

**WETNET PROJECT**  
**Coordinated management and networking of Mediterranean wetlands**

WP 2 - Communication

Activity 2.7 – External event report

Project Partner: Italian Centre for River Restoration (CIRF)

Date: October, 10<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> 2019

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Deliverable 2.7.1 - Event Report  
**Assemblea nazionale dei Contratti di Fiume**

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## 1 Event Details

**Title:**

EMCEI2019 - 2nd Euro-Mediterranean Conference for Environmental Integration

**Type:**

Conference

**Date:**

10-13/10/2019

**Location:**

Sousse (Tunisia)

**Programme:**

See link below and annex 1.

**Link:**

<https://www.emcei.net/>

**Audience:**

Some hundreds delegates of the scientific community from all around the globe.

**WetNet participation:**

- Giancarlo Gusmaroli (Italian Centre for River Restoration)

## 2 Description of the Event

The 2nd Euro-Mediterranean Conference for Environmental Integration (EMCEI) aimed to gather high-quality, original research papers for publication following peer review in topical collections (special issues) of the Euro-Mediterranean Journal for Environmental Integration and other Springer journals on various multidisciplinary topics linked to the evolution and development of the Euro-Mediterranean environment in the past, present, and future (see Special Issues). The main objectives of the conference have been to support research and innovation, to promote the exchange of scientific knowledge, and to foster collaboration among Euro-Mediterranean communities. The conference participants had the opportunity to attend several keynote presentations on new indicators and directions in research, development and innovations in the multidisciplinary fields of the environmental sciences. To this end, several high-profile Euro-Mediterranean scientists participated in this conference

FULL PROGRAMME

[https://emcei.net/source/files/Program\\_EMCEI2019.pdf](https://emcei.net/source/files/Program_EMCEI2019.pdf)

## 3 Relevance for the WetNet Project and the MED territory

ABSTRACT OF THE WETNET ORAL PRESENTATION

### **Wetland Contracts: voluntary-based agreements for the sustainable governance of Mediterranean protected wetlands**

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**Abstract.** The WETNET project (2016-2019), co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund through the Interreg Med Programme, aims at ensuring higher coordination between different levels of spatial planning and stakeholders engaged into wetland management processes, whilst limiting conflicts between conservation issues and economic activities. In order to achieve these goals, WETNET has tested in nine EU-Mediterranean wetlands a voluntary-based multi-stakeholder agreement (“Wetland Contract”) as governance tools for the sustainable management of protected wetlands. This paper presents the final outputs and outcome of the project, in order to foster the capitalization and dissemination at Pan Mediterranean level.

**Keywords:** protected wetland, governance, negotiated agreement, stakeholder engagement, public participation.

## Introduction

The WETNET project (2016-2019), co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund through the Interreg Med Programme, aims at ensuring higher coordination between different levels of spatial planning and stakeholders engaged into wetland management processes, whilst limiting conflicts between conservation issues and economic activities. Furthermore the project aims at defining common priorities for Mediterranean wetlands and freshwater ecosystems conservation. In particular it focuses on building a common territorial strategy for the integrated wetlands' management and ensuring higher coordination between different levels of spatial planning and stakeholders engaged into wetland management processes, whilst limiting conflicts between conservation issues and economic activities. In order to achieve these goals, WETNET has tested in nine EU-Mediterranean wetlands (one in Portugal, three in Spain, one in France, two in Italy, one in Slovenia, one in Malta) a voluntary-based multi-stakeholder agreement ("Wetland Contract") as governance tools for the sustainable management of protected wetlands. WETNET was built on previous EU experiences mainly based on "River Contracts" (born in France in the early 80' and developed in Belgium and Italy later on) to face the challenge of improving wetlands governance and ecosystems conservation. The River Contract is an agreement that allows to adopt a set of regulations in which criteria of public utility, economic return, social value and environmental sustainability equally take part in the search for effective solutions for the river basin's recovery (World Water Forum - L'Aja, 2000).

