

## Ministerial Conference on Water A calendar of concrete projects from 2009

The Ministerial Conference on Water held on 22 December 2008 on the shores of the Dead Sea in Jordan marked the speeding up of the issue of water management and the first important step for the implementation of the decisions made by Heads of State and Government on 13 July 2008 in Paris for the Union for the Mediterranean.

A double goal was reached, partly through the major contribution of the civil society partners who met on 21 December.

Firstly, the Ministers adopted the guidelines of a Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean, permitting the challenges of climate change and its impacts to be met and tackled. This Strategy, which will be submitted to the same Ministers during the first semester of 2010 and to the Heads of State and Government at the end of 2010, will make it possible to handle problems exceeding the means of action of any single country or organisation. It will have two figured targets concerning the preservation of water quality and the reduction of pressure on water resources through more efficient use.

Secondly, the Ministers drew the attention of governance bodies of the Union for the Mediterranean, in view of the rapid development of new equipment projects in the domain of water, consistent with the Strategy. From this perspective, they have already identified an initial series of projects which will be discussed as from January 2009. These projects will be completed during the Fifth World Forum on Water to be held in Istanbul in March 2009 and the first funds will be finalised for the ministerial conference on sustainable development in Monaco before the end of March 2009.

The Ministers have undertaken to stick to this very ambitious yet realistic calendar with regards the water situation in the Mediterranean. They insisted on the significant role that the Union for the Mediterranean must have for an effective improvement in the life of this region's inhabitants.

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