

## TRANSLATING THE WATER, ENERGY, FOOD AND ECOSYSTEM (WEFE) NEXUS APPROACH INTO PRACTICE: TOWARDS A MEDITERRANEAN WEFE NEXUS COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

**OBJECTIVE OF THIS NOTE IS TO SET THE BACKGROUND FOR DISCUSSIONS  
IN THE BREAKOUT GROUPS**

Climate change, demographic development and geopolitical tensions that are already affecting the Mediterranean region may become more severe in the future. The combined effects of desertification, biodiversity loss, water scarcity, groundwater depletion in extensive areas of the region and the rise of extreme weather conditions are likely to put further strain on agricultural, food and energy systems in the Mediterranean. These looming threats call for better coordination of sectoral policies and enhanced regional collaboration in the deployment of WEFE Nexus solutions addressing the specific challenges of the region.

Providing empirical evidence permitting decision makers to weigh up the potential economic and social impacts of different options is essential to balance immediate payoffs with future benefits and encourage changes. Showcasing positive experiences from different places in the Mediterranean region is fundamental. As inspired by the 2021 WEFE Nexus Science Advances Conference, linking the supply of evidence to its demand might be achievable through the interaction of scientists, practitioners, policymakers, investors and other stakeholders coming together as a **Community of Practice (CoP)** at a regional network of demonstration sites.

**The Conference organizers have agreed to gather in a core group to articulate the terms of reference for a WEFE Nexus Mediterranean Community of Practice.**

Participants in the Breakout Groups are expected to debate on the goals, activities and expected outcomes of such a Community of Practice. This offers the opportunity to empower themselves by participating rather than observing, give feedback at an early stage, internalizing the goals of the CoP and, eventually, promoting the growth of the Community by sharing their expertise. Following up the Conference, organisers and interested stakeholders will further work on the development of the CoP.

Through **networking of selected demonstration sites**, knowledge-sharing and capacity building, the WEFE Nexus Community of Practice will provide a proof-of-concept of the benefits of recommended Nexus measures based on tailored policies, best-available technology and multi-stakeholder partnerships. The CoP, facilitated by a core team of organizations committed to promote the Nexus approach, will engage relevant Mediterranean practitioners and stakeholders, including policy- and decision-makers and investors, to ensure a significant impact. It will take a regional approach, with the ambition to cover as many countries as possible to maximize the exchange of experiences and best practices and to identify solutions that may be broadly applied across the Mediterranean region.

Anticipated objectives are:

- To promote/support the deployment of regional demonstration sites as laboratories for scale-up and policy design

- To contribute to the development, testing, dissemination and replication WEFE Nexus solutions in the Mediterranean region and beyond (**knowledge acquisition**).

The expected outcomes are:

- WEFE Nexus best practices and innovative, science-based solutions for an improved management of natural resources
- Cost-benefits analysis and outlook scenarios on the regional impacts of cross-sectoral Nexus solutions tested at the WEFE Nexus demonstration sites
- New approaches and modes of practices to inform decisions, assist in choosing priorities and incentivising the cross-sectoral management of water, energy, food and ecosystem resources (**knowledge packaging**)
- Hands-on recommendations for the further development of practicable operational targets (**knowledge transfer**).

## ANNEX: OUTLINE OF THE BREAKOUT GROUPS AND GUIDING QUESTIONS

Breakout Groups will be an opportunity for participants to contribute to the forging of the **WEFE Nexus Mediterranean Community of Practice**, the work product of the Conference. Building on discussions in the panels and personal capacities, participants will reflect on an actionable approach to address the complexity of cross-sectoral science-to-policy interfacing. They are also expected to offer demonstration cases likely to show the economic and socio-ecological benefits of the WEFE Nexus approach.

Each Breakout Group will approach the CoP from the angle of one of the Conference sessions, namely:

- Energy - Water
- Food - Water
- WEFE Nexus
- Pilots

The Breakout Groups will take place on the third day (29 September 2021) of the conference, from 10:30 to 11:45 a.m (CEST). The links to each breakout room are reported in the table below and available also in the final version of the programme on the website [Home - WEFE Conference \(wefe-nexus-medconf-2021.eu\)](https://www.wefe-nexus-medconf-2021.eu).

The questions below are intended to guide the discussions, to be eventually enriched with personal knowledge, experience and examples of real-life projects:

<p><b>1. WATER-ENERGY</b>  <a href="https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/612277965">https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/612277965</a></p> <p><u>Breakout Group specific:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What institutional and cultural positioning prevent the appropriation of the WEFE Nexus concept, with emphasis on the <b>Water-Energy</b> axis, by Mediterranean decision makers and stakeholders?</li> <li>- On which barriers and their lifters should the focus be first, with emphasis on the <b>Water-Energy</b> axis? Please focus on providing examples/ideas of game-changer lifters.</li> </ul> <p><u>Common to all Breakout Groups:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Share your views on the need, added value and the possible goals of the CoP</li> <li>- How can internationally supported projects assist in the development of a network of WEFE Nexus demonstration sites, including giving examples of how your activities could contribute to the CoP</li> <li>- How can we ensure long-term ownership, sustainability and engagement in the CoP?</li> </ul>	<p><b>2. WATER-FOOD</b>  <a href="https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/286167101">https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/286167101</a></p> <p><u>Breakout Group specific:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What institutional and cultural positioning prevent the appropriation of the WEFE Nexus concept, with emphasis on the <b>Water-Food</b> axis, by Mediterranean decision makers and stakeholders?</li> <li>- On which barriers and their lifters should the focus be first, with emphasis on the <b>Water-Food</b> axis? Please focus on providing examples/ideas of game-changer lifters.</li> </ul> <p><u>Common to all Breakout Groups:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Share your views on the need, added value and the possible goals of the CoP</li> <li>- How can internationally supported projects assist in the development of a network of WEFE Nexus demonstration sites, including giving examples of how your activities could contribute to the CoP</li> <li>- How can we ensure long-term ownership, sustainability and engagement in the CoP?</li> </ul>
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<p><b>3. WEFEX NEXUS</b> <a href="https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/226547429">https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/226547429</a></p> <p><u>Breakout Group specific:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- What institutional and cultural positioning prevent the appropriation of the <b>WEFEX Nexus</b> concept by Mediterranean decision makers and stakeholders?</li><li>- On which barriers and their lifters should the focus be first? Please focus on providing examples/ideas of <b>WEFEX Nexus</b> game-changer lifters.</li></ul> <p><u>Common to all Breakout Groups:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Share your views on the need, added value and the possible goals of the CoP</li><li>- How can internationally supported projects assist in the development of a network of WEFEX Nexus demonstration sites, including giving examples of how your activities could contribute to the CoP</li><li>- How can we ensure long-term ownership, sustainability and engagement in the CoP?</li></ul>	<p><b>4. PILOTS</b> <a href="https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/715637789">https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/715637789</a></p> <p><u>Breakout Group specific:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- What institutional and cultural positioning prevent the appropriation of the WEFEX Nexus concept by Mediterranean decision makers and stakeholders, and how <b>WEFEX Nexus pilots</b> can assist improving that?</li><li>- On which barriers and their lifters should the focus be first? Please focus on providing examples/ideas of game-changer lifters through <b>WEFEX Nexus pilots</b>.</li></ul> <p><u>Common to all Breakout Groups:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Share your views on the need, added value and the possible goals of the CoP</li><li>- How can internationally supported projects assist in the development of a network of WEFEX Nexus demonstration sites, including giving examples of how your activities could contribute to the CoP</li><li>- How can we ensure long-term ownership, sustainability and engagement in the CoP?</li></ul>
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