



SYRIA

Master plan for the mobilization and multi-usage management of water resources in Northwest Syria - Latakia, Hama, Idlib and Alep regions

Project presented by the Latakia, Hama, Idlib and Alep regions.

→ Context and strategy

Syrian geography comprises very diverse landscapes, including a fertile mountain region, a vast agricultural plain and an arid steppe. Estimated at twenty-one million, the Syrian population is unequally distributed in the territory and primarily concentrated in the western part of the country, on the coastal plain and in the Ghad. Damas, the capital, counts around five million inhabitants, while Alep, the second-largest city, has around four million inhabitants. Most water resources find their source in neighboring countries: from the Euphrates in Turkey (50% of reserves) and the Orontes in Lebanon (20%). The level of national resources is low. Currently, water availability per habitant is less than 900 m³/year.

In 2020, the Syrian population will grow to around twenty-eight million, and average availability will reach the threshold of 500 m³/year, which is often considered as critical.

Irregular precipitation in Syria accentuates water supply problems. Independently of this factor, reasons for a lack of water are due to defects in governance related to water management and to poor supply infrastructures, which are outdated. Not only is the quantity of water in the country too low, its quality has worsened, in particular because of very poor management of solid wastes from households and industries and waste water that pollutes resources. A recent EMWIS (Euro-Mediterranean System on know-how in the Water Sector) report insists on the critical situation of cities like Alep, which are subject to a very large influx of rural populations from destitute territories lacking resources, especially water. However, there is one positive note: the meeting between representatives of the Turkish, Syrian and Iraqi governments on September 3rd 2009 to discuss the crucial question of management of the Euphrates.

→ Budget

Estimated at around one million euros; workload: 40 man/months.

→ Project

The project will contribute in an operational manner to defining a global strategy of water development and management in Northwest Syria. The goal is to initiate water development and management actions to meet future needs in the year 2030. In addition, French-Syrian partnerships between industries, institutions and research scientists will be established to reach this goal.

→ Implementation

The project aims at an inventory of knowledge of current resource use, international agreements for sharing the resource, sample levels for different utilizations, and economic margins.

It also includes carrying out a prospective analysis by region of water management and needs for cities, rural areas and industries on the scale of the project perimeter (and integrating, if necessary, the needs of the metropolitan area of Damas, which might be met using resources from the perimeter).

Finally, different multi-usage development proposals will be drawn up concerning long-term satisfaction of needs, institutional and technical improvement requirements for meeting strategic demand in the sector of Northwest Syria, and establishment of partnerships with the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region and its scientific and industrial network..

→ Expected results

- » Current status report – diagnostics, list of resources – needs;
- » Workshop actions in cooperation with local authorities;
- » Project definition report;
- » Feasibility studies on priority projects.

→ Partners

The project will be carried out in partnership with a group of companies, establishments and NGOs of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region: Canal de Provence Company, Marseille Water Company, G2C Environnement, PRIDES Eau-Ecoentreprises, Rhône-Mediterranean and Corsica Water Agency, Mediterranean Water Institute and pS-Eau, with the help of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Regional Council and its cooperation partners in Syria.