

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF A JOINT POSITION FOR THE EUROMEDITERRANEAN WATER FORUM 2026

Budget code: EEP001

Project: INTERMED

Imputation item: N/A

Introduction

The Associació MedCités / MedCities is an association of cities, with its headquarters in Barcelona, dedicated to sustainable urban development in the Mediterranean. It comprises 91 municipalities and unions of municipalities from seventeen different states and runs projects in the fields of strategic urban planning, urban services, the environment and local economic and social development, as well as training activities, technical support and the capitalisation of best practices. The network was created in 1991, since which time it has carried out dozens of projects in Mediterranean cities.

In 2023, MedCities, the Mediterranean Institute of Water (IME- Institut Méditerranéen de l'Eau) and AVITEM (Agence des Villes et Territoires Méditerranéens) initiated a collaboration that led to the Marseille Declaration, a document that underlined the essential role of Mediterranean decentralised authorities on integrated water and sanitation management. The Declaration was presented by a representative of the Barcelona Metropolitan Area (AMB), both a MedCities and IME member, in the 2024 Water World Forum in Bali.

As a result of the success of this initiative, in October 2025, as part of the programme of the World Metropolitan Forum held in Barcelona, MedCities co-organised again with IME and AVITEM the conference “Towards a Water-Resilient Mediterranean: Solutions from Local Authorities” with the support of the AMB.

This conference was conceived as a regional dialogue space to address one of the most urgent challenges facing the Mediterranean: the sustainable management of scarce, unevenly distributed water resources amid accelerating climate change and urbanisation. Building on the momentum generated by the Declaration of Marseille (2024), the event aimed to strengthen the role of subnational authorities in shaping a shared Mediterranean voice ahead of the Euro-Mediterranean Water Forum (Rome, 2026) and the World Water Forum (Riyadh, 2027).

The discussions centred on the political and technical dimensions of water governance, exploring how local and metropolitan authorities can lead the transition towards integrated, equitable, and climate-resilient water management. Through a combination of plenary sessions and interactive participatory dynamics, the conference promoted knowledge exchange and collaboration on key themes, including the WEF Nexus (Water–Energy–Food–Ecosystems), resilience and demand management, innovative economic models, and multi-level governance. A synthesis of the main interventions and debates during the conference sessions, and the key insights, challenges, and proposals that emerged, was gathered in a report.

MedCities is willing to continue its collaboration with IME and AVITEM and capitalise on these results to inform future Mediterranean and global policy dialogues on sustainable water governance, such as the Euro-Mediterranean Water Forum (29 Sep – 2 Oct, Rome), and in a later stage, bring it to the 2027 World Water Forum in Riyadh.

General Secretariat

In this sense, MedCities is searching for a water-related multidisciplinary team that can develop a joint position policy paper through a series of online participative processes.

1. Objective

The objective of this service provision is the development of a Joint Position for the EuroMediterranean Water Forum 2026

2. Scope of the services

This service needs to be developed in consecutive stages:

Task 1: Preparatory works:

1.1 Revision of the results captured on the final document of the “Towards a Water-Resilient Mediterranean: Solutions from Local Authorities” with the objective to analyse the proposals issued from the conference. This task will be done by the consultants with the assistance of the MedCities secretariat.

1.2 Revision and update of the list of actors invited and participating in the Conference Towards a Water-Resilient Mediterranean (who was invited, who was missing and who actually participated) to set the target group to engage in the process. This task will be done by the consultants with the assistance of the MedCities secretariat.

1.3 Map current initiatives on Water for 2026 and 2027 to know where we have advocacy opportunities of the joint position document. This task will be done by the consultants taking as starting point a document shared by MedCities secretariat.

1.4 Develop a quick assessment on the uptake of policy recommendation documents by its targets to identify remaining gaps and the most suitable scope, format and roadmap for the joint position.

1.4 Defining the key elements of the process: actors to be engaged, role of the stakeholders, calendar and tentative format of next steps and how they can contribute to and benefit from. This task will be done by the consultants in collaboration with MedCities secretariat.

