

WORKING GROUP ON “WATER AND ENERGY” OF THE INTERMEDITERRANEAN COMMISSION

ACTION PLAN 2015-2016

Update and conclusions on the central points:

- 1 – Responding to the strategic challenge of water in the Mediterranean
- and
- 3 - Water and energy as transversal elements

I. Background

The Working Group on “Water and Energy” is the result of the merger of the two original groups “Water” and “Renewable Energies and Energy Efficiency” of the IMC, approved by the Commission’s Political Bureau to promote greater exchange and take advantage of synergies between existing groups.

The relationships between these two sectors and climate change are recognised in all forums and this new working group’s Action Plan 2015-2016 (available on the organisation’s [website](#)) was drafted with this in mind.

In the case of “Water”, important milestones have succeeded one another during this period. The most important date was December 2015, when the bodies of water of the States of the European Union were all supposed to have achieved a good state¹. This date was also the one established for the approval of flood risk management plans². Finally, 2015 is also the year when programmes of measures begin to be developed so that the good environmental state (GES) of the marine environment is achieved or maintained by 2020 at the latest³.

¹ Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and the Council on 23 October 2000, establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy (*Water framework directive*).

² Directive 2007/60/EC of the European Parliament and the Council, of 23 October 2007 on the assessment and management of flood risks (*Floods directive*).

³ Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 27 June 2008, establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (*Marine strategy framework directive*).

The European Commission is evaluating all these actions, but it is clear that more strategies with additional measures and, perhaps, new approaches will have to be established, as, for example, focusing on compliance with the objectives of the water framework directive and considering the Commission's various reports and technical bulletins on the application of the river basin management plans it is clear that a good state has been achieved in barely 50% of bodies of water.

The working group's lines of action put forward for the 2015-16 two-year period in the "Water" sector were: (1) to improve the application of the EU's water policy, (2) to integrate water policy objectives into other policies and (3) to eliminate loopholes from the current framework in order to develop instruments to make water use more efficient.

Along these lines, the work carried out to date has consisted of:

- 1 Explaining the peculiarities of Mediterranean river basins and the difficulties presented in implementing European directives and achieving their objectives.
- 2 Exchanging of good practices and experiences in this field with the IMC's own group.
- 3 Participation in other working groups and forums, such as ERRIN, EIP, the European Water Conference.

This means that, nowadays, there is sufficient diagnosis for it to be possible to present and approve a final document for the regions making up the IMC.

II. Objectives

The general objective of the Water and Energy Group's 2015-16 action plan is that the regions should be able to contribute to sustainable development in the regions of the Mediterranean basin, providing specific responses to the strategic challenges concerning water and energy and the implementation of the EU's most important directives and policies and those of local and regional application.

Considering the circumstances set out above and the fact that there have been significant political changes in many regions making up the working group, it is necessary to relaunch and complete the group's work.

III. Actions

To achieve the objectives set, in this final period of the biennial action plan it should be possible to approve a new document agreed by the regions making up the working group detailing specific proposals to be developed by the regions themselves, individually or in a coordinated way or to urge that they should be carried out by higher authorities such as the States or the European Union.

These proposals will be based on the exchange of knowledge in communication between the members of the group and at the seminars or symposiums already

held. The various public recommendations based on expert analysis of the river basin management plans drawn up for the river basin districts must also be taken into account. This final document must not lose sight of the common area it is intended for (the Mediterranean basin); the environmental challenges pursued (the rational use of resources and the fight against pollutants limiting or prejudicing the use of these resources), and the consideration of water-energy-climate change relationships.

Once the consensus document has been approved, the aim is that the CPMR should use it to achieve the investment or promotion needed from the right levels of government so the measures approved in it can be adopted.

To strengthen the content of this document, it is planned to hold a Conference where experts (from the university, professional, user or regional administration spheres) will explain the issues dealt with in this document, which is intended to be technically approved at the Conference (this will have to be confirmed with policy approval from the Bureau or the Assembly).

IV. Calendar

1 Beginning of June.

- The group leaders will draw up a draft of the final document which will be distributed among group members by the Secretary of the IMC.
- The group leaders will propose an initial programme for holding the Conference. Invitation by the Secretary of the IMC to take part in the Conference.

2 July-August.

- Deadline for the presentation of contributions to this document by the regions making up the group.
- Reception of contributions for active participation in the Conference (speakers).

3 September.

- Final draft of the document, taking the various contributions into account.
- Confirmation of attendance at the Conference.

4 End of September.

- Distribution of the final versions of the document and the Conference programme among members of the group.

5 18 October.

- Conference in Valencia which will include the presentation of papers and the approval of the document by the working group.

6 November-December 2016

- Next meeting of the Policy Bureau or the Assembly: approval of the document.
- Dissemination of the document (involving the different agents in working along the proposed lines and getting the European authorities to support them).
- Proposals for monitoring the actions and drawing up new common proposals or projects in the next group work period.

Subsequent stages (2017):

- Measures for monitoring and proposing future lines of work for the next two-year period.
- Possibility of common projects.
- Ideas for involving society, users and businesses in the new lines of action.