

Conclusions of the 14th Meeting of the MCSD Steering Committee

1. The Steering Committee of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) thanked the Secretariat for the work done and expressed their satisfaction with the progress achieved since the last meeting of the MCSD. The Steering Committee expressed its appreciation for the concise form of presentation of the key areas of concern: Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD), support to National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSDs) and MCSD role and modalities;
2. It was agreed that a major focus of efforts in this period is to contribute to the global issues to be discussed at Rio+20 (Green Economy and the institutional arrangements for Sustainable Development) stressing the necessity to contribute from a Mediterranean perspective;
3. Enhancing the MCSD and MSSD role and visibility is very important in order to improve their impact while sharing national experiences at the MCSD may also facilitate understanding and identifying opportunities and challenges for regional cooperation;
4. The SC appreciated the preliminary work of Overseas Development Institute (ODI) with regards to the assessment of the MSSD implementation and looking forward to receiving the full assessment report for further discussion at the MCSD meeting. The meeting made some suggestions regarding the rationale behind the findings and conclusions of the presentation by ODI, particularly in terms of the relevance of the objectives and priorities of MSSD in view of broader changes and the relevance of indicators to monitor progress;
5. The MCSD governance debate should be linked to the international governance one, that “form should follow function”, in order to enable MCSD to deliver effectively, to adapt to contextual changes and be ambitious in a manner that does not defeat expectations and the quality of its deliverables;
6. The MCSD focus should be to support the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention to ensure environmental integration with a view to strengthen the environmental dimension in development policies; the need to broaden and enrich the role of MCSD as a driving force to provide support to countries incorporating environment concerns in economic and social aspects of development and to deal with new and emerging challenges, was also discussed;
7. The SC discussed the options presented by the Secretariat with regard to the role of the MCSD and its mandate. The Secretariat should further develop the modalities for each option presented, taking note of the outcome of the MSSD assessment, progress in the international debate, as well as the resources needed, with a view to facilitate discussions at the next MCSD meeting in May. In this context outreaching to other relevant Ministries, in both the social and economic sectors, and stakeholders should be considered;
8. The SC welcomed the initiative to work towards a Regional Framework on Climate Change adaptation and suggested to elaborate further on the relation of adaptation with mitigation, the necessity for NSSDs to include a strategic vision in terms of CC adaptation

and relate adaptation strategies to poverty eradication in the context of SD as well as the role of local, national and regional levels of governance. In addition, it was suggested to include a timetable for implementation of proposed activities and regular monitoring and review;

9. The two themes for the next MCSD meeting in May shall be Green Economy (including Sustainable Consumption and Production) and Institutional Arrangements towards Sustainable Development. The meeting should also establish synergies with many related ongoing initiatives and institutions. In this context, the Secretariat will develop an advanced version of the agenda including participation from experts and institutions which have experience in relevant areas and in particular those involved in the global process;

10. The Green Economy concept was welcomed as an instrument to implement the links between the economy and the other two pillars of the Sustainable Development agenda. It was suggested that further discussions on the Green Economy during the MCSD meeting emphasize the jobs and economic tool dimensions in sectors of particular relevance to the Mediterranean Basin. Relevant case studies could be developed as a first step to exchange and disseminate useful experience;

11. The theme on Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development has been already discussed under the modalities of MCSD. Seeking synergies at the national-regional and global-regional interface towards sustainable development was further elaborated, in relation to the Rio+20 discussions. Furthermore, the need to establish national committees (or other structures as appropriate) for sustainable development in all partner countries, was emphasized.

12. The agenda for the next MCSD meeting in Montenegro was discussed and adopted in principle, with a view to enrich the meeting by bringing in experiences from other organizations. It was suggested that relevant Mediterranean personalities participating in the Bureau of the Rio+20 and other relevant actors participating in the international process be invited to the MCSD meeting with a view to sharing their experiences, regarding the lessons learnt and the outcome of preparations for the Rio+20;

13. It was also suggested to the Secretariat to explore the possibility of organizing a Mediterranean side event at Rio+20 in order to highlight the Mediterranean contribution to Global issues; In this respect, the agenda of the MCSD meeting should include a specific item on the "Mediterranean contribution to Rio+20".

14. The NSSD assessment process carried out during the last biennium came out with a number of interesting suggestions which need to be further explored to strengthen the implementation of the MSSD;

15. The Steering Committee appreciated the initiatives of some countries to update their NSSD in light of RIO+20 and recommended that the MCSD meeting in May should make an appeal to all Mediterranean countries to do so.