DELIVERABLES TASK 1:

- List of actors to mobilise and results of the water initiatives mapping
- Quick assessment on uptake of policy recommendations and proposal for scope, format and roadmap of the Joint Position.
- Terms of reference of the key elements of the process and next steps.

Task 2: Actors mobilisation and Conclusion validation.

2.1 Using the results of the report and the outcomes from task 1, the consultants will develop the structure, aims, objectives and the desired outputs of a Mediterranean Water Task Force. In this regard, using the updated list resulting from task 1.2, MedCities will contact the identified key stakeholders, those previously engaged and the new ones, to invite them to be part of the task force, explain the objectives and the upcoming activities and, upon confirmation of interest, launch the task force for the joint position. The consultants will support MedCities secretariat in the communication with the task force to engage them and gather their opinions, and to involve them in all the foreseen activities.

2.2 With the new members of the task force confirmed, the consultants will engage them in order to validate the conclusions and the next steps proposed during the Conference Towards a Water-Resilient Mediterranean (held in October 2025). The following suggested guiding questions could lead the discussions to validate the document outcomes: Do these results make

sense for you? do you think that something is missing? from the suggestion of the Road Map, which one(s) do you find a priority?

The consultants should design the most appropriate engagement mechanism to gather their feedback either through an online meeting or by contacting the task force members by email and asking for feedback through a questionnaire.

DELIVERABLES TASK 2:

- Report on the conceptualisation and launch of the task force and the consultation process.
- Report on results validation and prioritisation.

Task 3: Online encounters and Joint Position document

3.1 Once the consultants have gathered the task force's feedback, they should identify (using the results of task 1) which is the most suitable way to build this common position document of Mediterranean Local Authorities to be presented in the most prominent Water Fora in 2026 and 2027. This can be presented, for example, by providing the practical steps to implement the conference roadmap.

The proposal should include two online encounters that could be a workshop, a training, a seminar, or other proposals agreed with MedCités. MedCités will facilitate the online platform and all logistical support for these online encounters, including interpretation.

3.2 The encounters should serve to develop a document that must contain agreed statements showing the will and role of Mediterranean urban local authorities in efficient and fair water management in the region. The document must be developed by the consultants, who must ensure interaction between the participants to validate it. The document will be complemented with an infographic summary to be used for communication purposes.

DELIVERABLES TASK 3 (to be delivered by 15th September at the latest):

- Online consultations programme
- Report of the activities with the list of participants, teaching materials and most important results.
- Joint position document
- Infographic summary

Task 4: Document's update after the Euro-Mediterranean Water Forum

4.1 Within the most prominent and related results issuing from the Euro Mediterranean water forum in September 2026, the consultants should update the joint position in order to include them. To this end, the consultants will validate the new elements with the task force by email consultation.

DELIVERABLE TASK 4: Joint position document updated.

3. Type of service, duration and place of execution

These terms of reference and the winning proposal will define the conditions of the service as a contract of provision of services from the notification of the order until 15 of December, 2026. The service will be carried out online.

The service will be governed by the Spanish law and the courts of Barcelona.

4. Base budget of the service

The maximum budget for this service is € 14.800,00 (all taxes included). If the bidder has its tax domicile in Spain, the maximum amount will be € 17.897,50 including the VAT rate valid on the date of the publication of these terms of reference which is 21%.

Any offer exceeding this amount will be rejected.

It is understood that the budget includes all of the costs that the successful bidder is required to pay for the normal fulfilment of the services contracted such as general expenses, financial costs, insurance, transport and travel expenses, remuneration for the staff under its control and all verification and job costs.

5. Price of the contract and economic conditions

The administrative details of the Contracting Body are:

ASSOCIACIÓ MEDCITIES AND/OR MEDCITÉS
C / 62. 16-18. EDIFICI B, ZONA FRANCA
08040 BARCELONA – CATALONIA - SPAIN
Tax number (VAT): ESG66401258

The contract price is the one established by the award of the tender, in line with the offer submitted.

