

# The Chania Declaration

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## **Preamble**

*Participants of the International Conference on **Sharing data and information in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East**, which took place in Chania, Crete, Greece on July 23 to 25, 2013 formulated a declaration that expresses the joint desire to enhance and expand collaboration between countries of the Eastern Mediterranean region in sharing data and information in the fields of climate, energy and water.*

The Eastern Mediterranean region, with a combined population of several hundred million people, strong environmental gradients, climate extremes, numerous social and cultural identities and recent challenging social and political developments, is expected to be disproportionately and adversely affected by future climate change. Anticipated changes in temperatures and precipitation, along with population growth, are likely to importantly affect human livelihood and natural environments and will lead to drastically enhanced energy consumption and increased demands for water. These changes will have significant bearings on the economic development of the countries in the region and may enhance societal and political tensions. Thus, there is an urgent need for a holistic assessment of climate change impacts on the Energy-Water Nexus in the Eastern Mediterranean region.

In order to understand these impacts and to devise effective and appropriate mitigation and adaptation strategies, a thorough knowledge of the past and current state of climate on the regional and local scales, as well as of the energy and water sectors, for each of the countries in the Eastern Mediterranean is crucial. While water and energy production and use are influenced by a variety of drivers, climate and its anticipated change are important determinants for both sectors. Thus, access to comprehensive data and information on all three sectors becomes a vital necessity for science, technology development, and decision making.

Despite the fact that countries in the Eastern Mediterranean region possess an impressive range of documentary data and information on climate, energy and water, accessing such data remains a challenge. While this is not a problem specific to the region, the political and cultural background and the history of science in some of the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean region accentuate the issue of data discoverability/accessibility, particularly for the energy and water sectors. Moreover, even if access is granted, common data-quality and metadata standards, and the harmonization of data for a given variable from different sources constitute major challenges. Participants of the DARECLIMED project (<http://www.cyi.ac.cy/index.php/dareclimed-welcome.html>) have pursued these issues during the project through the involvement of stakeholders and the conception of appropriate infrastructures for the creation of a joint data repository on climate and water in the Eastern Mediterranean.

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Therefore, the participants of the International Conference on **Sharing data and information in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East** call upon governments, other relevant authorities and the providers of data and information on climate, energy and water:

- i. To acknowledge shared issues on water, climate and energy that require enhanced collaboration across the region.
- ii. To enhance the free and unrestricted access to data and information on climate, energy and water, thereby benefitting from established international mechanisms and initiatives.
- iii. To ensure, where applicable, that data ownership and intellectual property rights - while strictly observed - do not limit the appropriate use of data and information.
- iv. To support and advance internationally agreed quality standards and guidelines, and implement measures enabling the harmonization of data, in order to facilitate the intercomparison of data and information.
- v. To join forces in advancing research on climate change, its impacts and interlinkages with the water and energy sectors in the Eastern Mediterranean region. This should be pursued through collaborative observational and climate modeling endeavors, including capacity building by institutions in the region and beyond.

Chania, July 25, 2013