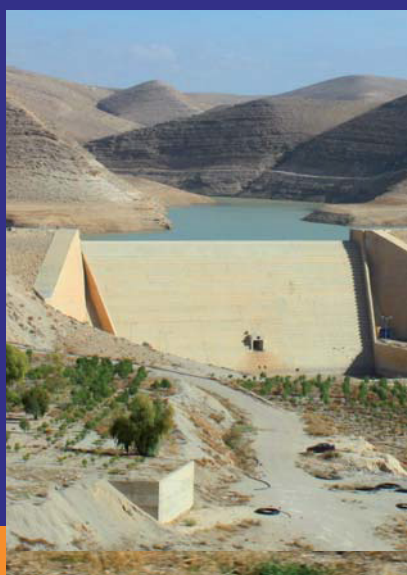


Scaling-up Integrated Natural Resource Management,  
furthering knowledge on groundwater resources management  
and strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation systems  
in the GEF MENARID program

Fourth Learning Workshop  
for MENARID Project Managers

16-18 June 2014, Beirut, Lebanon

# Agenda & Background



## WELCOME FROM THE ORGANIZERS



“Much effort has been invested by UNESCO-IHP, as part of the third cycle of the IW:LEARN Project, in promoting the consideration of groundwater resources in the GEF MENARID program. Groundwater, from the shallowest unconfined aquifers, to the deepest hidden reserves, has a critical role to play in addressing the new challenges of a changing climate and in combating desertification. I look forward to the results of this important gathering to enrich the 8th phase of IHP with its lessons learned.”

**Blanca Jiménez-Cisneros**, Secretary UNESCO-IHP/Director UNESCO Division Water Sciences



“We from the GEF Secretariat would like to extend a hearty welcome to you for this final MENARID workshop. We are about to enter the Sixth GEF funding cycle, which promises new and exciting initiatives for the dryland regions. We clearly see great prospects for scaling-up successes and achievements of the MENARID program. This includes working across sectors to integrate sustainable land and water (especially groundwater) management for sustainability and resilience of ecosystems. We wish you the very best for the next three days of deliberations.”

**Astrid Hillers**, Senior Environmental Specialist, GEF International Waters



**Mohamed Bakarr**, Senior Environmental Specialist, GEF Land Degradation



“The ICARDA- executed MENARID Project has provided an excellent platform of knowledge sharing and exchange where natural resources management projects within the MENARID portfolio, that are implemented in different countries, shared experiences and successful innovations which promoted group learning and knowledge transfer. In addition, the ICARDA project facilitated efforts to strengthen the M&E process of the MENARID portfolio of projects through learning and implementing specific M&E activities. ICARDA is glad to be a partner of the MENARID portfolio and to contribute to these vital aspects of the program. Valuable lessons learned are documented and are available for use in other development investments.”

**Aden Aw-Hassan**, Director of the Social, Economics and Policy Research Program, ICARDA



“We develop projects aiming at delivery of specific objectives and activities. What we notice on the way is that some of these projects offer something much beyond that. This is the case of the MENARID Umbrella project. Now and close to completion, we cannot but be impressed by the level of linkages and collaboration between the different countries forming the MENARID network. This is south-south cooperation at its best, in action and not in concept, and this is the “intangible” impact that will ensure that this project is sustainable beyond time frames, and is a highlight to be valued.”

**Rami Abu Salman**, Regional Climate and Environment Specialist, IFAD

## RATIONALE FOR JOINT MEETING

A **learning partnership** between the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) and the UNESCO International Hydrological Programme (UNESCO-IHP) was established at the beginning of the GEF MENARID multi-focal area program, with the aim of consolidating the exchange of knowledge in the field of water management and groundwater resources, while strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation systems.

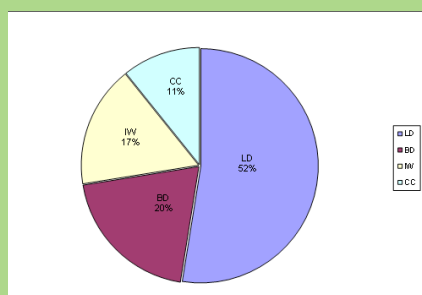
The ICARDA/UNESCO-IHP cooperation is based on a broad agenda covering many facets of integrated natural resources management, particularly on water-related topics. A series of jointly organized learning workshops are **building the capacity of MENARID stakeholders**, targeting different aspects of land/water management and paying particular attention to groundwater resources. UNESCO-IHP and ICARDA, through GEF co-financed activities, brought together the different projects under the MENARID portfolio in order to build bridges among participating countries which share similar challenges and opportunities in the field of land/water management. Over the past four years, as a result of these exchanges, a strong sense of belonging and common identity has been created among the participants who all engaged enthusiastically in meetings and related activities.

