



NEWS RELEASE

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SWIM-H2020 SM National Meeting in Palestine on Sustainable Water Resources and a Clean Environment in the Mediterranean

Today, the EU-funded SWIM-H2020 SM project organized a National Meeting on sustainable water resources and a clean environment in the Mediterranean.

SWIM-H2020 SM (2016-2019) is a key regional Project aimed at contributing to the reduction of marine pollution and the sustainable use of scarce water resources in the Mediterranean region, particularly in North African countries and the Middle East.

The objective of the National Meeting in Palestine is to present what has been achieved so far and what still needs to be implemented until April 2019, when the present phase of the project will end.

In addition to the co-organizers, the EU Delegation in Palestine, the representatives of the Palestinian Water Authority (PWA) and the Environment Quality Authority (EQA), national agencies and international organizations active in Palestine, and stakeholders from all sectors including academics, environmental NGOs and the media attended the meeting.

SWIM-H2020 SM is conducting six (6) main capacity-building Activities in Palestine to respond directly to the challenges facing the country and the opportunities that have emerged. In collaboration with the Palestinian Water Authority (PWA) and the Environment Quality Authority (EQA), SWIM-H2020 SM is running technical assistance activities related to: Mainstreaming Drought Risk Management; expertise on conceptualization and planning of the 1st Palestinian International Water Forum; Enhancing environmental awareness including the media and support for implementing Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in accordance with the Action Plan of the Mediterranean Strategy on ESD; Industrial pollution monitoring, management and enforcement focusing on specific industries (tanning and olive oil industries); Hazardous waste management.

These Activities have been implemented with the valuable contribution of relevant Ministries and other Palestinian stakeholders (local authorities, NGOs, etc.) and in collaboration with other regional actors and projects active in Palestine.

Thanks to the above, coordinated and satisfactory progress has been made so far. In addition, Palestine has taken full advantage of the opportunities offered by the regional component of the project, with more than 204 people participating in all training and on-site study visits.

"The SWIM-H2020 SM Project is contributing to the reduction of marine pollution and the sustainable use of scarce water resources in the Mediterranean region. In Palestine, we have a strong partnership with the Palestinian Water Authority and the Palestinian Environment Quality Authority. At this national meeting, participants will discuss the achievements of this joint work and the challenges faced. In future, we hope to be able to extend this approach further, discussing and integrating new support initiatives working together with other donors, in particular EU Development Partners. In the EU, we believe in putting together our resources and coordinating our efforts in favour of a more effective and relevant cooperation," said the **EU Head of Cooperation Ms. Alessandra Viezzer**.

"I am very happy with the implementation of SWIM-H2020 in Palestine. Palestine has demonstrated a commitment and ability to utilise in an efficient way all the opportunities and support provided by the programme. The relevant Ministries and other stakeholders have optimised the input and obtained tangible results and at institutional/regulatory, technical and operational level" said **Professor Michael Scoullou, SWIM-H2020 SM Team Leader**.

The National Meeting in Palestine allowed, through a panel discussion, to other projects and key processes working on various aspects of the sustainable management of water and the protection of the environment in Palestine, with a positive impact on the whole of the Mediterranean, to present also their status and their progress, thus showing complementarity and synergies among projects.

The SWIM-H2020 SM project covers 8 partner countries and has a budget of € 6,705,000. It organizes more than 100 activities, including 50 national and 35 regional, and addresses 21 themes.

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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.

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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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