



AWESOME

WATER-ECOSYSTEM-FOOD

PRESS RELEASE

June, 2020



This project is part of the PRIMA Programme supported by the European Union, having received funding from it under grant agreement No 1942



PRESS RELEASE

On the 1st of May 2020 the AWESOME (Managing Water, Ecosystems and Food Across Sectors and Scales in the South Mediterranean) project has officially started.

The project is part of the PRIMA (Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area) Programme supported by the European Union and involves several partners of excellence: Politecnico di Milano, Athens University of Economics and Business, Yezreel Valley College, University of Haifa, Agrimatic Farms, RWTH Aachen University and Fondazione Eni Enrico Mattei.

Global trends in population growth and rising economic prosperity are expected to increase the demand for energy, food and water in the Mediterranean region to a point where they may compromise the sustainable use of natural resources. This context calls for the adoption of integrated and participatory approaches that explicitly account for the Water-Ecosystem-Food (WEF) nexus to explore trade-offs, synergies, and interdependencies across sectors, and to generate shared economic, environmental, and societal benefits.

The main objective of AWESOME is developing a decision-analytic platform based on a multi-level, integrated WEF model to better understand multi-sectoral WEF trade-offs and to capitalize on potential synergies, also exploring the interdependencies and feedbacks across a hierarchy of spatial scales, from the macroeconomic development of the Mediterranean region and national scale, to regional planning at the river basin scale, downscaling until the single farm.

The project framework will allow simulating the impacts of alternative WEF planning portfolios composed of regional policies, river-basin strategic planning options, and innovative technological solutions demonstrated at the local scale, to generate shared economic, environmental, and societal benefits.

AWESOME will consider multiple future evolutions of climate, society, and economics, and how these will shape portfolios robustness, resilience, and sustainability. Pandemics like COVID19 will be added to the analysis and modelled as potential shocks impacting the Mediterranean region in the future. Scenarios of future pandemics will be developed and their impact assessed via simula-

tion across all the scales - regional, river basin, and farm. Specific indicators will be formulated to characterize pandemics' impact on the different components of the WEF nexus, and in particular on food.

As a result, AWESOME will make substantial progress in systems approaches to support the transition towards a more sustainable and resilient agriculture in southern Mediterranean countries, characterized by diverging water availability and demand, due to the projected impacts of changing climate, society and economics, as well as potential shocks.