



JOINT PHEMAC AND NEX-LABS INNOVATION WEEK OUTCOMES: STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS TO PAVE THE WAY TOWARDS ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

Tunis, 27/01/2022

From 17 to 20 January 2022, the joint EU-funded [NEX-LABS](#) and [PHEMAC Innovation Week](#) brought together Euro-Mediterranean researchers, policy makers, investors, Industry players, Academia, Technology Transfer Offices, SMEs, startups and Entrepreneurs.

The event provided participants with unique opportunities to know more about Water, Energy and Food (WEF) NEXUS status and realities in Tunisia and the Euro-Mediterranean Region and to forge strategic partnerships across Europe and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

The innovation week was particularly intense and rich with insights for the audience. Attended by **over 1000 participants** from the Mediterranean countries, the event was the occasion to showcase innovative products, services and ideas through the virtual exhibition.

During day one, the event focuses on connecting with PHEMAC Euro-Mediterranean and Tunisian innovators, researchers, policy makers, international companies, investors and industrials in WEF sectors.

The Opening ceremony was chaired by the president of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Center in addition to the project coordinators, European funding programs representatives ([PRIMA](#) and [ENI CBC MED](#)) and Mr. Mahmoud Elyes Hamza, Minister of Agriculture, Water Resources and Fisheries.

The session highlighted the main objectives for the organization of the Water, Energy, Food Innovation Week: to **identify the WEF NEXUS results** better suited to be considered in **innovation actions**; to **identify the WEF NEXUS innovative solutions towards implementing Sustainable Development Goals**, to **raise social awareness** of the inherent value of **WEF NEXUS research and innovation**; to **promote the uptake of the WEF NEXUS project results** by the **private sector** to ensure that the more relevant previous outputs can be incorporated into the innovation system; to **gather policy recommendations** to ensure long-term sustainability and maintenance of EU MPC society through implementation of innovative WEF NEXUS solutions.

The key note focused on **The Nexus approach applied to water, energy, and food security in the MENA region** while the WEF NEXUS panel through 3 conferences on Water-Energy/Energy-Food/Water-Food defined the typical problems for the successful



implementation, acceptance of technological solutions and provide the floor to identify and discuss which problems prevent the replication of acceptance within the different WEF NEXUS interphases

The **Focus group sessions** gathered **Incubation & Acceleration Managers, Research Valorization Representatives, Technology Transfer Offices (TTOs), Intellectual Property Rights Experts** and discussed about the PHEMAC NEXUS [iHUB](#)'s Key Performance Indicators; the magnitude of transforming nexus-hubs into the active ecosystem, measuring the success of nexus-hubs beyond quantitative indicators, drawing insights from NEXUS-hubs for assessment on one hand and the gathered experience of various funded projects and platforms while addressing existing WEF NEXUS challenges and opportunities; the good practices at the national or regional levels for promoting research outputs using online platforms, the means to further support the exploitation of research outputs through institutional, national, or regional platforms, the challenges in relation to classifying (Technology Readiness Level, etc) and promoting research outputs, the possible tools and policy interventions that could incentivize use and activate the exploitation process of research outcome.

In the second day, the **Participatory Impact Pathway Analysis workshop** was an opportunity to present PHEMAC iHUB and 3 Co-funded EU projects - Veggie-Med-Cheeses, InTheMED, AQUASALT - and to describe how by achieving PHEMAC vision, the selected WEF NEXUS projects can contribute to longer term impacts, while the **PHEMAC Brokerage event** allowed the presentation of 12 co-funded EU projects and 16 pitches of project innovators.

The main focus of day 3 gathered **Crowdfunding specialists, Founders of crowdfunding platforms, Euro-Mediterranean and Tunisian innovators, investors & Startups** for a round table discussion focused on **revealing the rationale behind the crowdfunding guideline and rules**, why such guidelines were implemented and a general advisory on how to employ crowdfunding to support the replication of WEF NEXUS technologies or solutions

The closing day was designed to bring together **Researchers, Innovators, TTO Managers, Investors, Industrials, Startups, SMEs, Entrepreneurs** to discuss about the **constraints & barriers faced by TTOs in the EU MPC region** addressing WEF NEXUS challenges, WEF technology protection and readiness, WEF technology assessment and commercialization and the **open living labs as a solution to face WEF NEXUS challenges**.