During these learning events, project managers, scientists, development actors, as well as international and local experts are joining forces to find new ways to support GEF MENARID projects and their local communities – many of whom live in the harshest dryland areas and require more assistance to strengthen their resilience to climate change and better manage their natural resources. Given the **importance of water resources and agriculture to dryland developing countries**, especially in the Middle East and North Africa region, where farming remains the backbone of the economy, such partnerships will benefit all stakeholders in the region to make sure targeted communities can optimize their water management in the future, and produce food sustainably.

# THE GEF MENARID PROGRAM



**The Integrated Natural Resources Management in the Middle East and North Africa Region (MENARID) Program includes 11 investment Projects** — co-founded by the GEF and IFAD — that cuts across the following GEF focal areas: Land Degradation (LD), Biodiversity (BD), International Waters (IW), and Climate Change (CC). *See percentage in the pie chart.*



The overall objective of MENARID is twofold: (i) to promote integrated natural resource management (INRM) in the production landscapes of the MENA region and (ii) improving the economic and social well-being of the targeted communities through the restoration and maintenance of ecosystem functions and productivity.

The purpose of this programme framework is to provide overall guidance in identifying strategic priorities for GEF investments in integrated natural resource management (INRM) in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

## The MENARID Portfolio

1. MENARID Cross-cutting Medium Size Project on Monitoring and Evaluation and Knowledge Management for Integrated Natural Resources Management
2. MENARID (Algeria) Conservation of Globally Significant Biodiversity and Sustainable Use of Ecosystem Services in Algeria's Cultural Parks
3. MENARID (Iran) Institutional Strengthening and Coherence for Integrated Natural Resources Management
4. MENARID (Jordan) Mainstreaming Sustainable Land and Water Management Practices
5. MENARID (Morocco) Participatory Control of Desertification and Poverty Reduction in the Arid and Semi Arid High Plateau Ecosystems of Eastern Morocco
6. MENARID (Morocco) A circular Economy Approach to Agro-biodiversity Conservation in the Souss Mass Draa region of Morocco
7. MENARID (Regional) Reducing risks to the sustainable management of the NorthWest Sahara Aquifer System (NWSAS)
8. MENARID (Tunisia) Support to Sustainable Land Management in the Siliana Governorate
9. MENARID (Tunisia) Second Natural Resources Management Project - Land and Water Optimization
10. MENARID (Tunisia) Ecotourism and Conservation of Desert Biodiversity
11. MENARID (Yemen) Adaptation to climate change using agro-biodiversity resources in the rainfed highlands





08:45-09:00	<b>Registration</b> .....
09:00-09:30	<b>Welcome and opening addresses</b> ..... Chair: Hassan Machlab, Country Manager, ICARDA Lebanon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Aden Aw-Hassan</i>, Director of the Social, Economics and Policy Research Program, ICARDA</li> <li>• <i>Hamed Alhamami</i>, Director UNESCO office Lebanon</li> <li>• <i>Steffen Hansen</i>, International Waters Adviser, GEF Secretariat</li> <li>• <i>Mish Hamid</i>, Project manager, IW:LEARN Project</li> <li>• <i>Lucilla Minelli</i>, Project Officer, UNESCO-IHP</li> </ul>
09:30-10:00	<b>Keynote speeches introducing the scope of meeting</b> ..... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Andrea Merla</i>, Senior Groundwater Expert, UNESCO-IHP</li> <li>• <i>Aden Aw-Hassan</i></li> </ul>
10:00-10:30	<b>Twinning and tour de table exercise</b> ..... <p>Overview of projects and organizations involved in the GEF ICARDA/IFAD/UNESCO MENARID program. Participants will be assigned in pairs with the objective of explaining to one another the main highlights in their respective Projects/Organizations. The exercise will be facilitated with prepared material by the organizers.</p> <p>Moderator(s): Jose Gaona, Wageningen University and Hugo Remaury, ICARDA</p>
10:30-11:00	 <b>Coffee Break and Group Picture</b>
11:00-11:30	<b>Report in plenary of twinning exercise</b> .....
11:30 -13:00	<b>Session I – led by UNESCO-IHP “Highlights from previous learning workshops on groundwater”</b> ..... <p>Chair: Lucilla Minelli</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Semsar Yazdi</i>, International Center on Qanats and Hydraulic Structures (ICQHS) UNESCO centre – “Traditional Knowledge and ancient hydraulic structures”</li> <li>• <i>Ebel Smidt</i>, IGRAC-TUD-WaterFocus – “Opportunities for Managed Aquifer Recharge”</li> <li>• <i>Lhoussaine Bouchaou</i>, University of Agadir, Morocco – “Groundwater economics”</li> </ul> <p>Q&amp;A Session</p>
13:00-14:00	 <b>Lunch break</b>

