

Experts at the OMEC-MedECC webinar on WEFE highlight urgent need for cross-sector collaboration in the Mediterranean's Climate and Environmental Challenges

On 13/03/2025, the WEFE (Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems) Nexus webinar, jointly organized by OMEC and MedECC, brought together experts from diverse fields to discuss the growing environmental challenges in the Mediterranean region and the urgent need for a cross-sectoral approach in tackling them.

The discussions underscored how the magnitude of these challenges necessitates deeper cooperation between private and public sectors at all governance levels. Experts highlighted that isolated technical solutions can sometimes have unintended negative impacts on other WEFE components. A key example was presented on water-energy interlinkages in Spain, illustrating the complexities of resource management and the necessity for holistic policymaking.

A significant concern raised during the webinar was the projected reduction in energy availability, particularly in hydropower and thermoelectric production, due to water scarcity. These insights will have to be incorporated in energy forecasts and scenario planning for the Mediterranean region.

An interactive session using Slido provided valuable insights from attendees, revealing that water stress is perceived as the primary environmental challenge. Participants also identified a lack of coordination among institutions as a major obstacle to effective WEFE policy implementation. The discussion reinforced the need for policymakers to integrate the WEFE approach into policy planning and to assess trade-offs between sectors to create more sustainable and effective strategies.

A key takeaway was the significant role of local governance. Municipal authorities must be empowered with the necessary knowledge and tools to implement policies that consider all WEFE components. The webinar concluded with a call for more capacity-building initiatives targeted at national agencies and local policymakers to enhance their understanding of the WEFE nexus.

Additionally, experts identified crucial knowledge gaps in WEFE-related literature, emphasizing the need for more data-driven research specific to the Mediterranean. The MedECC initiative, which has been working to fill these gaps, was highlighted as an important step in advancing regional understanding and policy development.

The WEFE webinar demonstrated how multidisciplinary collaboration can drive sustainable development in the Mediterranean. Organizers expressed their gratitude to all speakers and participants for their valuable contributions and reaffirmed their commitment to fostering continued dialogue and action in this critical area.