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Partner für Perspektiven  
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German Technical  
Cooperation

Seminar on Water Governance: Role of Stakeholders  
Beirut, 14 - 15 November 2005

## Experiences from River Basin Organizations (RBOs) in the Mediterranean

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION  
FOR WESTERN ASIA

INFORMATION & DOCUMENT SECTION

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## Seminar on Water Governance: Role of Stakeholders

14-15 November 2005

Beirut, Lebanon



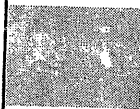
"Experiences from River Basin Organizations  
(RBOs) in the Mediterranean"



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Red Mediterránea de Organismos de Cuenca  
Mediterranean Network of Basin Organisations  
Réseau Méditerranéen des Organismes de Bassin



- **Introduction to MENBO**

- Objectives and achievements



- **Water governance at the river basin level**

- Meaning, roles, advantages



- **Experiences learnt**

- From the Júcar River Basin

- As a Network in the Mediterranean Region

- **Conclusions**



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MENBO was created in Valencia in 2003 as a regional Network of INBO to promote collaboration among basin organisations of the Mediterranean region. Recent Moroccan Presidency.



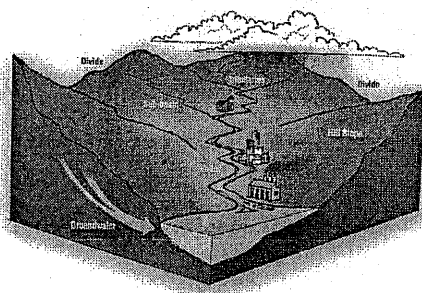
#### Objectives

- Promote IWRM at the river basin level as an essential tool for sustainable development
- Encourage exchange of expertise and knowledge between RBOs
- Organise activities of regional interest and support IWRM projects



### Effective water management River Basin Level

- The "basin" should be a management unit. **Implies one organism in charge of planning, managing, supplying and protecting water resources**
- River basins, catchment areas of rivers and lakes and their aquifers have natural boundaries (geographical and hydrological)
- *"the area of land from which all surface run-off flows through a sequence of streams and, possibly, lakes into the sea at a single river mouth, estuary or delta"*

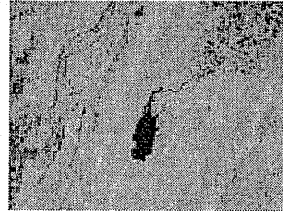


Systems include: aquifers, lakes, wetlands, reservoirs...

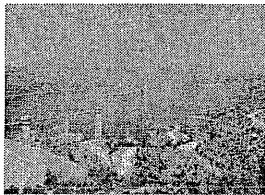


## Water Management at the River Basin Level

- Delimitating basins is becoming technologically easier: GIS, elevation terrain models, satellite images.
- Studying basins allows identification of their specific problems: spills, point-source and diffuse pollution...



Litani River



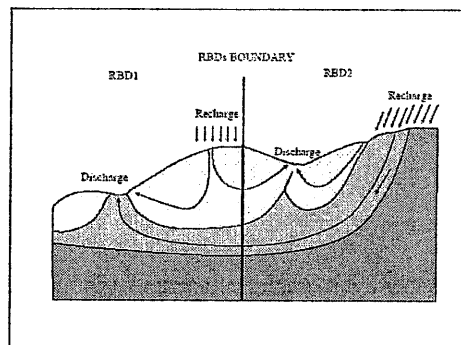
Reservoir

- Basin as units are widely accepted, recently supported throughout all EU members by the implementation of the **WFD (2000/60/EC)**



## Water Management at the River Basin Level

- Why modifying these boundaries through administrative, political or economic limits?
- Sometimes there are obstacles:
  - Shared aquifers: assignment to an RBO
  - Very small basins: grouped together into a district (climatic, environmental, socio-economic or administrative aspects)
  - Many competent authorities involved: need of coordination and formal agreements
  - The basin lies in more than a country: sub-division of management



Aquifer between two RBO



## Widely adopted model

- However, it is not just a European model!

