

Horizon 2020 Mediterranean report

Toward shared environmental information systems

EEA-UNEP/MAP joint report

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European Environment Agency



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Foreword

Over the last eight years, since the Cairo Declaration, the Mediterranean Region has been facing emerging environmental challenges, whilst the environmental status of the Mediterranean Sea has remained a high priority on the political agenda. To meet the goal of the Horizon 2020 Initiative to de-pollute the Mediterranean Sea by 2020 would require enhanced efforts, among which further and better implementation of policies supported by reliable, targeted and, above all, shared environmental information.

The current report, which we are glad to hereby present, provides relevant evidence of such developments. This report is a joint effort by the European Environment Agency (EEA) and the United Nations Environmental Programme – Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP), and builds on previous joint EEA and UNEP/MAP reports. The work undertaken by the review and monitoring subgroup of the Horizon 2020 Initiative was instrumental in its preparation, with financial support from the European Commission.

We are pleased to recognise that the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) principles served as a vehicle to implement the review process. Gradually extending SEIS across the whole region can contribute to better management and easier sharing of environmental data and information which would have a positive effect on achieving the de-pollution of the Mediterranean Sea.

We acknowledge the engagement and work carried out by national partners and authorities, which were instrumental in drawing the key finding and recommendations of the current report. At this time these represent an important tool which we hope will be used by all stakeholders in the region.

The present report is very timely! It informs about the status of the three H2020 priority issues in the region and takes stock of the advancements made at regional and national levels in de-polluting measures. The report confirms the importance of the three thematic priority areas (municipal waste, urban waste water and industrial pollution), and points out the relevance

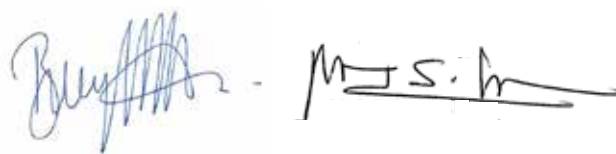
of addressing them together with other linked areas in a more integrated and systemic manner.

One of the findings of the report calls for the enhancement of the inter-institutional cooperation between relevant partners at national level to ensure the sustainability of a regular H2020 review and monitoring process. There is a huge potential for meeting the objectives through a stronger cooperation, coordination and involvement of different actors within national context and across the region.

The report demonstrates significant improvements in national monitoring and reporting tools. One of the recommendations points to the use of national good practices and promotes replication as a way of ensuring data sharing and the building up of a solid knowledge base that is readily up-to-date and accessible to support the decision-making process. The country contributions have proved to be an efficient capacity building approach and a useful tool to assess main environmental drivers and pressures at national level.

Taking into consideration all the efforts invested so far, we should continue working together to create strong leadership, provide further support to this process and ensure continuity in implementing the agreed commitment.

We encourage you to thoroughly read this report, openly discuss it with your colleagues and let us know of your ideas how to best respond to the ultimate goal of de-polluting the Mediterranean Sea by year 2020.



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