

# 1 PUBLISHABLE SUMMARY

This report summarises the work carried out during the first part (from 1st March 2010 to 31st August 2012) of the project [increasing the regional competitiveness and economic growth through the RTD&I on sustainable water management \(SWAM Project\)](#). The aim of this first progress report is to provide a complete account of the work undertaken, the findings thereafter, and to plan the activities for the second phase of the project (1st September 2011 to 30th June 2012).

## 1.1 PROJECT RATIONALE

The availability of water resources is a key contributory factor to economic and social development, as well as being an essential pillar of environmental preservation. Due to the world's population growth, global warming and a decrease in water supply, the efficient management of water resources is a priority for policy makers throughout the world.

Most Mediterranean regions, with semi-arid climates, have historically suffered from water scarcity. This has led in many cases to a strong culture in the efficient use of water and development of innovative policies and techniques relating to sustainable water management.

Within this context, some Mediterranean regions have developed effective research-driven clusters focused on sustainable and efficient management of water, and dedicate considerable resources to research, technical development and innovation (RTD&I) activities in this field. These regional research-driven clusters are closed to the productive activities in many of the regional economic sectors, making their products and services more competitive in a worldwide and globalised market, while stands for the environmental protection.

The international water market is one of the most important growing markets in the world (\$450 billion, and 7%-8% annual growth), and just like any other sectors, the Water-Tech sector needs to face issues related to globalisation of markets as well as increasing number of complex technologies, and heterogeneous water scenarios.

The SWAM project is proposed to increase the economic growth and global competitiveness of Murcia, Eastern Galilee and Western Greece regions having high potential in the Water Technologies (Water-Tech) sector, and taking into account the cross-cutting effect of water in these regional economies since water technologies are applied to all productive sectors. There is an innovative approach behind this idea of regional economic growth matched with environmental preservation.

Therefore, the above participant regions, belonging to the Mediterranean basin, have many economic, social and culture similarities, and thus RTD synergies, mutual learning, and business opportunities can be achieved in the further proposed cooperation framework.

## 1.2 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

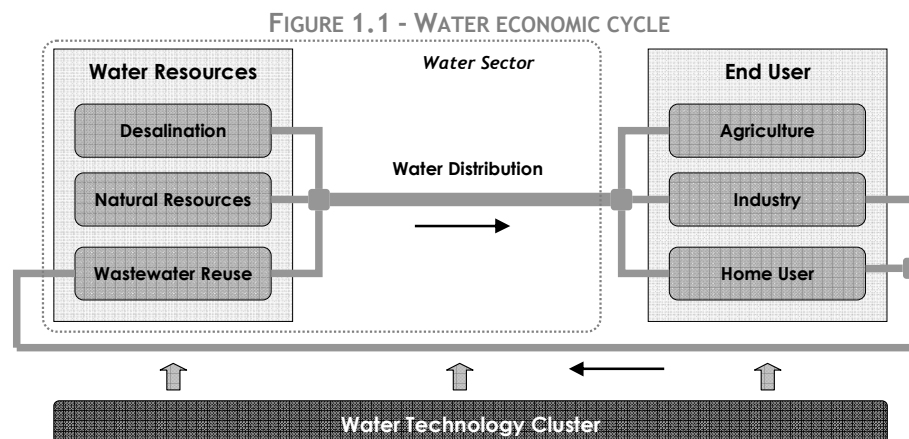
The overall objective of the SWAM Project is to create a common dialogue platform and a joint action plan among three innovative and dynamic Water-Tech clusters that will maximise their capacity for better RTD investments at regional level through complementarities and synergies, so



as to contribute to sustainable development, economic growth, global competitiveness of the regions, and the emergence of the Water-Tech lead market (See **¡Error! No se encuentra el origen de la referencia.**).

But, in the short-medium term context, and in a measurable and verifiable way, the specific SWAM objectives are clearly the following:

- **To enhance the deeper understanding of the regional research and economic environment**, including the assessment of the research infrastructures and support policy schemes, for all the actors belonging to these clusters, in order to gain vision about the current competitiveness of the Water-Tech sector in these regions.
- **To create a sharing environment of common priorities and strategies** among the participant clusters for mutual learning.
- **To promote the collaboration among researchers and commercial companies** of the participant regions.



### 1.3 WORK PERFORMED

These first 18 months have been essential for the following reasons:

- Setting-up and fine-tuning an efficient operating mode between SWAM partners,
- Setting-up an efficient relation with regional clusters stakeholders from the different axes of the Triple Helix approach,
- Developing productive exchanges of information within the partnership and some other European clusters, and
- Scheduling and ambitious but realistic working plan and deliverables for the next period.

FIGURE 1.2 - SOME SWAM PHOTOS ABOUT IMPORTANT MOMENTS (INCLUDING LOGO)



## 1.4 MAIN RESULTS ACHIEVED

In accordance with the conditions set out in the contract **245427**, this Progress Report presents the progress of the project activities and principal results.

Main activities during the first 18-month period are as follows:

- Organisation of the kick-off meeting and elaboration of the kick-off document
- Organisation on 3 Network Meetings (Greece, Israel, Greece)
- SWAM Regional Competitiveness Analysis Final Report, gathering all reports on cluster analysis which have been presented on each participant region to all the water-tech regional players through three so-called “Seminars on regional competitiveness” events.
  - 3 Individual Regional Reports, one per each region, with at least 10 qualifying interviews per region.
  - 3 Cluster Mapping Regional Reports, one per each region.
  - 3 Visits to other international clusters for benchmarking (Linköping in Sweden, Lancaster in United Kingdom and Marseille in France) and (1) International Cluster Benchmarking Report.
  - 3 Regional competitiveness seminars to discuss the analysis and benchmarking reports.
- Common Water-Tech Dialogue Platform to introduce the research capacities to research demanders in each region and to maximize the coordination between the different research agendas.
- 3 Inter-cluster round table meetings (Patras-Greece, Galilee-Israel and patras-Greece)
- Draft of the joint Action Plan
- 3 Info-Days for “Raising Awareness” about existing research collaboration funding opportunities at national/local level or at European level. (Patras-Greece, Galilee-israel and Murcia-Spain)

- 3 Mentor-Trainings for learning exchange with other emergent research-driven clusters (Cyprus mentoree by Galilee-Israel, Diyarbakir-Sanliurfa (Turkey) mentee by Murcia-Spain, and Albania by Patras-Greece), including a set of Info-Days and Mentor-Trainings materials.
- Set of different promotional materials as brochures about collaboration opportunities, booklets about the organisations' profiles, etc., and dissemination in international events, conferences and fairs.
- Development of the SWAM web-portal.
- Progress report of activities to the European Commission, including First Cost-Statement

## 1.5 EXPECTED FINAL RESULTS AND POTENTIAL IMPACT AND USE

- Regional cluster mapping
- Accomplishment of the regional cluster mapping and priority setting analysis.
- Completion of international benchmarking trips.
- Completion of regional seminars on competitiveness.
- Completion of Regional Competitiveness Analysis Final Report.
- Drafting on Joint Action Plan.
- SWAM web portal.