**basin = management unit worldwide**

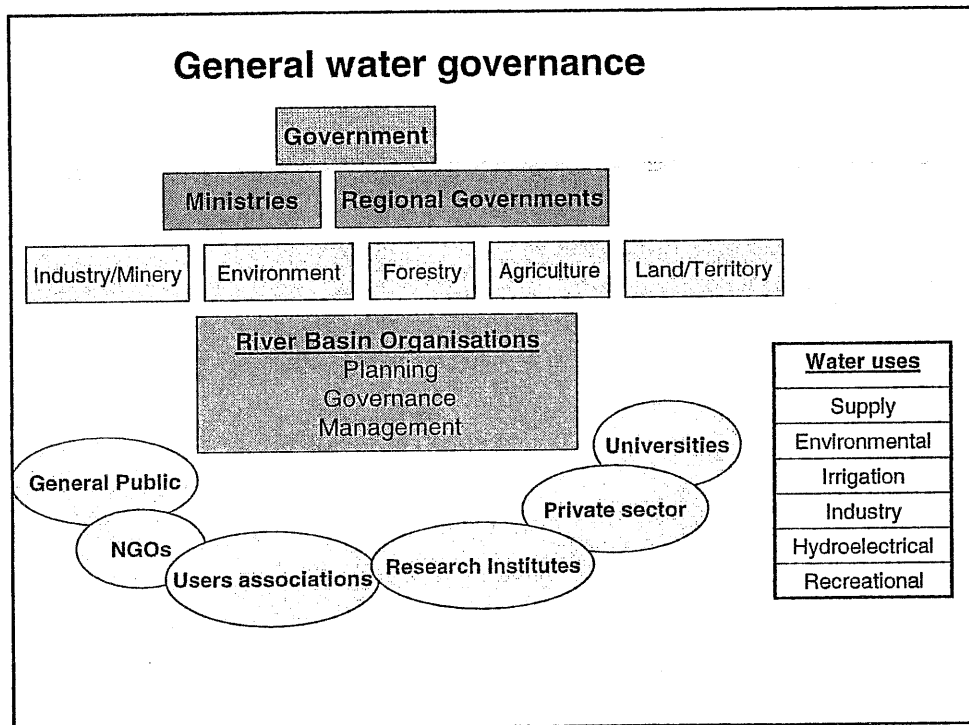
- Model promoted over years in South and East Mediterranean, and worldwide: Morocco, Brazil, Vietnam, international-transboundary basins, e.g. Danube...
  - Currently being established in Lebanon: Litani River Authority


**RBO: Means single organism for planning, managing and allocating water resources according to demand/needs by prioritizing uses.**



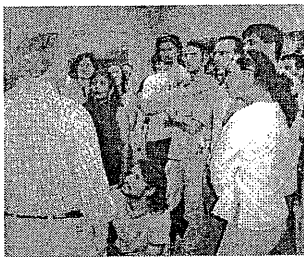
## Government level and tasks

- Level of governance of RBO in the country system widely depends. (Ministries, local administrations, private-public institutes...)
- Common duties and tasks:
  - Establish water planning: elaborate sustainable Basin plans
  - Management of all water resources within a basin
  - Share or complement tasks with other entities (local administrations, users, private sector...)
  - Create and maintain infrastructures (dams, channels, pipes)
  - Ensure quality and quantity of water resources
  - Apply laws that protect water (polluter-pays principle)
  - Promote environmental protection and restoration (avoid impacts, restore eroded river banks, polluted aquifers...)



## Successful role of an RBO



- Identify the role of regulators (policy makers), managers, operators (engineers, and technical services) and users (irrigators)
- Ensure a fair allocation of water resources
- Coordinate actions with inter-related local and national administrations (land-territory, agricultural, coastal...)
- Also useful: international cooperation!

- Recommended (WFD, WSSD...):
  - Use of participatory mechanisms to avoid water conflicts
  - Promote participation of stakeholders and private sector



## MENBO: Learnt experiences

- As part of an RBO: MENBO with head quarters in the Júcar RBO (SE Spain).

- Pilot River Basin, WFD implementation: technical experience, direct information, well-established RBO structure (>60 years)



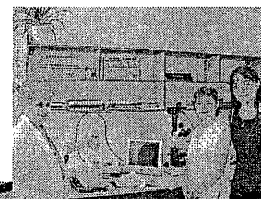
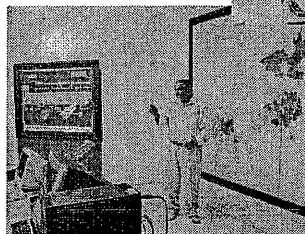
- Júcar RBO challenges

- 43000km<sup>2</sup>
- 4 autonomous communities (Regional Governments), large number of provinces and municipalities
- 4.3 M. people, 1.4 equivalent due to tourism (important water pressure)
- Tasks shared with other administrations



## MENBO: Learnt experiences

- As a Network: MENBO promotes interaction between RBOs allowing exchange of experiences in the Mediterranean region
- Participates in IWRM projects and initiatives
- Organizes seminars and conferences that cover Mediterranean Water management problems





## Network projects



### Mediterranean EU Water Initiative -WFD Joint Process

- MENBO proposed to mobilise Mediterranean RBOs and organise annual workshops.
- Participates in the report "Mediterranean Document on Groundwater", chapters: over-exploitation, international cooperation.



### TWINBASIN Project (OIEAU/INBO, GWPO...)

- MENBO leader of twinning group among Mediterranean RBOs
- Important exchange of technical information (WFD, monitoring networks)



## Additional information

[www.remoc.org](http://www.remoc.org)

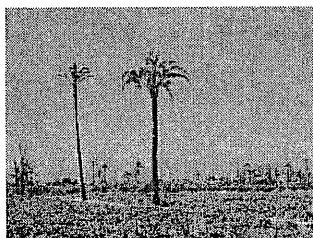
### Mediterranean Network of Basin Organisations

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Other web-sites: [www.inbo.org](http://www.inbo.org), [www.chj.mma.es](http://www.chj.mma.es),  
[www.mma.es](http://www.mma.es)





