some **key points of the Civil Society Statement** that was adopted in Jordan on the 21<sup>st</sup> of December 2008:

1. **Greater policy coherence** with regard to water is needed in the region. This could be achieved through the **mainstreaming of all current and up-coming water-related initiatives** such as the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), Horizon 2020, the Mediterranean Water Strategy and projects under the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), the EU Water Initiative – Mediterranean Component, etc. and other relevant processes and policies (i.e. Euro-Med Free Trade Agreement);
2. **Civil society participation, involvement and empowerment** in the whole spectrum of regional and national water management processes is essential. **Participation of civil society representatives in the Water Experts Group** in charge of developing the **Mediterranean Strategy for Water is of particular importance**, as is the establishment and maintenance of a **robust tripartite dialogue** between civil society, governments and the regional and international financial institutions (e.g. EIB, WB);
3. Governments of the region must promote **sustainable use and demand side management** based on **IWRM and IRBM** principles and by employing a **mix of regulatory, financial and policy measures** that reflect the degree of water scarcity in the region;
4. A new **“water culture”** in the Mediterranean needs to be encouraged, notably through **education for sustainable development**, capacity building and awareness raising activities;
5. The Mediterranean Strategy for Water should make clear **reference to the “ecosystem approach”**, in line with several regional and international efforts (CBD, UNEP-MAP, MSSD, EU policies, etc.) and recognize the **role of ecosystem services**;
6. Regional cooperation with regard to **transboundary water resources** should be enhanced through the application of **international law and mechanisms** such as the UN Watercourses Convention. Transparency and accountability in water management overall could also be facilitated in this way.

<sup>1</sup> Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED), Environment and Development Action in the Third World (ENDA - Maghreb), European Environmental Bureau (EEB), Friends of the Earth - MedNet Programme, Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE), Greenpeace, World Wide Fund for Nature - Mediterranean Programme Office (WWF MedPO)

Furthermore, while acknowledging that further infrastructure may well be needed in order to support provision of water for basic needs and socio-economic development, the CdS on the occasion of the Mediterranean Session at the 5<sup>th</sup> WWF, **calls upon the governments of the Euro-Mediterranean countries** to:

1. base the projects developed under the UfM on the **Mediterranean Strategy for Water**;
2. enhance **good governance** and **transparency in the selection process** – including definition of criteria, evaluation processes, etc. – **of the water-related projects** to be funded/promoted under the UfM and its Secretariat in Barcelona;
3. only select those **infrastructure projects** that are really needed, for which no alternative solutions exist and are cost-efficient (notably by conducting options assessments, SEAs, etc.), while using internationally recognized **sustainability standards** (i.e. EIAs, certification schemes) and encouraging “**soft**” or “**natural/green**” **infrastructure** projects (e.g. constructed/rehabilitated wetlands for pollution mitigation, flood plain restoration);
4. ensure **civil society participation** in the decision-making processes related to the above-mentioned projects - especially of the **stakeholders directly affected** by their implementation and benefit-sharing - in line with the requirements of related international and regional initiatives (i.e. Aarhus Convention, EU policies, Equator Principles).