

WES-BCA PRESS RELEASE

The WES-BCA project formally kicks off!

Athens, 20 December 2024

The EU funded “Water and Environment Support-Biodiversity and Climate Action (WES-BCA) in the Neighbourhood South region” project held its Kick Off Meeting, on Tuesday the 17th of December 2024, in Brussels, Belgium.

In his opening remarks, **Mr Stavros DAMIANIDIS, Project Director WES-BCA**, noted: “As the WES-BCA project (2024-2027) is actually the continuation of the WES project (2019-2024) and capitalises on the long-standing experience of previous successful EU funded regional projects (SWIM-Horizon2020 SM, SWIM SM; Horizon 2020 CB/MEP), I trust in a successful delivery of the WES BCA objectives and expected results.”

Professor Michael SCOULLOS, Team Leader of WES-BCA, in summarizing the discussions, emphasized how WES-BCA will upscale WES achievements and aim for deepening countries’ understanding and strengthening skills in integrated approaches such as the water-energy-food-ecosystems (WEFE) nexus in the Mediterranean Source to Sea continuum, as jointly promoted by the EU, the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and the Barcelona Convention at regional level. Limiting plastic pollution and marine litter, also from riverine sources, will continue to be a priority aim. An additional awareness and outreach component, addressing key sectors and the wider public, with emphasis on women and youth, will support the adoption of appropriate behaviours and attitudes towards improved climate action and the region’s shift to a more sustainable consumption and production model.”

The meeting was co-chaired by **Mr Frédéric FORTUNE, Programme Manager Environment, Water & Biodiversity DG NEAR, European Commission**, Programme Manager of both WES and WES-BCA: “I am certain that the previous excellent cooperation with the WES team will continue and that WES-BCA, through two distinct, yet interlinked components, implemented at the regional and national level, will contribute to the reduction and prevention of pollution in the Mediterranean region, the protection and restoration of biodiversity, making the partner countries more resilient to climate change, with strengthened water use efficiency.”

WES-BCA project in a snapshot:

The “Water and Environment Support-Biodiversity and Climate Action (WES-BCA) in the Neighbourhood South region” project is the continuation of the WES project and aims to improve the protection of the environment, the restoration of biodiversity and the management of scarce water resources, while enhancing the resilience to climate change in the Mediterranean region, strengthening the formulation and enforcement of the relevant policies of the Partner Countries and the two regional political frameworks, namely the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and the Barcelona Convention.

Partner Countries: countries of North Africa and the Middle East

Duration: November 2024-November 2027

Budget: 7.000.000 Euros

Implementing Consortium of leading European and regional entities with complementary skills and experience, namely:

LDK CONSULTANTS S.A. (Leader), Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED), Association of Cities and Regions for Sustainable Resource Management (ACR+), Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Bari (CIHEAM Bari), Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE), MedWaves, the Regional Activity Centre of UNEP/MAP for Sustainable Consumption and Production.

Contracting Authority: European Commission, Directorate-General Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR)

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