14:00-15:30

## **Session II – led by ICARDA “Overview of ICARDA-led MENARID initiative in sharing knowledge and strengthening monitoring and evaluation systems”**

Chair: Aden Aw-Hassan

Speakers:

- *Hugo Remaury*, ICARDA, Achievements of ICARDA in supporting Results Based M&E systems and knowledge sharing through the MENARID program
- *Michael Devlin*, ICARDA, Knowledge sharing achievements in MENARID – How to maintain efforts to sustain knowledge sharing and mainstream knowledge management in Integrated Natural Resources Management projects – MENARID videos
- *Dina Najjar*, Gender specialist at ICARDA – Policy issues in mainstreaming gender into land and water management activities, and natural resources management right in the context of MENARID (via videoconference)

Q&A Session

15:30-16:00

 **Coffee Break**

16:00-17:30

## **Session III – led by UNESCO-IHP “Groundwater Governance tools to fight land degradation and provide good frameworks for transboundary aquifers management”**

Chair and Moderator: Lhoussaine Bouchaou

Keynote presentations:

- *Amin Shaban*, CNRS of Lebanon
- *Nanor Momjian and Ralf Klingbeil*, UN ESCWA “Legal Issues and the ESCWA-BGR Inventory on Shared Water Resources in Western Asia as a Knowledge Base for Transboundary Cooperation”
- *Yussuf Al Mooji*, Independent Senior Expert, “Groundwater Governance”

Video projection (extract) from Regional Consultation in Arab States, Groundwater Governance Project (5’)

Q&A Session

20:00-22.30

 **Group Dinner (Leila restaurant, Verdun area)**

During the two-day meeting, participants will be invited to record very short statements on camera. The videos will be edited into an episode of “Groundwater Talks” and will be distributed through different channels of GEF, UNESCO and other networks.

Groundwater Talks can be watched at:



[www.groundwatercop.iwlearn.net/groundwatertalks](http://www.groundwatercop.iwlearn.net/groundwatertalks)

09:00-10:30

## **Session IV – led by UNESCO-IHP “Speed Groundwater Stories from MENARID Projects”**

Using the information and material provided by the organizers prior to the event, MENARID PMs will deliver very short (5') focused presentations on respective projects and related groundwater experiences.

Chair: Samer Al Hachem, Ministry of Environment of Lebanon

Speakers:

- *Ardeshir Sayah* (Iran)
- *Khaled Habashneh* (Jordan)
- *Abderrahim Boutaleb* (Morocco)
- *Saydi Abdessalam* (Morocco)
- *Lamia Jemeli* (Tunisia)
- *Adel Loueti* (Tunisia)
- *Awatef Larbi* (Tunisia)
- *Bilquis Sattar* (Yemen)

Q&A Session

10:30-11:00

 **Coffee Break**

11:00-12:30

## **Session V – led by ICARDA “Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation efforts across MENARID: measuring outcomes and impacts”**

Chair: Aden Aw-Hassan

Speakers:

- *Sara Torabi Dastgerdoui*, MENARID Iran, Forest, Range and Watershed Management Organization MoA, Measuring the ex-ante impact of MENARID Intervention/Practices in Behabad site (Kamkooyeh village), Iran
- *Abdolfaz Mighasemi*, ICARDA, Impact Study on the MENARID
- *Mamoon Al Adaileh*, Ministry of Agriculture of Jordan, measuring livestock improvements outcomes in the MENARID Jordan project

12:30-13:30

 **Lunch break**

13:00-...