## Mediterranean wetlands: screen of biodiversity and in core of human welfare

Wetlands only occupy 9% of the land globally, but they provide proportionally significantly more ecosystem services, which are also of high importance (e.g. water provision, regulation of hazards). Especially in regions such as the Mediterranean Basin where wetland extent is decreasing while the human population is increasing, the importance of wetlands for ecosystem services and biodiversity is increasingly disproportionate. Meanwhile, ongoing social and political instability in the region means progress towards Sustainable Development Goals is not a trivial challenge. Information on how policy and management measures could improve the outlook for Mediterranean wetlands biodiversity and ecosystem services is however lacking. Since planning and monitoring of wetlands takes place mostly in protected areas, wetlands management plans are usually not incorporated into the broader national and local development planning processes. This has frequently led to cases of artificial segmentation in land use, social conflicts with local communities over access to natural resources, and opportunistic attitudes between the different planning processes, in which nature is usually the short-term loser.

## The Wetland Contract

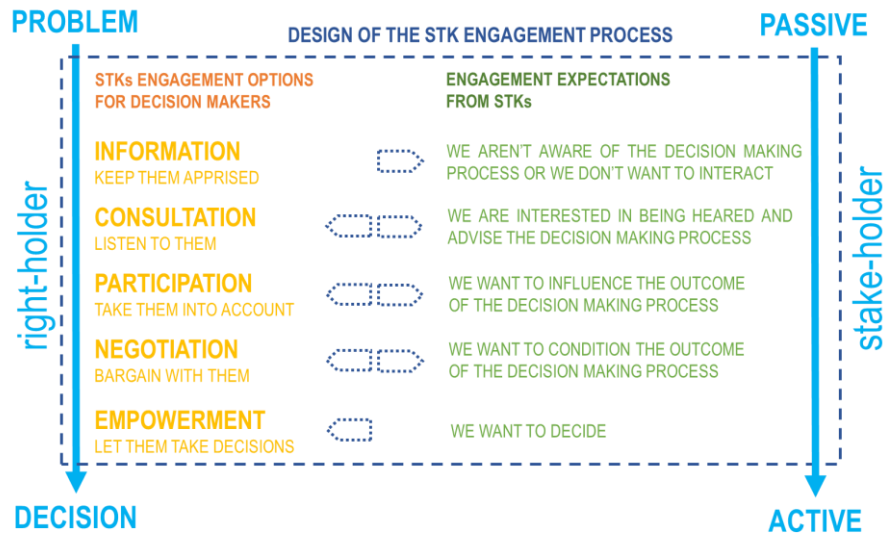
Wetlands are naturally complex ecosystems that cannot be managed with sectorial approaches and policies. In such a context, single-objective measures normally generates externalities that could affect other sectors than the ones addressed by the measure itself. Thus it is to be acknowledged the importance of adopting integrative and inclusive decision making processes, able to take into account different ecosystems features and place-based stakes. From the governance point of view, such a voluntary based negotiated agreement as the Wetland Contract tested in the WetNet project can represent a way for identifying common and shared responsibilities amongst relevant stakeholders for the sustainable management of Med wetlands.

WETNET tackles the issue of implementing a multilevel governance for MED wetlands in order to achieve overall and network effects on wetlands' ecosystems. Wetland Contracts can be defined as voluntary-based commitments undertaken by various public and private entities for the sustainable management of wetland systems. Through the Wetland Contract a local community can identify responsibilities and implementation strategies for the governance and management of their own wetlands. Even before sharing decisions, this governance tool aims at sharing the way of taking decisions.

The Wetland Contract is based on a process of mutual listening amongst public and private stakeholders, aimed at (1) integrating expertise and perceptions, (2) sharing wishes and complaints and (3) agreeing proposals and commitments. The path toward the contractual agreement is inclusive and transparent, in order to facilitate the legitimacy and practicability of the final decisions.

Two key issues of the participatory process are the stakeholder analysis and the consequent stakeholder engagement strategy. Under the umbrella of the European regulatory framework both public information and consultation should be anyway guaranteed (according to the recommendations of the Water Framework Directive). Beside of this the design of active participatory and/or negotiation processes should match the expectations of the target groups as well as the specific

features of the decision making problems. In any case the engagement process could be considered a pedagogical path in which each player may get to higher levels of knowledge and awareness, thus shaping the inclusiveness and empowerment degree of the Contract itself (fig. 1).



