



CEDARE: Regional Role in Water Management and Development

The Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE) was established in 1992 as an international organisation, in response to the convention adopted by the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment (CAMRE) in Damascus in 1991, and upon the initiative of the Arab Republic of Egypt, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD).

CEDARE strives to cope with all rapid variables, in order to spread, enhance, and encourage the concept of 'Environment for Development', which the whole world is trying to popularize. This is a modern concept that holds solving environmental problems which eventually contribute to eliminating many obstacles to development, and emphasizes that addressing environmental issues, though highly important from the moral and ethical point of view, would also have a positive impact on the health and quality of life of man.

Water resources are one of the pillars of the natural resources systems that also include land resources, marine and coastal environment, biodiversity, atmosphere, mineral resources, and energy sources. Water resources issues are also intertwined with the different sectors of development, agriculture, industry, and urban development. Compared to other regions, such as the Mediterranean Europe

countries, most Arab countries suffer from a scarcity of renewable water resources. That is why it is vitally important to encourage water reuse, the best uses of non-renewable groundwater, and desalination as a regional policy to develop unconventional water resources in the region.

The quality of surface and groundwater is increasingly becoming under threat of deterioration due to some environmentally harmful activities. This requires proper treatment of municipal and industrial wastewater, as well as proper management of solid waste. In addition, several Arab states depend on shared rivers and groundwater, which necessitates greater regional cooperation.

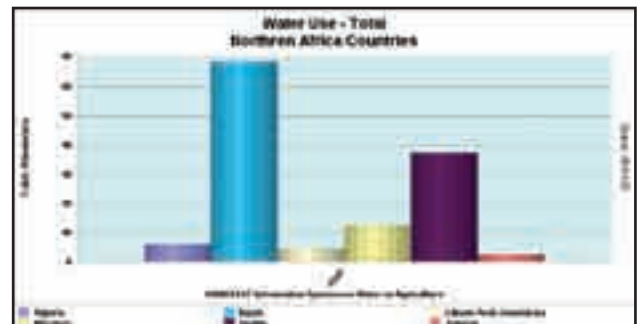
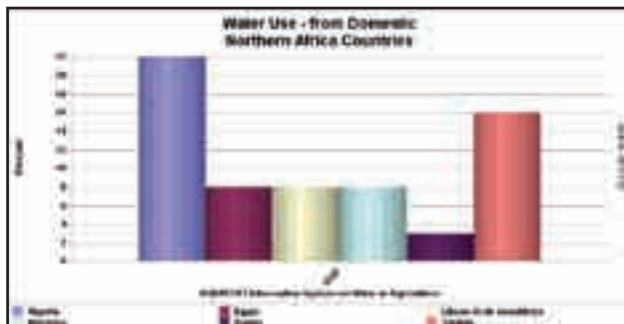
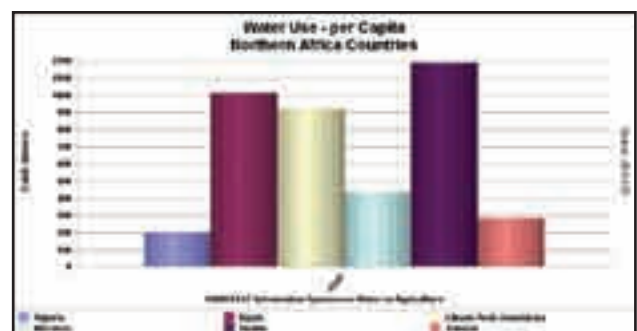
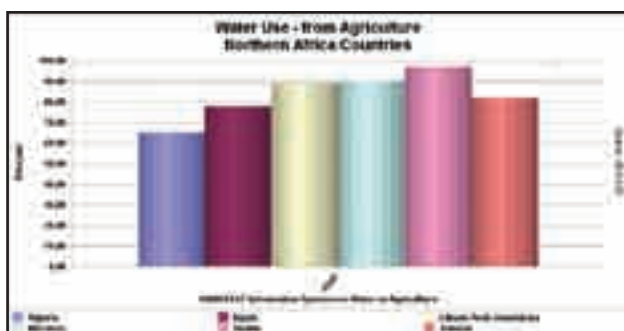
In order to overcome the challenges mentioned above, water resources management will remain one of CEDARE's Priorities of Action at this stage, with special emphasis on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), by developing comprehensive methodologies to achieve balance between water availability and actual need, involving all sectors of the community according to their different responsibilities.

CEDARE will continue its efforts to maximize IWRM in the Arab region and Europe by building partnerships with the aim of strengthening dialogue and joint action. A fine example of such contributions is its establishment of both the Global Water

Partnership – Mediterranean (GWP-MED) at the regional level and the Egyptian Water Partnership (EWP) at the national level, as well as its activities within the framework of the GWP, the Arab Water Council, and the African Ministers Council on Water.

CEDARE is also participating in enhancing human capacities, preparing technical studies, and developing implementation frameworks for a phased transformation towards IWRM. Within this context, CEDARE has started to set the implementation framework necessary to achieve IWRM in South Mediterranean countries, and to evaluate the status of IWRM in Arab Mediterranean countries, in coordination with the Global Water Partnership, for transformation into action plans suitable for the limitations and capacities of each country. CEDARE has also begun to evaluate the progress achieved by Arab countries in their preparation of IWRM plans in order to develop a regional programme within the UNDP and the Arab Water Council to assist Arab countries in the preparation and execution of IWRM plans.

CEDARE's experience has been varied, covering several initiatives, projects and activities in the field of water management and development, especially in IWRM including water resources assessment, conflict resolution mechanisms, shared groundwater management, in addition to several activities related to capacity building, training, media, and public awareness.



Source: Amr Abdel-Megeed, Senior Regional Water Specialist, CEDARE

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