## **FIELD TRIP**

Visit to the Chabrouh Dam and the Jeita Grotto (tbc) by experts from the Ministry of Environment of Lebanon and BGR

### **Official rapporteurs of the meeting:**

*Jose Alberto Gaona Currea*, MSc Student in International Land and Water Management, Wageningen University, The Netherlands; and *Hugo Remaury*, Project Coordinator, ICARDA

09:30-10:30	<p><b>Session VI – led by ICARDA “Establishing good basis for a monitoring and evaluation system – evidence from a baseline study in Morocco”</b></p> <p>Chair: Aden Aw-Hassan</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mohamed Bendaoud</i>, ICARDA, , Establishment of a baseline study in Morocco</li> <li>• ADA/ANDZOA representative, MENARID project perspectives on the process of establishing a baseline for the Circular Economy Project in Morocco</li> </ul> <p>Q&amp;A Session</p>
10:30-11:00	<p> <b>Coffee Break</b></p>
11:00-12:30	<p><b>Session VII –led by ICARDA “Presentation and group discussions on strategies to support Results Based Management M&amp;E systems for Integrated Natural Resources Management projects, and to maintain the MENARID platform”</b></p> <p>Facilitator: Lamia Mansour, ICARDA</p>
12:30-14:00	<p> <b>Lunch break</b></p>
14:00-15:00	<p><b>Session VIII – led by UNESCO-IHP “Conclusions and recommendations for groundwater management in arid and semi-arid lands”</b></p> <p>Chair: Hamed Alhamami</p> <p>Interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mohamed Bakarr/ Astrid Hillers/ Chris Severin</i>, GEF Secretariat (video conference)</li> <li>• <i>Ralf Klingbeil</i></li> <li>• <i>Lucilla Minelli</i></li> </ul> <p>Final remarks from the audience</p>
15:00-16:00	<p><b>Session IX – led by ICARDA “Conclusions and recommendations for enhancing knowledge sharing in INRM projects, and implementing Results Based Management and Results Based Budgeting monitoring and evaluation system in INRM programs”</b></p> <p>Chair: Aden Aw-Hassan</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Michael Devlin</i>, ICARDA</li> <li>• <i>Lamia Mansour</i>, ICARDA</li> </ul>
16:00-...	<p> <b>Coffee break [and free afternoon/departures]</b></p>

## Highlights on UNESCO's work on freshwater resources

The **International Hydrological Programme (IHP)** is the only intergovernmental scientific programme of the United Nations system devoted to hydrology, water resources management, and water education. The IHP Secretariat serves UNESCO's 190 Member States, through the IHP National Committees, other governmental bodies, and academic and research institutions in the implementation of the programme. The **UNESCO Water Family** comprises the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education; the World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP); a network of 18 water-related Institutes and Centres; and 29 Water-related Chairs and UNITWIN Networks.



The eighth phase of IHP (2014-2021) focuses on “**Water security: Responses to local, regional, and global challenges**”. It reflects a deeper understanding of the interfaces and interconnections between the water, energy and food nexus, which aims to further improve integrated water resources management (IWRM). The role of human behavior, cultural beliefs, and attitudes toward water, and the need for research in social and economic sciences to understand and develop tools to adapt to human impacts of changing water availability, are challenges to be addressed in this new phase.