**Fig. 1.** Diagram of the stakeholder engagement process for a Wetland Contract

The outcoming action plan includes responsibilities for each activity to be implemented, specifying implementation deadlines, financial resources (already available or to be retrieved) and implementing rules.

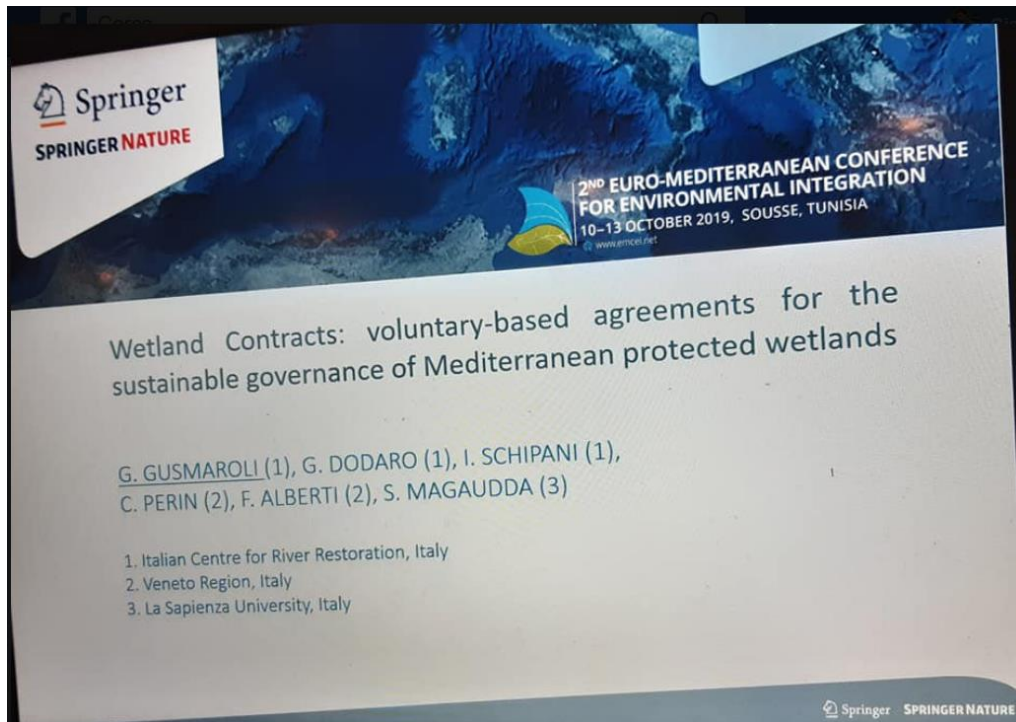
## 4 Concluding Remarks

The event has provided a valuable chance for networking at Med level. A scientific publication will be done (beyond the end of the WetNet project) thanks to the participation at this conference.

## 5 Photo Gallery







## ANNEX 1 - Event Programme

SCHEDULE

### 10 Oct.

- 09:00 – 11:00 Arrival of participants / Registration
- 09:00 – 11:00 Welcome Drink & Chat
- 11:00 – 12:30 **Big Hall**

KEYNOTE: Benigno Sánchez Cabrero [T12]  
KEYNOTE: Setimio Feriás [T19]  
KEYNOTE: Mokhtar Guizani [T8]

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- 14:00 – 16:00 **Big Hall**

KEYNOTE: Akkpa Bahri [T8]  
KEYNOTE: Giulia Guerrero [T10]  
KEYNOTE: Elena Xoplaki [T5]  
KEYNOTE: Georgios Nikolopoulos [T13]

- 16:00 – 17:00 Opening Ceremony
- 17:00 – 18:00 Icebreaker / Group Photo

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### 11 Oct.