During the **Entrepreneurs' corner space**, the main theme of the discussion was to present inspiring concrete solutions to the problem of scale-up and market entry for entrepreneurs who are at the stage of prototyping/market testing. The accent was put on **how to overcome hurdles through partnerships and cooperation**. Representatives of the investment world also discussed the role of the *business angel* to help the entrepreneur overcome difficulties such as



administration, access to network and market, strategic thinking etc. so that the researcher can focus on its technology development.

The **Brokerage event** gathered around 200 academics, researchers, water, energy, food experts, funding agencies, startups and SMEs in one to one meetings and networking

The virtual exhibition included 32 exhibitors in the SMEs area and 37 exhibitors in the WEF NEXUS Innovation Fair space.

PARTICIPANTS OF THE WEF SMEs EXHIBITION:

Elastic-Solutions, ORBIT Smart Monitoring - Your AI powered energy savings tool, IPOMM BY, DATA PM, MIRAL Technology, Smart Farm, GCER, RIBLUM, CMR-GROUP, Wattnow - Your Smart Energy Management Solution, GREENSOL Industry, FLOW SOLUTIONS, Pâtes Warda Drive green, GEEC - Global Engineering Energy and Construction, Bahia Cosmetic, Suintrepreneur, MASHARIQ ENERGY photovoltaïque, AIUS, Be Wireless Solutions, Seniatna, Chemical Industrial, Petroleum Engineering & Management - CIPEM, NextAV, Next Aviation Solution for your Next View, HAYAT TECHNOLOGY, WS ENERGY PV, SESIT, Eco-Bio Spirulina Tunisia, WATER AND ENERGY FOR FOOD -Consulting, EGROBOTS, DIARI, ICN, PURE ROOTS

You can visit the virtual booths here: <https://innovweek.eventoo.io/myspace/liste-des-stands>

WEF INNOVATION FAIR:

GreenBuilding, Hy-Tec, Nano Energy, Bicicletta, AQUACYCLE Low-cost Eco-Innovative, Wastewater Treatment System, Q-Nexus Web Tool, GS1 Tunisia, ANTEPSAN DRIED NUTS AND SWEETS CO., Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Center, Berytech, DeepVolt, Competitiveness Pole of Bizerte, Agence de Promotion de l'Industrie et de l'Innovation, INTECMED Project, SmartDetection, SMH, Aggri brand, Centre d'affaires de Sousse, GREEN PAM, iFarming, A2Bio, DunAlgues, Titans Télésurveillance & Sécurité, SMARTECO GROUP, Bioverde terapia, E-Vap, Rissala Kids Farm, WASTE-TO-ENERGY RESEARCH GROUP, INOVA SYSTEM, CLEVER, Power Converter Health Monitoring (PCHM), RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE OF ENERGY – CRTEN, Foodlab, SAIDI Maha Doctorante, ne3me, TRANSDAIRY, ALLER

Virtual booths can be visited here: <https://innovweek.eventoo.io/myspace/liste-des-fairs>

For those who missed it, or those who want to relive some of the panels, visit the virtual booths, event recordings and virtual exhibitions are freely available on the event website upon registration : <https://www.innovweek.com/>



ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP

NEX-LABS project includes a partnership of 11 institutions (Autonomous University of Barcelona (ES), Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Center (TN), Royal Scientific Society- Aqaba Liaison Center (JO), Berytech Foundation (LB), INNOLABS SRL (IT), Academy of Scientific Research and Technology (EG), American University of Beirut (LB), Centre for promotional services to enterprises – Special Agency of Cagliari Chamber of Commerce (IT), Net7 Srl (IT), C.I.P Citizens In Power (CY), The Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development /Princess Basma Community Development Centre Aqaba (JO)) from 7 different countries across the Mediterranean. With reference B_A2.1._0124, NEX-LABS project is funded by the EU under the ENI CBC Med Programme. With a total budget of €3.450.984,97, the project has received a contribution of € 3.105.866,47 (90%).

ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

The 2014-2020 ENI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme is a multilateral Cross-Border Cooperation (CBC) initiative funded by the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI). The Programme objective is to foster fair, equitable and sustainable economic, social and territorial development, which may advance cross-border integration and valorise participating countries' territories and values. The following 13 countries participate in the Programme: Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Palestine, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia. The Managing Authority (MA) is the Autonomous Region of Sardinia (Italy). Official Programme languages are Arabic, English and French. For more information, please visit: www.enicbcmed.eu

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Further available information about the project can be accessed at:
<https://www.enicbcmed.eu/projects/nex-labs>