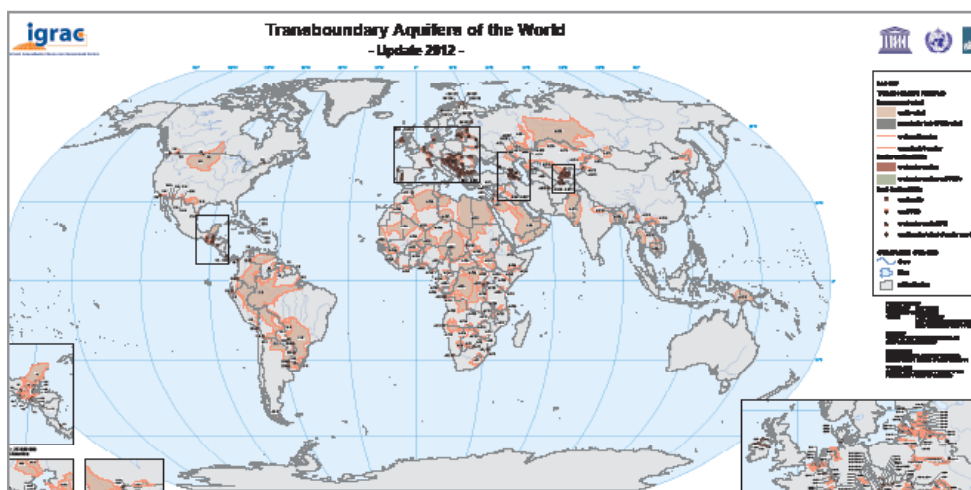
Since its inception, IHP has paid due attention to studies on groundwater resources and aquifer characteristics, enhancing the role that aquifers play in supporting human activities and ecosystems. In order to conduct a global inventory of transboundary aquifers and to elaborate recommendations for the sustainable management of these systems, UNESCO launched the multidisciplinary **International Shared Aquifer Resources Management (ISARM)** programme. ISARM has identified more than 440 transboundary aquifers. These systems exist in each continent, are shared by two or more countries and contain significant quantities of groundwater.



The **World-wide Hydrogeological Mapping and Assessment Programme (WHYMAP)** compiles data on groundwater from national, regional and global sources, and visualizes them in maps, web map applications and services.

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

The **UNESCO/WMO International Groundwater Resource Assessment Centre (IGRAC)** facilitates and promotes international sharing of information and knowledge on sustainable development, management monitoring and governance of groundwater resources worldwide.



Map prepared by IGRAC, 2012



### The UN ILC Draft Articles on the “Law of Transboundary Aquifers”

In 2002 the UN International Law Commission (ILC) embarked on the codification of the law of transboundary aquifers in order to provide **legal regime for the proper management of transboundary aquifers** in view of the critically important freshwater resources. UNESCO-IHP played a central role in providing the valuable assistance and support to ILC by mobilizing hydrogeologists, groundwater administrators and water lawyers. A UN General Assembly Resolution (A/RES/63/124) was adopted in December 2008, including a **set of 19 draft articles** as an annex and encouraging States sharing an aquifer to consider them when entering into an agreement for the proper management of the underground resource.

The Draft Articles provide a comprehensive understanding of transboundary aquifers and their adequate management that includes procedures for **data exchange, monitoring and cooperation**. The articles also consider the existing disparities in capacity and knowledge between countries and the need for international technical cooperation. The articles include requirements on cooperation, including scientific and technical cooperation for developing countries, and regular exchange of data and information between the countries in whose territory the aquifer is located, as well as provisions concerning monitoring and prevention of contamination, with particular attention to groundwater dependent ecosystems. The UN ILC draft articles indicate that regulations should accurately define the limits of the system and identify the recharge and discharge areas. The **guiding principles** are indeed: the obligation for equitable and reasonable utilization of a transboundary aquifer (Art. 4), the obligation not to cause significant harm to other countries of the country in whose territory such system is located (Art. 6), or where a recharge/discharge area is situated, the general obligation to the countries to cooperate (Art. 7) and the regular exchange of data and information between countries on a regular basis on the condition of their transboundary aquifers or aquifer systems.

The first example of the application of the Draft Articles is the agreement on the **Guarani Aquifer** signed by the four countries concerned (Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Paraguay) in 2010. This is the **first international agreement that explicitly refers to the Draft Articles** as inspiring principles for its formulation and implementation.

At its sixty-six session in December 2011, the UNGA brought once again to the attention of Member States the issue of the form that the “Law of Transboundary Aquifers” should take in the future. By reaffirming the major importance of the subject matter and the need for a proper management of this vital natural resource through international cooperation, the **UNGA adopted a second Resolution** (A/RES/66/104) on the “Law of Transboundary Aquifers” recommending the set of 19 draft articles already annexed to the first Resolution to be considered by Member States when negotiating future arrangements for the management of their transboundary aquifers. The text of this second Resolution reaffirms “the major importance of the subject of the law of transboundary aquifers in the relations of States and the need for reasonable and equitable management of transboundary aquifers, a vitally important natural resource, through international cooperation”. A significant addition to the second Resolution on the “Law of Transboundary Aquifers” is the specific call that the UNGA makes to the **UNESCO International Hydrological Programme to act as the technical and scientific instrument facilitating the implementation of the Draft Articles** and providing the necessary assistance to the States concerned in making regional or bilateral agreements.