2 invoices are required according to the following details:

- 40% of the total amount with the submission of the deliverables of Task 1 & Task 2
- 60% of the total amount with the submission of the deliverables of Task 3 & Task 4

Offer and invoices must contain at least the following information:

- Full tax name and full tax address of the supplier
- Tax identification number of the supplier
- Complete MedCities data
- Offer/Invoice number
- Offer/Invoice date
- Budget code and project name indicated in the header of this document
- Description of the service to be provided/provided
- Detail of the amount of the service and taxes (if any)

The payment term of the invoice will be: bank transfer around 30 days after the date of the invoice (bank account details are required) and always after internal favourable technical report issued by the General Secretariat of MedCities at the end of each phase.

The service provider will be directly responsible for paying the local or national taxes applied to the services except if the service provider is fiscally domiciled in Spain, whereupon the current tax law in respect of personal income tax (IRPF) will be applied.

Invoices must be sent either by post to the offices of the General Secretariat of MedCities or, if they are in digital format, to contact@medcities.org.

Bank charges arising from the payment of invoices will be shared (SHA according to bank coding).

MedCities may require information from the service provider regarding its compliance with obligations relating to social security contributions and the payment of taxes.

Those non-EU service providers will be required to present a certificate of tax residence within 7 calendar days of the award of the service. If the aforementioned document has not been provided to MedCities within 7 days, the contract may be terminated.

6. Participation requirements

Those bidding for the service can be individuals or companies that have the full capacity to carry out the work, that are not subject to a ban on hiring staff and that can demonstrate their technical reliability and professional experience.

7. Confidentiality clause

The information that the service provider will have access to in order to fulfil the purpose of this contract must be kept strictly confidential and must not be used for any activity not covered by this contract. In circumstances where a particular use of the information gives rise to doubts in respect of this confidentiality clause, the service provider must, in all cases, request the consent of MedCities.

8. Ownership and authorship of the work

The ownership and authorship of any service provision work carried out belongs to MedCities. As owners of the study, any use or mention of it in publications, articles, interviews, conferences, etc. must have the express authorisation of MedCities.

9. Termination of the service

By giving notice of one month, the service can be terminated by either party before the date indicated in Point 3 of these terms of reference for objective reasons or for the reason described in the last paragraph of point 5 of this terms of reference.

10. Submission of offers

The offer must be sent to the following email address: contact@medcities.org

- Proposal submission period: 7 working days from the date of these terms of reference.
- The subject line of the email should specify "Service offer for is the development of a Joint Position for the EuroMediterranean Water Forum 2026"

The offer must include the extent of the services offered and fulfil the conditions expressed in the previous sections. Notwithstanding that the candidate can attach to their offer any complementary information they consider to be of interest, the tender must include the following documentation:

- Detailed offer of the services.

- Economic proposal: candidates must submit an economic proposal in euros that either they or their representative must sign. The prices offered should include any type of tax, charge or fiscal ruling of a European, state, autonomous community or local nature as indicated in Points 5 and 6 of these terms of reference.
- CV of the professional person or company involved and of the working team, giving relevant examples of similar work undertaken and, if applicable, international experience.

In the event that additional information is required to present the offer, we invite you to contact MedCities by writing to the email address contact@medcities.org. Only written questions about clarifications of the presentation of offers will be answered.

MedCities may request additional information related to the proposal if it deems it appropriate. If this is the case, the proposals that require clarification must be answered within a reasonable period established by the evaluation team.

11. Assessment criteria

The most advantageous offer will need to be evaluated bearing in mind the cost-effectiveness ratio in accordance with the overall proposal. The assessment could take the price-quality ratio into account.

MedCities guarantees equal treatment of the people/companies bidding and will keep their offers confidential.

The person/company adjudicated as the successful bidder will be notified within a period of 5 working days from the final submission date for offers.

Barcelona, 13th of May, 2026

Jordi Castellana Gamisans
Acting Secretary General