



**Water and
Environment Support**
in the ENI Southern Neighbourhood region

WES PRESS RELEASE

Water Accounting as a vital tool for water management

Athens, 5 November 2020

Water Accounting is a vital tool to achieve integrated water governance and a sustainable water balance. **In order to establish proper Water Accounting in all Southern Mediterranean countries, more than 50 participants participated in a two-week regional training on Water Accounting, which was organized by the EU funded “Water and Environment support” (WES) project.** Through an on-line platform, water experts from relevant ministries and statistical offices, followed a 20 hours intensive on-line training spreading over more than two weeks of lectures and workshops presented to them by European, regional and local experts.

The training revolved around the overall concept of water accounts, their environmental and economic components, the benefits of water accounting and the use of water accounting outputs in reporting on the progress made towards the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Participants also were introduced to the Physical Flow accounts and Physical Assets accounts, using the UN System of Environmental Economic Accounting for Water (SEEA-W) and to various monitoring frameworks. During the working groups, newly acquired knowledge was brought into practice through practical exercises and gave the opportunity to further exchange experiences between participating practitioners from the Northern and Southern Mediterranean countries.

According to WES trainers George Bariamis and Eric Mino, water accounts should be seen as part of a larger programme. “Water Accounting shows us how we treat the environment and how we can quantify our natural capital. It helps us to ensure not to further degrade the environment. All Mediterranean countries therefore need to start working systematically on collecting the necessary and relevant data.”

“Most of the participants are used to make hydrological balances, but during the training they learned that it is important to connect their daily work with economic factors as well. Because at the end, water use should be reported as an economic activity, based upon international standards. Normally people in the water sector often work alone but now they know it is necessary to cooperate for example with the statistical office as well in order to create proper water accounts.”

“This training gave them the opportunity to take advantage of the European partnership with the region and to experience European water accounts and statistics. In Europe, Water Accounting also started with making assumptions as not all data is always available. Therefore, a lack of available data should not be an argument for not establishing a proper water accounting system.”

“We also tried to convey that teamwork with different colleagues is vital in order to develop those accounts and explained the need to use standard classifications like SEEA. Through case studies from different countries in Europe and the region, useful examples were provided but those studies also showed that in this field European countries are also still learning.”

Majeda Alawneh, who participated in the training on behalf of the Palestinian Water Authority, acknowledged that “the training was very interesting and gave us a good idea on all aspects of Water Accounting and how we can use it.”

Hosam el Nagar from the Egyptian Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation added that it was a very good opportunity to also meet colleagues from other countries to exchange experiences and that it gave him a very good introduction to the subject and to learn that there are different systems that can be used and applied to establish proper water accounts.





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in the ENI Southern Neighbourhood region

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The Water and Environment Support project in the Southern Mediterranean Neighbourhood aims to protecting the environment and improving the management of scarce water resources in the Mediterranean region. It will tackle problems related to pollution prevention and water use efficiency. WES is a regional project with emphasis on the countries of North Africa and the Middle East (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, and Tunisia).

Disclaimer

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