### IW:LEARN Project and Groundwater Community of Practice

IW:LEARN stands for the "International Waters Learning Exchange And Resource Network" Project of the Global Environment Facility. It is a unique initiative in the GEF portfolio and its current phase (2011-2014) places a strong focus on groundwater protection and management. Its goal is to Strengthen Transboundary Waters Management by facilitating information sharing and knowledge management amongst GEF IW projects and partners.

By pursuing these objectives, IW:LEARN has entrusted UNESCO-IHP and IUCN to establish and facilitate respectively two Global Communities of Practices on **Groundwater** and **Surface Freshwater**. These Communities are formed by water practitioners, GEF IW project managers and representatives of relevant Ministries. The CoPs aim to accelerate learning from and within the GEF IW portfolio, and promote replication of good practices in transboundary freshwater management.

[www.groundwatercop.iwlearn.net](http://www.groundwatercop.iwlearn.net)

Within the Groundwater CoP several activities are being organized:

**Analysis of the GEF Groundwater Portfolio:** A tool to present and review the portfolio of groundwater projects (co-)financed by the GEF in light of disseminating outstanding results, lessons learned and replicable practices. The report is a living document that will continue to be enriched with comments, additions and revisions from participants of the Groundwater Community of Practice until end of the project.

**Groundwater Integration Dialogues:** Face-to-face meetings in different regions of the world organized by UNESCO-IHP to bring together surface, marine and groundwater GEF:IW projects to exchange among each other as well as with local scientific communities in order to identify best practices and promote cooperative approaches and conjunctive management within transboundary settings.

**Groundwater Talks:** A series of videos and interviews from events across the world looking at groundwater issues. Groundwater Talks presents an "underground" journey to explore what people say and think about groundwater, their experiences and perceptions, what they would like to learn or share.

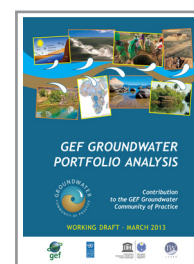
**Webinars:** A series of online workshops that allows multiple participants to exchange and discuss groundwater related issues online from anywhere in the world. The software is provided by UNESCO and all recordings and resources are available at the Groundwater CoP website.

**Global Groundwater Forum:** Hosted by IGRAC, it is the world's online hub for dialogue about groundwater resources. Its purpose is to incite conversation, share knowledge and inspire action among professionals interested in groundwater issues. The Forum is an integral part of the Groundwater CoP.

[forum.un-igrac.org](http://forum.un-igrac.org)



[www.iwlearn.net](http://www.iwlearn.net)



**Global Groundwater Forum**



## Groundwater in the GEF and cooperation with UNESCO-IHP

Since 1999 efforts have been made in the IW Focal Area to **fill a major gap in GEF portfolio relative to groundwater and aquifers**. During the early 2000's, the GEF Secretariat and the GEF Implementing Agencies have been working cooperatively to analyse opportunities for projects that would promote a new approach to groundwater management, better integrated with land use planning, ecosystems protection and basin management. Thanks to this cooperation a number of highly representative projects have entered the GEF portfolio, and the GEF has come to the forefront as the leading funding institution in the field of transboundary groundwater.

In 2003 the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP), in dialogue with the GEF Secretariat, identified groundwater as a priority for its 2003-5 Work Program.

This has led to the establishment of a highly successful cooperation with UNESCO's International Hydrological Program (IHP) and its global long-term initiative to promote assessments and scientific collaboration on transboundary aquifers – the **International Shared Aquifer Resources Management Initiative (ISARM)**.

STAP urged GEF to catalyze the integration of groundwater issues into the global dialogue on water and to encourage the efforts, led by United Nations International Law Commission (UNILC) and UNESCO-IHP, to promote the implementation of the UNGA Resolutions on the 'Law of Transboundary Aquifers' and their annexed Draft Articles.

As a consequence of this sustained effort, the Recommendations of the Fifth Replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund included a special focus on, and a specific mention of groundwater as part of the first Strategic Objective of the International Waters focal area.

This growing realization of the **critical role of groundwater in sustaining human development and ecosystems** has led to the inclusion in the third phase of IW:LEARN of a substantial effort to strengthen groundwater consideration in the GEF IW portfolio of projects.

