



**GABES**  
gouvernance  
environnementale

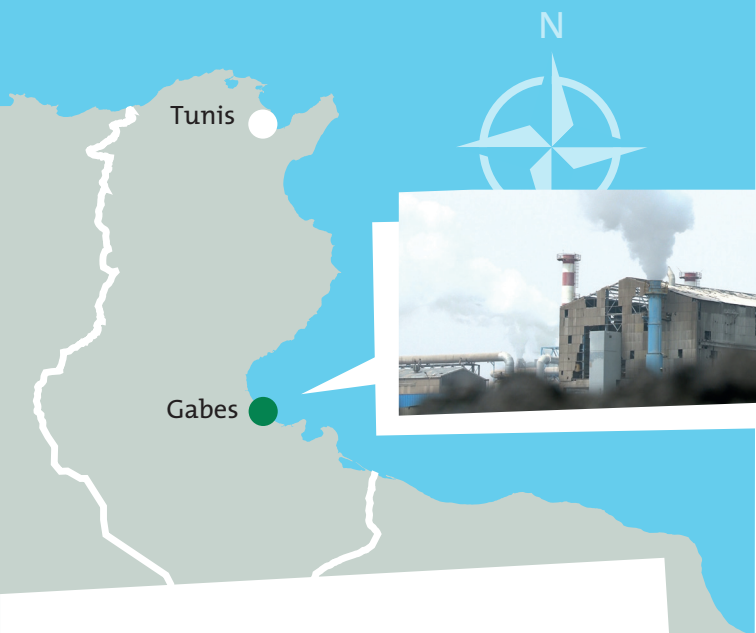


The project is financed by the European Union



A project implemented by Expertise France

# The Gulf of Gabes: a pollution hot spot in the Mediterranean area



As the coastal gateway to the Tunisian desert, at the crossroads between the North and the South, Gabes houses unique marine oasis in the Mediterranean region. This is one of the last examples of this type of oasis in the world (ref.: UNESCO). Considered as an «Outstanding Universal Value», this 7,000 hectares oasis has an abundant biodiversity and rich coastal, marine and freshwater ecosystems (ref.: CRDA Gabes).

Since the early 1970s, around 4 million tons of phosphate per year are converted into fertilizer and detergent. An average of 90% of this production is then exported by ship to Europe and beyond.

Industrial hazardous waste spills (5 million tons per year), associated with high water consumption (9.5 million m<sup>3</sup> per year), have led to a deterioration of coastal and marine ecosystems. In 40 years, water has almost disappeared from the oasis, which represents about 7,000 hectares in 2015, against 7,500 in 1970 (ref.: CRDA Gabes).

“ *The Gabes region has been facing a **double challenge**: how to mitigate and repair the impact of industrial pollution on the environment and how to adapt to vulnerabilities caused by climate change. In fact, the degradation of natural environments and the impact of climate change are two sides of the same coin. If we want to preserve our water resources, soil, biodiversity, etc. as well as our health, our coastlines, etc. we do have to initiate **a sustainable development policy** taking into account both environmental constraints and adaptations to climate change.* ”

**Sana BEDOUI**, student of the University of Gabes.

## Support project to Environmental Governance of industrial activity in Gabes

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In December 2014, the European Union (EU) has entrusted Expertise France, the French International Technical Expertise Agency, with a project for supporting local environmental governance of industrial activity in Gabes (EGP Gabes), Tunisia. The project aims at contributing to the reduction of coastal and marine pollution in the Gabes region, and at establishing a dynamic of local environmental governance in the context of the renewed national environmental policy.

The project thus contributes to the establishment of a local environmental governance and environmental communication between the key players, namely civil society, central and local government, and industry in the region of Gabes.

# Meeting local needs through an appropriate mainstreaming approach: enhancing appropriation and sustainability

The European Union has earmarked for a period of **48 months** a grant of **5 million euros** to achieve the following **four main** results:

## Result 1

### Improving knowledge

The knowledge of industrial pollution-related health and economic impacts is improved.

## Result 2

### Building capacities and supporting private sector in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Local private actors' skills in CSR policies and tools, in environmental management and other aspects of good governance are strengthened.

## Result 3

### Establishing sustainable governance at local level

Local actors' skills in environmental communication are improved. Moreover, a local framework of sustainable good governance is implemented and is cited as a model of best practice which can be replicated elsewhere.

## Result 4

### Supporting local development actions

Grants are allocated to finance actions in the Gabes region, which fostering on sustainable development and / or improving environmental situation. The maximum amount is 2,833,000 euros.

Political transition in Tunisia has underscored the need for involving civil society in public policy dialogue. Local actors are expected to contribute actively to the establishment of a framework for environmental governance. Therefore, the proposed activities and expected results of the project particularly aim to accompany and support civil society organizations and actors from the private sector in the quest for sustainable local development in Gabes.

Thus the project brings together social, economic and environmental sustainability, with a strong emphasis on gender equality and women empowerment.

“Citizens of Gabes legitimately hope for living in a healthy environment, especially since nature has endowed the region where they live with an exceptional environmental and cultural heritage, where sea, oasis and desert harmoniously have been coexisting. The European project for “supporting local environmental governance in industrial activity in Gabes” may be considered as one link in a long chain and actions working towards rehabilitating a balanced environment and engaging the territory on an effective sustainable development path.”

**Mabrouk MONTACER**, Professor in the Faculty of Sciences, Former President of the University of Gabes

## Institutional partners

The main Tunisian institutional counterparts are the Ministry of Development, Investment and International Cooperation, the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, the Office for Southern Development (ODS) and the Governorate of Gabès. The Northern Mediterranean side is represented by the Delegation of the European Union to Tunisia and Expertise France, the French international technical expertise agency.



## For more information

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