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9TH MEETING OF THE HORIZON 2020 STEERING GROUP 29 JANUARY 2018

JORDAN VALLEY MARRIOTT DEAD SEA RESORT & SPA, DEAD SEA, JORDAN

SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSIONS

ATTACHED ARE: FINAL **AGENDA** OF THE MEETING AND **LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

ALL **PRESENTATIONS** MADE ARE ACCESSIBLE AT:

[HTTPS://WWW.H2020.NET/COMPONENT/JDOWNLOADS/CATEGORY/336-9TH-H2020-STEERING-GROUP-MEETING-29-JANUARY-2018-DEAD-SEA-JORDAN?ITEMID=411](https://www.h2020.net/component/jdownloads/category/336-9th-h2020-steering-group-meeting-29-january-2018-dead-sea-jordan?itemid=411)

The aim of the 9th Steering Group meeting was on the one hand to share progress achieved since the previous meeting in February 2016 and on the other to (i) agree on the best way to consolidate results and achievements in view of the remaining last two years of the Initiative's Work Plan and (ii) provide inputs on the Horizon 2020 Initiative to the UfM Environment Task Force on the post-2020 environment agenda (dedicated meeting of the following day), where Horizon 2020 has a prominent role, particularly in view of the approaching of its target year 2020.

Opening remarks

The panellists stressed the importance of the H2020 Initiative for the region as a whole and the countries, as well as their appreciation of the opportunity to meet in Jordan. In the case of the latter, emerging challenges, such as the influx of refugees, limit the chances to achieve sustainable development. Nevertheless, Jordan is gradually moving towards a green economy, also through the support of the H2020 Initiative for a Cleaner Mediterranean.

All meetings of the week were intertwined. Ministries of Environment and Water from the countries, different EU DGs, different divisions in the UfM were involved. The participants were invited to take stock of progress achieved so far, gather lessons learned and define priorities for the next steps. The milestone year of 2020 is around the corner so there is a lot of work to be done now. The links to the SDGs should be well defined.



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Pollution reduction and prevention investments component

After the presentations made, the Flagship project criteria that were jointly developed under H2020 were discussed:

1st criterion: a project fulfils these four strategic criteria and priorities and has access to financing.

2nd criterion: a project is part of a national development plan of a country, or part of a MAP NAP, acknowledged by regional/local authorities and local community/NGOs (i.e. that stakeholders are involved).

3rd criterion: a project meets environmentally relevant criteria.

4th criterion: a project is 'bankable'.

It seems that if all criteria are met, then a project has good chances of implementation. The pool of IFIs has been enriched with AfD, EBRD, etc. being more involved. Nevertheless, the PRPI component of H2020 should have a better cooperation with the Financial Institutions.

An additional potential criterion that was proposed was to consider the rate of continued environmental degradation (to the extent that it is measurable) that is taking place while the project financing process is running.

Access to available funds is a problem and capacity building on this could be part of the next phase of H2020 Capacity Building.

Apart from these criteria, each donor agency has its own criteria. If possible, harmonising these could shorten the process and make it easier for countries: it facilitates the country capacity to prepare.

Investment projects are inherently difficult: it takes time and there are many obstacles. Two years are needed just for building trust and each case is very country specific. Continuity is needed yet priorities change and adaptations are constantly needed. Convincing the Ministry of Finance and other Ministries what the value of investing in environmental projects is, is a major challenge. High level political support is necessary for investments to advance and this should be seriously taken into account in future planning.

The Lake Bizerte project has taken very long and in the meantime the relevant studies are outdated. In Egypt (the country with the biggest portfolio) when will the results be apparent on the ground? Bilateral support for investments is quicker in implementation.

The Western Balkan countries and Turkey did not participate in any of the MeHSIP phases. This investment component should open for these countries in the next programming phase. The UfM Secretary General in fact confirmed that this request will be seriously considered.

The investment component of the MedProgramme¹ will contribute to the funding of some of MeHSIP's projects which meet the GEF criteria. The MedProgramme can build on MeHSIP and also contribute to H2020 objectives.