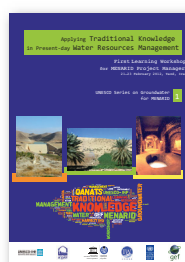
## Groundwater in the MENARID Portfolio

Within this framework, the third phase of IW:LEARN (2011 – 2014) has foreseen a regional sub-component **"Support to MENARID Integrated Land/Groundwater Management"** whose objective is to improve effectiveness in combating land degradation in MENARID by enhancing the role of groundwater and improving subsurface space management.

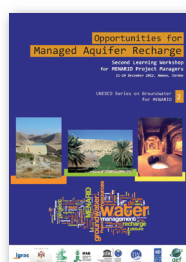
Due to its leading position in groundwater research and expertise, UNESCO's International Hydrological Programme (IHP) was entrusted with the coordination of this sub-component.

UNESCO-IHP builds on its projects and networks of specialists, including UNESCO water related centres and chairs around the world, to provide assistance and expertise to the GEF MENARID multi-focal area projects by creating dialogue on the role of groundwater in land management and agricultural production. This includes sharing of **knowledge and best practices on groundwater management techniques in arid and semi-arid zones**, in order to promote integrated land and groundwater management practices and solutions aimed at increasing the effectiveness of soil conservation efforts and more generally of land degradation and mitigation initiatives. These techniques include aquifer recharge management, water harvesting, notions of groundwater economics and governance, and the enhancement of traditional knowledge, among others, in MENA countries.

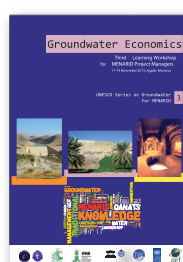
This regional component involves the **organization of a series of learning workshops on different aspects of groundwater management** for GEF MENARID Project Managers and M&E Officers. These workshops are organized by UNESCO-IHP in cooperation with ICARDA and other partners.



1  
Yazd, Iran  
February 2012



2  
Amman, Jordan  
December 2012



3  
Agadir, Morocco  
December 2013



4  
Beirut, Lebanon  
June 2014

### About ICARDA and the CGIAR

Established in 1977, ICARDA is one of the 15 centers supported by the CGIAR. ICARDA's mission is to improve the livelihoods of the resource-poor in dry areas through research and partnerships dedicated to achieving sustainable increases in agricultural productivity and income, while ensuring efficient and more equitable use and conservation of natural resources.



ICARDA has a global mandate for the improvement of barley, lentil and faba bean, and serves the non-tropical dry areas for the improvement of on-farm water use efficiency, rangeland and small ruminant production. In Central Asia, West Asia, South Asia, and

the North Africa regions, ICARDA contributes to the improvement of bread and durum wheats, kabuli chickpea, pasture and forage legumes, and associated farming systems. It also works on improved land management, diversification of production systems, and value-added crop and livestock products. Social, economic and policy research is an integral component of ICARDA's research to better target poverty and to enhance the uptake and maximize impact of research outputs.

CGIAR is a global agriculture research partnership dedicated to reducing rural poverty, increasing food security, improving human health and nutrition, and ensuring more sustainable management of natural resources. It is carried out by the 15 centers who are members of the CGIAR Consortium in close collaboration with hundreds of partner organizations and the private sector.



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



[icarda.org](http://icarda.org)

### The MENARID ICARDA-led Project Linking lone interventions to programmatic goals

While several environmental initiatives exist at the national and regional levels, these are often stand-alone projects not aligned with the broader planning and development sectors. Further, effective knowledge capturing and sharing across the projects and beyond is a missing link in transitioning from localized to system-wide operations – the overarching programmatic goal. The ICARDA-led MENARID project is a strategic extension of the MENARID program that underpins the long-term objectives of MENARID of achieving area-wide environmental benefits through the implementation of multi-focal area projects.



[menarid.icarda.org](http://menarid.icarda.org)

The ICARDA-led MENARID project is an information and knowledge sharing framework providing strategic tools to catalyze the successful integration of land and water resource management practices on an area-wide basis. Besides its direct application to the projects under the MENARID umbrella, the framework contributes to the growing global knowledge on INRM, and land degradation and desertification processes. In particular, it reports on the costs of effectiveness of the institutional model for INRM, desertification control, and the requirements for up-scaling these procedures to other countries not only in the MENA region but to other arid and semi-arid parts of the world.



