



**AG-WaMED** | Advancing non conventional water management for innovative climate-resilient water governance in the Mediterranean Area

Grant Agreement Number: UNIFI 391 del 20/10/2022, AGRERI ΓΠΡ21-0474657

Deliverable 1.4.1

# Ethical Standards Report



**Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area Programme (PRIMA)**

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<b>Abstract</b>	<p>The present report is produced as deliverable for the task 1.4 of AG-WaMED project, Ethics issues. The task provides ethical oversight, analysis, and guidance on all aspects of the project. The task is defining: i) the procedures and criteria that will be used to identify/recruit research participants; ii) the informed consent procedures that will be implemented for the participation of humans; iii) how all of the data involved in the process is relevant and limited to the purposes of the research project. In particular, the present document is defining:</p> <p>(a) Detailed information on the informed consent procedures that will be implemented for the participation of humans</p> <p>(b) Templates of the Informed Consent Form (ICF) and AG-WaMED Information Sheet (IS)</p>		
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## Glossary

**Data Controller:** The institution/company/other legally responsible person who 'alone, or jointly with others determines the purposes, conditions, and means of the processing of personal data'. The Data Controller is a formal position and involves requirements for compliance with a number of duties in the Personal Data Act (GDPR).

**GDPR:** General Data Protection Regulation EU regulation (regulation (EU) 2016/679) on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data.

**Informed consent:** Principle according to which human participants can enter research freely (voluntarily) with full information about what it means for them to take part, and that they give consent before they enter the research.

**Personal data:** Personal data include 'any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person'. Different pieces of information, which collected together can lead to the identification of a particular person, also constitute personal data. Personal data include data such as internet protocol (IP) addresses (unique identifiers that can be used to identify the owner of devices connected to the internet) and data from 'smart meters' monitoring energy usage by addresses linked to identifiable persons. Personal data that has been de-identified, encrypted or pseudonymized but can be used to re-identify a person remains personal data and falls within the scope of the law. Personal data that has been rendered anonymous in such a way that the individual is not or no longer identifiable is no longer considered personal data. For data to be truly anonymized, the anonymization must be irreversible.

**Processing personal data:** Processing personal data entails 'any operation or set of operations which is performed on personal data or on sets of personal data, whether or not by automated means, such as collection, recording, organization, structuring, storage, adaptation or alteration, retrieval, consultation, use, disclosure by transmission, dissemination or otherwise making available, alignment or combination, restriction, erasure or destruction' (Article 4(2) GDPR).

## Introduction

Studies available at Mediterranean level show the evidence on the applicability of technologies to use Non Conventional Water (NCW) for multiple purposes. What is still missing is a “good governance” for the equitable use of such water resources and this needs an advancement of current management practices to be fostered by integrating innovative approaches and evidence-based, co-produced decision making. In this framework, a multi-actor approach that can guarantee the representation of multiple stakeholders in the decision-making process will be promoted to improve water governance schemes.

The aim of the project “Advancing non conventional water management for innovative climate-resilient water governance in the Mediterranean Area (AG-WaMED)” is to provide innovative, evidence-based participatory management solutions to water scarcity governance that can be scaled at the Mediterranean level. The project will propose a transdisciplinary approach, integrating the state of the art on land, water and agronomic modeling to support evidence-based water management in four Living Labs (LLs) located in Mediterranean watersheds, Italy, Tunisia-Algeria, Spain, Egypt.

A participatory modeling suite will allow the co-definition and co-evaluation of different water allocation scenarios for improving water governance in each LL, taking into account the decisive impact of NCW use to ensure climate-resilient strategies under a climate change perspective. A flexible yet comprehensive socio-economic approach procedure will enable the evaluation of such scenarios and will trigger a feedback mechanism to generate an adaptive learning environment in the AG-WaMED LLs. The full process will inform new water allocation models and will produce an innovative framework for improving water governance and for reducing conflicts in water-stressed contexts of the Mediterranean.

The digital technologies that will be used for the data analysis coming from the participatory session for the co-design activities represent a challenge when dealing with fundamental rights of privacy and protection of personal data. It is important then to provide users with a secure digital environment that they can trust, including effective control and protection of their personal data. For this reason, the EU Regulation n. 679/2016, entered into force from May 25, 2018, will be applied both for personal data collection in EU and non-EU countries project partners.

The present report is produced as deliverable for the task 1.4 of AG-WaMED project, **Ethics issues**. The task provides ethical oversight, analysis, and guidance on all aspects of the project. The task is defining: i) the procedures and criteria that will be used to identify/recruit research participants; ii) the informed consent procedures that will be implemented for the participation of humans; iii) how all of the data involved in the process is relevant and limited to the purposes of the research project.

In particular, the present document is defining:

- a) Detailed information on the informed consent procedures that will be implemented for the participation of humans

- b) Templates of the Informed Consent Form (ICF) and AG-WaMED Information Sheet (IS).

The first section of the document analyzes the Ethical Issues described in the AG-WaMED proposal.

The second section describes the Informed Consent procedures, and the template of the ICF and of the IS.

The third section offers a specific detail of the Gender Issues to be addressed in the process.

# 1. Ethical issues highlighted by AG-WaMED

In accordance with the submission format of the Administrative forms (Part I) submitted for AG-WaMED, the following ethical issues are considered for the AG-WaMED project.