¹ The GEF-MedProgramme builds on the success of the previous GEF-funded MedPartnership and ClimVar & ICZM projects. Its 7 Child projects aim to reduce the major transboundary environmental stresses affecting the Mediterranean



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Cooperation is key for a collective effort in the same direction. NAPs are from 2016-2025 with a mid-term evaluation in 2020. Unless this component also succeeds, we will find that by 2025 NAPs will not have been implemented.

There is a long history, since way back when METAP² began. Do we continue along these lines till 2025 and settle for the 'low-hanging' fruits (mainly feasibility studies)? This exercise of assessing/identifying challenges in PRPI is very useful and part of the evaluation process linked to the Ministerial Declaration. Till now, MeHSIP was funded by FEMIP to help project promoters prepare. The EC informed the participants that a new tool will be in place soon.

To send a more hopeful message to the region, it may be good to give priority to easier projects so that results can be visible.

The question was raised about the Co-chairing of the PRPI sub-group of H2020. MeHSIP may be closing down but the PRPI group must continue.

In a nutshell: Links to the country commitments and SDGs process should be clear; preparedness (capacity building) for project preparation and implementation is key; the flagship project criteria are useful and should be circulated so that they are not just known but actually used; it could be useful to enhance PRPI links to other processes dealing with financial issues, such as the current work on the UfM Water Agenda (which touches among other issues on the water-food-energy-climate change nexus); the level of information on MeHSIP projects should be maintained.

Review and monitoring component

The Work Programme of the RM component is mostly in progress with a lot expected to be implemented in the 2018-2019 biennium. This is the second phase of SEIS and is mid-way now so reflecting on progress is timely. The 2nd indicator-based H2020 Assessment Report will be prepared over next year together with UN Environment/MAP with 2017 as the baseline on the state of the marine environment (it will be ready in 2019). Clearly a lot needs to happen in the remaining 2-3 years of the H2020 Initiative in terms of review and monitoring.

Under the RM component and SEIS implementation a strong inter-institutional mechanism (both environment and statistics) has been established in the countries through national committees and they do a lot of work. But they are not formal bodies that feed into policy development.

EU States are not as present as hoped for in the RM sub-group meetings (as is the case in the whole of the H2020 Initiative). The participants are mainly from the beneficiary countries. There is a need

Sea and its coastal areas while strengthening climate resilience and water security, and improving the health and livelihoods of coastal populations.

² Regional Solid Waste Management Project. It was financed by the European Commission, executed by the World Bank and hosted by the Tunisian Solid Waste Management Agency (ANGED) (2003-2007). Beneficiary countries were Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Palestinian Authority and Tunisia.



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for harmonised communication at regional level and the countries should better reflect H2020 in their national processes.

Because there are very limited national resources for the monitoring of industrial pollution, the use of PRTR (Pollutant Release and Transfer Register) may be the way to go. Under solid waste management, the informal recycling sector should also be considered.

As information systems have to be sustained within the countries, with or without donors, there is a need of having a strong implication of the countries themselves in accessing the necessary financing. Through SEIS, Jordan (MoE) got a new fund of 3.8 m euros for the national waste information system (infrastructure at dumpsites, e-linked, etc.) which is expected to be ready in 5 years. The key message of the discussion was that tapping into the EU bilateral agreements of countries, is worth the effort. The funding exists but it needs to be claimed.

The closer collaboration of MAP and SEIS Focal Points has had positive results and needs to continue both at regional and national levels.

Research component

Under the Research component of H2020 and the SWIM-H2020 SM one of the H2020 WP tasks has been completed: a screening of a large number of EU funded research projects on the science-policy interface and a resulting set of recommendations on making the interface more effective has been submitted to feed into the relevant internal process underway.

The mapping of country needs on research, as mentioned in the H2020 WP is a pending task. There are numerous research projects of relevance to H2020 but we are missing the impact aspect and the links to pollution.

Of interest to the countries may be that the BLUEMED research and innovation Initiative for promoting the blue economy in the Mediterranean Basin is now opening to the South on common priorities (working group was set up late last year).

