



NEWS RELEASE

Athens, 12 October 2018

Continued support for the sustainable management of Lake Bizerte 2nd SWIM-H2020 SM Consultation Meeting Bizerte, Tunisia 9 October 2018

The Bizerte Lake basin in Tunisia has been identified as a "hot spot", with a high concentration of pollution sources and serious environmental problems requiring urgent action.

The EU-funded SWIM-H2020 Support Mechanism is supporting Tunisia in consolidating the governance structure for the sustainable management of Lake Bizerte, building on previous steps in this direction. A Consultation with the Lake Bizerte stakeholders, most of which are signatories to the Lake Bizerte Charter that was signed in 2012 and is a joint commitment to the lake's sustainable development, was co-organised by the SWIM-H2020 SM and the Management Unit of the Integrated De-pollution Project for the Lake Bizerte region, on 9 October 2018, in Bizerte, Tunisia.

More than 50 stakeholders from involved ministries, government agencies, local authorities, academia, and NGOs participated to discuss the approaches and governance frameworks that could be appropriate, the challenges that need to be dealt with, good Tunisian and other practices in the Mediterranean and also hear and learn from similar experiences such as that of the Marchica Lagoon in Morocco. The overall aim of the meeting was to ensure the continuity and a smooth and rapid evolution towards a sustainable development in the Bizerte Lake area.

A previous consultation organized by SWIM-H2020 SM (22 March 2017) had informed stakeholders on the progress and provisions of the Charter and the latest developments at the time. It also served to re-invigorate the commitments for the implementation of the Lake Bizerte Charter through the various initiatives, programs and projects undertaken by the stakeholders in alignment with the vision outlined by the Charter.

The Lake Bizerte Depollution project is co-financed by the European Investment Bank (EIB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the European Union and the Tunisian State. It is a Union for the Mediterranean labeled project and focuses on four main areas: the reduction of industrial pollution, the rehabilitation and strengthening of the sewerage and wastewater network, the treatment of industrial solid waste and the improvement of quality of life (through the development of the lake banks and the extension of nearby fishing ports) and a horizontal component of support to the institutions and the administration to enhance its efficiency in environmental management and sustainability.

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Sustainable Water Integrated Management and Horizon 2020 Support Mechanism

Working for a Sustainable Mediterranean, Caring for our Future.

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The civil society component of SWIM-H2020 SM is facilitated by the UfM labelled BlueGreen project and network.

SWIM and Horizon 2020 Support Mechanism Project

The **SWIM-H2020 SM EU-funded Project** aims to contribute to the sustainable use of scarce water resources and properly manage municipal waste, industrial emissions and waste water, and therefore enhance, directly and indirectly, resilience to climate variability and change in the entire region with emphasis on the countries of North Africa and the Middle East (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, [Syria] and Tunisia).

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