



CENTER for MEDITERRANEAN
INTEGRATION | CENTRE pour
l'INTÉGRATION en MÉDITERRANÉE
مركز التكامل المتوسطي

CIM / CMI

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The Center for the Mediterranean Integration (CMI) **welcomes this Inter-ministerial Conference as an occasion to discuss urgent regional challenges**, and **thanks the Albanian Governments and CIHEAM** for organizing this important event. We are a regional knowledge/sharing platform focusing on common challenges facing the Mediterranean region. For the benefit of better integration, we **exchange knowledge, discuss public policies, and identify the solutions needed to address key challenges** for the region, including the issues related to climate change and forced displacement.

Historical, human-induced environmental degradation has preceded climate change in leading to the **regional instability** and **food insecurity** currently at hand in the region. Deforestation, soil erosion; desertification and aquifer depletion are long-term processes that have significantly reduced the region's water security. **Current water mismanagement** and **water losses** are now making this situation worse.

Numerous research had been published on the **droughts in Syria in 2006-2011**, which was one of the the key long-term shocks that contributed the international displacement and built-up to the Syrian crisis. **Water scarcity** coupled to **climate change** and **ongoing environmental degradation** have become **fundamental important drivers of forced displacement** and **economic migration**, specifically in the Mediterranean region's arid areas, further threatening the **region's future food security and stability**.

Many of the climate change mitigation and adaptation challenges in the region revolve around **Water**. The Mediterranean region is currently facing water challenges. Climate change will place already scare water resources under intense pressure in the region, with major consequences for human life, the environmental and regional food security. Water is not an isolated sector: it is the **cornerstone of the Water-Food-Energy Nexus**, and requires transversal, trans-sectoral thinking to develop holistic responses to the challenges that the Mediterranean is facing. Water is also a catalyst of employment, territorial development and commerce, and can therefore yield significant opportunities rather than obstacles in the future.

CMI has been convening a **Water Hub** with its core partners over the past year, and is committed to **strengthening awareness-building** in the region through its Water Program within the climate challenge theme, which specifically **target Water Demand Management, Water Resources Management** and several upcoming events focusing on **PPPs for desalination technology coupled to renewable energy sources, regional water security, and performance-based approaches for water utilities**.

CMI's added value lies in its capacity to gather numerous partners from around the Mediterranean **to discuss common priority issues. Through** its regional knowledge program on water, the CMI builds awareness and **know-how on regional solutions, policies and strategies** necessary to addressing the numerous water challenges that we currently face around the Mediterranean.

CMI looks forward to further **engaging with its member countries and partners**, many of which are represented here, in order to contribute to a **Euro-Mediterranean knowledge-sharing and discussion platform. We will be collaborating with the CIHEAL in sharing relevant analytical work and support the awareness building** to better understand **the linkages between water challenges and climate change and their rebound effects on agriculture and forced displacement.**