The presentation of the PANACeA project results confirmed the on-going efforts for a paradigm change in biodiversity management efforts in the Mediterranean through the use of an effective Ecosystem Based approach that ensures ecosystem function and integrity as pre-condition of the provision of ecosystem services. A few words were shared afterwards with the participants on the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA) project, that will make integrated water management and agro-food systems in the region more climate-resilient, efficient, cost-effective and sustainable and to address up-stream problems such as water scarcity, food security, health, well-being and migration. Over 10 years (2018-2028), 494.8 m euro will be dedicated. PRIMA's Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda will support and promote integration, alignment and joint implementation of national R&I programmes under a common research and innovation strategy to address the diverse challenges in water scarcity, agriculture and food security.



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Capacity Building component

Many of the Horizon2020 CB priorities under the Horizon 2020 Work Plan have either been met (8 out of the 13) via a collective effort in the region while the rest are partially met or in progress.

The future is prevention but de-pollution remains an issue in terms of capacity building needs. The EU Plastics Strategy was just approved and will be considered in the next phases of planning and implementation of the Capacity Building component of H2020. Much of the institutional and legal setting required for environmental protection and sustainable development is in place in most partner countries and thus enforcement is a main focal area: permitting and inspection should be in the next phase of the CB component. Regardless of the thematic focus, there is a need to put more emphasis on the impact of any future CB activities.

Environment becoming a cross-cutting theme in governments significantly helps things advance, also at CB level. Awareness raising and Education for Sustainable Development create the enabling conditions for reforms and regulations and is an ongoing effort/need.

Peer to Peer exchanges may be the way ahead, particularly when combined with site visits. But the issue of who to capacitate remains an issue. Governments do not have the capacity and resources to find the right people in many cases. Nevertheless, the H2020 CB activities do build platforms for interaction that are actually sustained over time.

The various CB work programmes of the H2020 stakeholders and projects well support each other's objectives without overlaps filling in gaps and addressing real needs.

Overall, the progress under this component is very satisfactory and its continuation without a gap should be ensured.

Consolidation of achievements and results of the Horizon2020 initiative

The session aimed to focus on how progress/results can be consolidated over the coming months/years and what needs to be decided now so as to not have a gap when launching the new phase in 2020. The coordination between the different components of H2020 should be improved overall but also in this consolidation effort.

Further details need to be worked out on how this consolidation will take place and the coordination mechanism can help in this respect.

In terms of the 2019 EEA/UNEP MAP report, operationalising the integration of all reporting and indicator processes in the region is a challenge. The RM sub-group has identified operational actions for all those involved and proposes an H2020 assessment framework.

The main H2020 stakeholder inputs to the discussion were the following:

The need for capacity building (inspection, enforcement, investment preparedness, etc.) remains high with many reforms underway at the moment throughout the region. Since H2020 is succeeding in terms of CB, it should be continued. Training of trainers should remain at the core of the design so that the people who are trained transfer their knowledge. This continuation will ensure sustainability. Any gap would be problematic. An extension would be preferable and not another



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tendering like before. The delays that ensued with the previous gap caused serious problems. The same applies to the RM activities.

The CB and RM activities have launched interministerial collaboration, new policy focus and reform and a clear transition to a green economy. Perhaps more emphasis on industrial pollution compared to the other two H2020 themes (urban wastewater and municipal waste) is needed in the next phase. Exchange of experiences between countries is always a high priority. In general, a provision of flexibility to adapt and integrate emerging needs must be built-in as a buffer, so as to be able to address *ad hoc* needs.

H2020 is supported by many non-state actors, but in an uncoordinated way, so consolidation at national level is needed. Better visibility can improve this as well as buy-in of other state actors (ministries). The few resources of the H2020 Coordination Mechanism and the national meetings of SWIM-H2020 SM that will take place in 2017 can support this to a certain extent.

At regional level, the H2020 governance scheme could be revisited. Regardless of the scheme, it is important that Focal Points do not change so that institutional memory and continuity are maintained. In terms of Civil Society involvement the regional member NGOs could be re-organised as in the past (Comite de Suivi).

Overall, H2020 implementation is smooth. National coordination has indeed improved but it can be improved further. Hopefully the 2019 Assessment Report will be able to reflect this progress. For CB, emerging needs surface all the time so it is never enough and there is always room for more.

There is an overall optimism for the future of H2020 because of its inclusiveness and cooperative character. The post-2020 phase will definitely build on today's achievements but may be different.