- 08:30 – 10:30 **Big Hall**

KEYNOTE: Sami Ritimi [T1]  
KEYNOTE: Sudip Chakraborty [T2]  
KEYNOTE: Abdelif Anrane [T3]  
KEYNOTE: Philippe Michaud [T4]

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- 11:00 – 12:30

- Big Hall** [T6-OS1]
- Room1** [T1-OS1]
- Room3** [T11-OS1]
- Room4** [T12-OS1]
- Poster Hall** [T8-PS1 - Screen 1] [T3-PS1 - Screen 2] [T5-PS1 - Screen 3] [T13-PS1 - Screen 4]

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- 14:00 – 16:00

- Big Hall** [T6-OS2]
- Room1** [T1-OS2]
- Room2** [T5-OS1]
- Room3** [T3-OS1]
- Room4** [T13-OS1]
- Poster Hall** [T6-PS2 - Screen 1] [T4-PS1 - Screen2] [T2-PS1 - Screen 3] [T9-PS1 - Screen 4]

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- 16:30 – 18:00

- Big Hall** [T6-OS3]
- Room1** [T1-OS3]
- Room2** [T5-OS2]
- Room3** [T2-OS1]
- Room4** [T8-OS1]
- Poster Hall** [T6-PS3 - Screen 1] [T3-PS2 - Screen 2]

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- 20:30 – 22:30 Editorial Meeting of the Euro-Mediterranean Journal for Environmental Integration

### 12 Oct.

- 08:30 – 09:00 **Big Hall**

KEYNOTE: Anthony Lehmann [T6]

- 09:00 – 10:30

- Big Hall** [T6-OS4]
- Room1** [T6-OS5]
- Room2** [T4-OS1]
- Room3** [T10-OS1]
- Room4** [T8-OS1]
- Poster Hall** [T1-PS1 - Screen 1] [T7-PS1 - Screen2]

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- 11:00 – 12:30

- Big Hall** [T6-OS6]
- Room1** [T7-OS1]
- Room2** [T4-OS2]
- Room3** [T10-OS2]
- Room4** [T8-OS2]
- Poster Hall** [T1-PS2 - Screen 1] [T6-PS4 - Screen 2]

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- 14:00 – 16:00

- Big Hall** [T6-OS7]
- Room2** [T4-OS3]
- Poster Hall** [T1-PS3 - Screen 1] [T10-PS1 - Screen 2] [T8-PS1 - Screen3]

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- 16:30 – 18:00 **Big Hall**

Plenary 1: Helen Koprina  
Plenary 2: Wolfgang Cramer  
Plenary 3: Jörg Luterbacher  
Plenary 4: Essam Heggy  
Plenary 5: Thomas L. Brewer

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- 20:30 – 21:00 Panel discussion / award ceremony / closure
- 21:30 – 23:30 Euro-Mediterranean musicology 4<sup>th</sup> birthday ceremony of EMJIEI

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### 13 Oct.

- 06:00 – 10:30 **Big Hall** Plenary 6: Nabil Khélifi

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- 11:00 – 12:30 **Big Hall** Special Session  
Meet with your Springer journal's Editors (Q/A)

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- 14:00 – 18:00 Social Program (Sightseeing Sidi Bou Said)
- 18:00 Departure of conference participants

T: TRACK O6: ORAL SESSION P6: E-POSTER SESSION  
REFER TO PROGRAM INDEX TO FIND OUT DETAILS OF YOUR PRESENTATION (REFER TO YOUR PAPER NUMBER)

### 12 OCT. 11:00-12:30

- ID 134: A Maritime Emission Control Area for the Mediterranean Sea? Technological Solutions and Policy Options for a "Med ECA"  
Thomas Brewer
- ID 330: Comparison of pixel-based and object-oriented classification methods for extracting built-up areas in coastal zone  
Chayma Kefi, Amina Mabrouk, Haythem Ismail
- ID 501: Wetland Contracts: voluntary-based agreements for the sustainable governance of Mediterranean protected wet-lands  
Giancarlo Gusmaroli, Giuseppe Dodaro, Ileana Schipani, Claudio Perin, Franco Alberti, Stefano Magauda
- ID 328: Repository of technical documents for a sustainable management of marine and coastal environments: the new portal [www.coastalmapping.eu](http://www.coastalmapping.eu)  
Tullia Valeria Di Giacomo, Francesco Paolo Di Giacomo