### The MENARID approach

The MENARID Gateway is creating new synergies amongst ongoing projects and identifying scalable practical solutions by implementing a two-fold approach:

#### **CAPTURING AND SHARING EXPERIENCES AND LESSONS LEARNT FOR GREATER TECHNOLOGY UPTAKE**

*Online portal:* A harmonized knowledge sharing framework, designed and facilitated by ICARDA together with project leaders, is helping MENARID projects capture and share practical experiences in INRM from across intervention sites in six countries. Implemented online as an innovation platform, MENARID Gateway ([menarid.icarda.org](http://menarid.icarda.org)) is enabling stakeholders of national rural development grants to exchange information on land degradation, and the successes and failures of their approaches to land and water management. The tool also encourages broader learning by providing practical solutions and best practices from MENARID to external agencies, stimulating replication to similar agro-ecosystems.



*In live participatory sessions:* Each MENARID national project offers a wealth of practical examples that have demonstrated the potential to increase farm productivity locally, shielding communities from climate change uncertainties and improving livelihoods for rural communities and their overall food security. Many of these approaches have the potential to be scaled up to benefit larger swathes of population in their countries and those living in similar agro-ecosystems across the world. Aiming to mine the rich but hidden knowledge in these national rural development projects, the MENARID Gateway team

is honing the process of “write shops.” These help to build the capacity of project leaders to present on their natural resource management projects and capture and synthesize information in a manner that is ready for wider dissemination and application.

*Training workshops:* Learning workshops organized in partnership with UNESCO’s International Hydrological Programme are educating MENARID stakeholders about managing aquifer recharge, the application of traditional practices in water management, and the economics of groundwater.

Best practices that have been replicated include Vallerani ploughs (from Morocco to Jordan), and land degradation assessment techniques (Tunisia).

#### **HARMONIZING MONITORING AND EVALUATION FUNCTIONS ACROSS THE MENARID PORTFOLIO FOR CONSOLIDATED IMPACTS**

Projects commonly use weak and fragmented environmental monitoring systems, which generate scattered and often inadequately updated data. The MENARID Gateway project has engaged MENARID stakeholders across all projects to put in place the basic requirements for a functional Results Based Management (RBM) and Results Based Budgeting (RBB) Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system.

Along with stakeholders, the project developed a series of the most relevant cross-cutting indicators that could be used as a cornerstone for evaluating natural resource management projects. These cross-cutting indicators are a basis for harmonizing and aligning M&E systems across MENARID portfolio for consolidated impacts. Further, a systematic M&E data aggregation and analysis system is being designed to allow stakeholders to gather, analyze, and report on their activities. This database is being integrated into the MENARID Gateway to provide timely, useful information on progress being made across MENARID.

### Results and way forward for MENARID KM and M&E project

The Menarid Gateway and knowledge sharing services: adding value to rural development projects.

The Menarid Knowledge Management Initiative has delivered the proof-of-concept for a knowledge sharing process that can initiate learning across rural development projects and programs. Its knowledge sharing approach also supports technology transfer and scaling-up of project innovations that were successful in one area, for wider use in regions and countries with similar agro-ecosystems that face similar problems.

The Menarid Knowledge Management initiative offers three services that will improve the effectiveness and wider use of IFAD projects and potentially other rural development initiatives that are active in sustainable land and water management:

- Menarid Gateway knowledge sharing platform: a web-based platform designed for the sharing of useful information on sustainable land and water management projects and can serve as a forum for sharing of ideas and experience between project managers and rural development specialists in different countries. The current Gateway community brings together managers from Algeria, Iran, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, and Yemen. It can serve any number of users and projects and be used as a library for land water management project innovations related information. This can be a one-stop-shop for all IFAD sustainable land management projects and information and for other materials.
- Menarid learning and technology transfer process: the process tested by Menarid and documented in the ICARDA-Menarid Working Paper encourages the learning and review of rural development innovations across project and between managers of programs. This process is a pathway for technology transfer and scaling up of innovation across countries facing similar land degradation problems.
- Menarid monitoring and evaluation process and tool: the tool created by Menarid Knowledge Management allows the tracking and measurement of the effectiveness of rural development projects. It also facilitates the capturing and sharing of useful learning as part of the project management process. The results of evaluations can be shared on the Menarid Gateway.

To learn more about how the Menarid Gateway services can help you, contact:

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## MEETING VENUE and CONTACTS

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