On the next day's meeting a few words were said: it will be focused on the future, how and why we are building the 'Green Package'; the next Ministerial Meeting will be at the end of 2019 - beginning of 2020; in November 2018 the next meeting of the ENV and CC Working Group will take place; exchanges will be made till then as an enrichment process while the political process will start in early 2019 (concept note to be submitted to the Senior Officials Meeting (SOM)); it is the SOM that will call and agree on the next Ministerial Meeting. The day's outcomes will help build the TOR for the external evaluation of the Declaration's implementation.



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9TH MEETING OF THE HORIZON 2020 STEERING GROUP 29 JANUARY 2018

JORDAN VALLEY MARRIOTT DEAD SEA RESORT & SPA, DEAD SEA, JORDAN

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Registration: 8:30-9:00

9:00 – 9:30 **Opening remarks, context and objectives of the meeting**

Miguel Garcia-Herraiz, Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)

Ibrahim Laafia, Delegation of the European Union to Jordan, UfM Co-Presidency

HE Eng Ahmad Al-Qatarneh, Ministry of Environment, Jordan, UfM Co-Presidency

The aim of this Steering Group meeting is on the one hand to share progress achieved since the previous meeting in February 2016 and on the other to (i) agree on the best way to consolidate results and achievements in view of the remaining last two years of the Initiative's Work Plan and (ii) take note of the work done on the post-2020 environment agenda under the UfM Environment Task Force (dedicated meeting of the following day).

9:30 - 11:00 **Pollution reduction and prevention investments component**

- Debrief by the chairs of the PRPI Group on the implementation of the work program (UfM Secretariat and EIB):
 - o *Miguel Garcia-Herraiz, Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (15 min)*
 - o *Souad Farsi, European Investment Bank (15 min)*
- MeHSIP in Jordan, *Mohammad Sutari, Resident Environmental Expert – MeHSIP (10 min)*
Discussion will follow with emphasis on recommendations for the last 2 years of the Work Programme implementation

11:00 - 11:15 **Coffee Break**



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11:15 - 12:45

Review and monitoring component

- Debrief by the chairs of the Review and Monitoring Group on the implementation of the work programme (EEA and UN Environment/MAP)
 - o *Galina Georgieva and Cécile Roddier-Quefelec, European Environment Agency (15 min)*
 - o *Tatjana Hema, UN Environment/Mediterranean Action Plan (15 min)*
 - o *Countries' presentations: Karim Sahnoun, Ministry of Environment, Tunisia & Mohamad Afaneh, H2020 Focal Point, Jordan) (20 min)*

Discussion will follow with emphasis on recommendations for the last 2 years of the Work Programme implementation

12:45 - 13:30

Research component

Information on research activities that are within the scope of Horizon 2020; highlights of specific projects (briefing on the EU PRIMA by *Sylvie Fontaine, DG NEAR, European Commission* and presentation on the PANACeA project by *Sonsoles San Roman, ETC-UMA*) and issues to be addressed.

13:30 - 14:30

Lunch

14:30 – 15:30

Capacity Building component

- Debrief by the chairs of the Capacity Building Group on the implementation of the work programme (UN Environment/MAP and UfM Co-Presidencies)
 - o *Patrick Wegerdt, DGENV, European Commission, UfM Co-Presidency and Michael Scoullas, Team Leader, SWIM-H2020 Support Mechanism (15 min)*
 - o *Tatjana Hema, UN Environment/Mediterranean Action Plan (10 min)*
 - o *Ahmad Abu Thaher, H2020 Focal Point, Palestine (10 min)*
 - o *Contributions of other H2020 Stakeholders participating*

Discussion will follow with emphasis on recommendations for the last 2 years of the Work Programme implementation

The last two years of the H2020 Initiative's Work Programme and beyond

15:30 - 17:30

Consolidation of achievements and results of the Horizon2020 initiative

- o *The 2019 EEA/UNEP/MAAP report*
- o *Horizon 2020 Coordination Mechanism*
- o *The implementing projects*
- o *Other inputs from participants (countries, stakeholders and projects)*

17:30 – 18:00

Wrap-up, meeting conclusions, towards day 2 and UfM Environment Task Force

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Ninth Meeting of the Horizon 2020 Steering Group

29 January 2018, Dead Sea, Jordan

List of Participants

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