

RETHINKING THE FUTURES OF MEDITERRANEAN LAND AND WATER



A science–policy conference to capitalize on the legacies
of recent PRIMA research and innovation projects

 **ACADEMY OF ATHENS, GREECE**
 **11 NOVEMBER 2025**



This project is part of the
PRIMA programme supported
by the European Union.



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1. Concept Note

The Mediterranean region is facing unprecedented, interlinked challenges of land degradation and water scarcity that jeopardize ecosystems and rural livelihoods. The intensifying climatic pressures are exacerbating the societal tensions across the Mediterranean basin, resulting further uncertainty in the context of wider social-ecological conflicts in many different sectors and domains.

Science can provide the evidence to support adaptation pathways and enhance the resilience of dryland socio-ecosystem. The PRIMA partnership has created unprecedented opportunities for the scientific community to empower a new generation of researchers and innovators to rethink the futures of Mediterranean land and water. The inclusive efforts put in place by PRIMA, bridging together scientists, entrepreneurs and civil society organizations, are the best seeds of peaceful and prosperous futures rooted in sustainable land and water science, approaches and practices.

This conference is designed to distill the key messages from different PRIMA projects, focusing on the future of land and water in the Mediterranean. The forward-looking perspective emphasizes the active engagement of the next generation of researchers and leaders from both the public and private sectors who have seized the opportunities offered by the PRIMA projects. This will be facilitated by the new “NextGen4MED” initiative, jointly launched by the SALAM-MED, OurMed and NatMed PRIMA funded projects.

The event is designed by the SALAM-MED Project in collaboration with all PRIMA projects on land and water participating in the initiative, to identify, implement, and promote innovative and inclusive approaches and pathways to sustainable land and water management across Mediterranean drylands. This initiative will serve as a unique platform to **distill key findings, share lessons learned, and build bridges** for the **next generation** of researchers, by defining priority lists of key themes and topics and project implementation practices.

Objectives

- Distill key findings from PRIMA projects addressing land and water management in the Mediterranean.
- Highlight scalable and innovative solutions for sustainable land and water practices across the Mediterranean
- Foster dialogue on the role of Science Diplomacy as a tool for regional cooperation
- Create new spaces for intergenerational dialogue and youth-led visions through the NextGen4MED initiative
- Enhance synergies with other PRIMA-funded projects to build a cohesive Mediterranean agenda

Key Themes

- Nature-based solutions for the future of land and water management in Mediterranean drylands
- Science-policy-society interfaces in the Mediterranean
- Youth leadership and intergenerational collaboration
- Cross-border cooperation and science diplomacy
- PRIMA project networks and shared strategic vision for the future research and innovation agenda

A key outcome of the event will be a Joint Declaration summarising key insights and recommendations for advancing cooperation on land and water sustainability in the Mediterranean region.

2. Agenda

Morning Plenary Session – Open to All Participants

Time	Key Topic	Speakers
09:00	Welcome and Opening Remarks	Christos S. Zerefos – Secretary General, Academy of Athens, Greece Stavros Solomos – Professor, Academy of Athens, Greece
9:10	Session 1 – The future of Land and Water in the Mediterranean	Chaired by Pier Paolo Roggero – Professor, University of Sassari, Desertification Research Centre (NRD), Italy
9:20	The Future of Research and Innovation to Address the Challenges of Land and Water in the Mediterranean Region	Rachid Serraj – Professor, Mohamed VI Polytechnic University, Morocco
9:40	FAO Priorities for Land and Water in the Mediterranean and NENA Countries	Walid Saleh – Regional Officer for Near East and North Africa, FAO Feras Ziadat – Land and Water Officer, FAO
10:00	For the Planet and for the People Wellbeing: global perspectives on land protection and restoration	Barron Orr - Chief Scientist for the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) Anna Luise – Italy UNCCD Scientific and Technical Correspondent, Italian Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA)
10:30	Break	
	Session 2 - Youth Perspectives and Aspirations for Mediterranean Land and Water Futures	NextGen4MED – Daniele Secci & Chiara Ceseracciu
11:00	The PRIMA Programme: Future Directions and Key Priorities	Antonella Autino – Programme Coordinator, PRIMA

11:20	Intergenerational Panel: Lessons Learned from PRIMA-funded projects and the Role of Next Generations	PRIMA Ambassadors (SALAM-MED , OurMED , NATMed , AG-WAMED , SUREPASTOR) with junior and senior representatives – facilitated by NextGen4MED
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Lunch & Poster Session

Time	Key Topic	Focus
13:30	Poster Exhibition: Achievements of SALAM-MED, OurMED, NATMed, AG-WAMED, SUREPASTOR, OliveAlarm (...) Projects	Highlighting scientific results alongside social and political outcomes, with particular attention to youth and women's engagement. Further information