No. <sup>1</sup>	Macro-area	Issue
4	PERSONAL DATA	Personal data collection and processing
		Tracking of participants
		Further processing of previously collected personal data
6	THIRD COUNTRIES	Importing data (personal data)
	Countries involved: Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt	

In particular, personal data to be collected during AG-WaMED will consist of:

- Farm-level survey: sociodemographic data of farmers and also technical and economic data of farm socioeconomic performance. These data will include land use and fixed capital (buildings and machinery); variable capital per crop (agrochemical and fertilizer inputs quantities and values; value of other inputs and other variable costs); labor availability and requirements per crop; yields, product prices and subsidies. Also, one part of the questionnaire interview will be based on open-ended questions to record qualitative assessments of farmers' aspirations and opinions with regards to the use of Non Conventional Waters (NCW).
- Sociodemographic data of participants (questionnaire respondents) to the Choice Experiment survey, which will include e.g. gender, age, family status, education. In the same survey, respondents will be asked about their preferred scenarios of NCW valorization.

## 2. Informed consent

For all personal data collected, the data subject will be provided with detailed information about the envisaged data processing in an intelligible and easily accessible form, using clear and plain language.

The information provided will include:

- a statement that participation is voluntary;
- information about who is organizing and funding the activities;

<sup>1</sup> Reference to the section "Ethics issues table" of the AG-WaMED proposal - Administrative forms (Part I)

- the identity of the data controller and, where applicable, the contact details of the Data Protection Officer (DPO);
- the specific purpose(s) of the processing for which the personal data will be used;
- the subject's rights as guaranteed by the GDPR and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, in particular the right to withdraw consent or access their data, the procedures to follow should they wish to do so, and the right to lodge a complaint with a supervisory authority;
- information as to whether data will be shared with or transferred to third parties and for what purposes;
- and how long the data will be retained before they are destroyed. The data subjects must also be made aware if data are to be used for any other purposes, shared with research partners or transferred to organizations outside the EU (see article 13 GDPR).

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Below is a sample of the informed consent form that will be used.



## CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

### Informed Consent

Project Acronym:	AGWAMED
Project Name:	Advancing non conventional water management for innovative climate-resilient water governance in the Mediterranean Area
Start date of the project	01/09/2022
End date of the project	31/08/2025
Financed by	EU and national funds
Programme	Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area Programme (PRIMA) 2021 Call – Section 2
Website	.....

I agree to take part in the “AGWAMED – Advancing non conventional water management for innovative climate-resilient water governance in the Mediterranean Area” research project. I have had the project explained to me and I am happy with the information provided have received a project information sheet. I have had the chance to ask questions about the project.

I understand that agreeing to take part means that I am willing to:

- participate in the AGWAMED project,
- be interviewed by the researcher
- allow the interview/focus group to be audio recorded and photographed for internal use in the project,
- make myself available for a further interview should that be required.

I understand that any information I provide is confidential and that no information that I disclose will lead to the identification of any individual in the reports on the project, either by the researcher or by any other party. However, I also understand that comments that I make may be quoted anonymously as part of the publications of the project and may state my position in the supply chain (e.g. producer, consumer, processor, retailer, consultant, or researcher).

I understand that my participation is voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and that I can withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.

I consent to the processing of my personal information for the purposes of this research study. I understand that such information will be treated as strictly confidential and handled in accordance with the EU General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679.

I agree, that pictures taken during the meeting/interviews can be used for social media and project publication without additional consent.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



The PRIMA programme is supported under Horizon 2020, the European Union's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation



The information sheet will be developed on the basis of the following text:

“The use of unconventional water, collection of surface runoff and rainwater, desalination, use of purified wastewater and recharge of the aquifer under controlled conditions, represents one of the solutions for adaptation to climate change in the Mediterranean area. In this context, local research will be essential to address the challenges related to the sustainable management of water resources in agriculture and for multiple uses.

Precisely for this reason, the University of Florence is active on the subject and within the PRIMA program (Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area) has received a grant of over one million euro for the **AG- WaMED “Advancing non conventional water management for innovative climate-resilient water governance in the Mediterranean Area”**, as coordinator.

The project brings together eight academic institutions from the Mediterranean area – University of Florence, Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (Spain), Institut des Régions Arides (Tunisia), Alexandria University (Egypt), Hellenic Agricultural Organization (Greece), Université Larbi Tebessi de Tébessa (Algeria), Vrije Universiteit of Amsterdam (the Netherlands), Politecnico di Milano - with the aim of promoting innovative and resilient governance of the water resource.

The scientific activities will concern the hydrological modeling of critical areas in the Mediterranean basin and the simulation of the use of non-conventional water management technologies.

The results of the latter will be elaborated and discussed in Living Labs, territorial laboratories for comparison with the main stakeholders, to make the proposed solutions truly implementable in the realities of the project.

In the framework of the project, and also among the Living Labs stakeholders, the project will also collect data aiming at estimating monetary values for benefits expected to accrue from the use of NCW which are not valued in markets (non-use values) to inform the socio-economic analysis.”

### 3. Gender issues

All AG-WaMED partners emphasize the importance of taking an inclusive and participatory approach to address gender inequalities. The general approach foresees specific campaigns addressed to female stakeholders in order to guarantee an equal participation of gender at workshops and events.

The findings of the project are not foreseen to affect women and men differently and all the outputs are expected to be non-gendered. Nevertheless, the Consortium will incorporate sex and gender analysis into its research and innovation content (particularly where these might have adverse effects) and Management activities to ensure that the sex and gender

dimensions are properly taken into account thereby removing potential barriers to adoption and take-up.

For example, the Dissemination and Exploitation Management will ensure that system user interfaces or published documents (i.e., scientific papers, white papers, etc.) do not contain any assumptions or biases with regard to sex and/or gender. In the context of the project activities and management, the Partners of the AG-WaMED consortium are all equal opportunity employers, actively working towards a better balance between male and female members of staff, flexibility of the workforce and benefits for all working parents.