Afternoon - Interactive Session 3

Time	Key Topic	Speakers
15:00	Interactive Drafting Session: Future Priorities for Research and Implementation (Part I)	NextGen4MED – facilitated by Daniele Secci & Chiara Ceseracciu Process design: Kevin Collins, The Open University, UK.
16:30	Break	
16:45	Interactive Drafting Session: Future Priorities for Research and Implementation (Part II)	NextGen4MED – facilitated by Daniele Secci & Chiara Ceseracciu Process design: Kevin Collins, The Open University, UK. Expected Output A Joint Declaration summarizing key insights and recommendations for advancing Euro-Mediterranean cooperation on land and water sustainability

Conclusions

Time	Key Topic	Speakers
17:30	Conclusions and Forward-Looking Perspectives	Daniele Secci & Chiara Ceseracciu-NextGen4Med Antonella Autino - PRIMA Walid Saleh - FAO Barron Orr - UNCCD Rachid Serraj – Mohamed VI Polytechnic University, Morocco

3. Venue Information

The event will take place at:

Academy of Athens
 Panepistimiou 28, 106 79, Athens - Greece

The venue is centrally located and well connected by public transportation.
 Metro Station: Panepistimio (Greek: Πανεπιστήμιο) - Line 2

4. Transportation & Airport Access

Transportation from Athens International Airport to Panepistimio

✓ 1. Metro – Fastest and Most Convenient

- **Route:**
 - Take **Metro Line 3 (Blue Line)** from the airport to **Syntagma Station** (~40 min)
 - Change at Syntagma to **Line 2 (Red Line)**, one stop to **Panepistimio Station**
 - **Also walking distance from Syntagma to Academy about 10 min**
- **Total time:** ~50 minutes
- **Fare:** €9 (valid for 90 minutes, including transfers)
- **Schedule:** ~6:30 AM to ~11:30 PM, every 30 minutes

🚌 2. Express Bus X95 + Metro

- **Route:**
 - Board the **X95 Express Bus** outside the arrivals terminal (Gates 4–5) → **Syntagma Square**
 - At Syntagma, transfer to **Metro Line 2 (Red)** → Panepistimio

- **Also walking distance from Syntagma to Academy about 10 min**
- **Total time:** ~60–75 minutes (depending on traffic)
- **Fare:** €5.50 (bus) + ~€1.20 (metro ticket if transfer exceeds 90 min)
- **Service:** Operates **24/7**, buses every 15–40 minutes

Credit or debit cards (Visa or Mastercard) can be used directly on the metro and buses. No ticket purchase is required.

3. Taxi / Private Transfer

- **Flat fare:**
 - €40 (day: 05:00–24:00)
 - €55 (night: 00:00–05:00)
- **Travel time:** ~35–45 minutes (traffic-dependent)

5. Recommended Hotels in and near Syntagma Area

The Academy of Athens is situated in the Syntagma neighborhood—home to both Syntagma Square and the Syntagma Metro station (Lines 2 & 3). All listed hotels lie within Syntagma or its immediate surroundings, ensuring minimal travel time to the venue. Please note that 5-star hotels may be reimbursed provided that they offer a more cost-effective option compared to hotels of a lower category. The following hotels are within walking distance and located in safe areas. Any other options nearby would also be fine.

1. Syntagma

The **Academy of Athens**, event venue, is located here.

- *Mid-Range:*
 - Pan Hotel
 - Hotel Achilleas
- *Budget:*
 - Bedbox Hostel
 - Rastoni Athens Suites

2. Plaka

5–10 min walk to Syntagma.

- *Mid-Range:*
 - Adrian Hotel
- *Budget:*
 - Phaedra Hotel

3. Monastiraki

10–15 min walk to venue.

- *Mid-Range:*
 - 360 Degrees Hotel
- *Budget:*
 - City Circus Hostel

4. Psiri

15–20 min walk to Syntagma.

- *Mid-Range:*
 - The Foundry Suites
- *Budget:*
 - Pella Inn Hostel

5. Koukaki

20 min walk or short metro ride.

- *Mid-Range:*
 - Herodion Hotel
- *Budget:*
 - Acropolis View Hotel

6. Kolonaki

10 min walk

- *Mid-Range:*
 - Periscope Hotel
- *Budget:*
 - Hotel Lozenge

6. Emergency Contacts

Emergency Numbers:

- General Emergency: 112
- Medical Emergency: 166
- Police: 100

Local Contact:

Stavros Solomos (AoA): ssolomos [at] academyofathens [dot] gr

Christos Pantazis (AoA): [chpantazis \[at\] noa \[dot\] gr](mailto:chpantazis@noa.gr)

7. Useful Apps & City Tips

- OASA Telematics (transportation)
- Taxi Beat / Free Now (local taxi app)
- Uber

Tipping is customary but not obligatory.

Most places accept credit cards.

Tap water is safe to drink.