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MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

18th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to
the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment
and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols

Istanbul, Turkey, 3-6 December 2013

Draft Istanbul Declaration

DRAFT ISTANBUL DECLARATION

We, the Environment Ministers and Heads of Delegations of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (the Barcelona Convention) and its Protocols, meeting in Istanbul, Turkey, on 5 December, 2013,

Recalling the conclusions of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), which was unanimously adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in June 2013,

Acknowledging the significance of the regional cooperation framework established in the Mediterranean since 1975 and the fundamental contribution of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols to the definition of a shared legal, regulatory and innovative framework of cooperation for the protection and sustainable management of marine and coastal resources in the Mediterranean as well as the progress carried out to jointly implement the Barcelona Convention, its Protocols and Strategies as well as to achieve the Good Environmental Status of the Mediterranean through the application of the Ecosystem Approach to human activities,

Recognizing the important contributions by representatives of international, regional, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders through their well-established and diverse experience, expertise and capacity in support to the implementation of Barcelona Convention and its protocols,

Reaffirming the fundamental value of biological diversity and natural resources, as well as its critical role in maintaining marine and coastal ecosystems that provide goods and services essential for the sustainable development of the Mediterranean population,

Deeply concerned by the continued threats from land and sea based sources of pollution which are toxic, persistent and liable to accumulate such as marine litter including waste, persistent organic pollutants, heavy metals, and nitrogen-based compounds, as well as those originating from off-shore exploration and exploitation activities, shipping, over-use of natural resources, over-fishing and soil and coastal degradation, and,

Being aware of the degradation of the marine and coastal environment posed by urban sprawl and the continuous unplanned growth of coastal settlements during recent decades,

Today we commit to take all the necessary measures to make the Mediterranean a clean, healthy and productive sea with conserved ecosystems and resolve to:

- *Achieve* the targets adopted under the Ecosystem Approach to human activities which will be periodically reviewed through a Barcelona Convention/MAP integrated monitoring and assessment system based on a strengthened capacity by the UNEP/MAP to collect, manage, analyse and share reliable data,
- *Develop, a coherent, representative and well-managed network of coastal and marine protected areas in the Mediterranean by 2020* in line with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets adopted under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and in particular to meet by 2020 target 11 and thus extend to 10 % the Mediterranean network of marine and coastal protected areas including deep seas whether within or beyond national jurisdiction and in this context, we *underline the need* for sustainable financing mechanisms in support of marine protected areas and *commit* to raise the number and visibility of the Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (SPAMI),

- *Continue and strengthen* the process of regional cooperation to scientifically evaluate Ecologically or Biologically Significant Areas (EBSAs) in Mediterranean deep seas in collaboration with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) with a view to finalize the description of areas that meet the criteria for EBSA, before CBD CoP XII in October 2014,
- *Take all necessary legal, administrative, financial and other measures to ensure implementation of the Marine Litter Regional Plan* [adopted at this COP], which is the first regional effort to follow up on the global commitment to reduce marine debris adopted at Rio+20 and *engage* with industry, intergovernmental organizations, donor agencies, non-governmental organizations and academic institutions to support its implementation so as to reduce knowledge gaps, develop and provide capacities for sound technical solutions and provide sufficient financial resources to prevent, reduce and remove litter in the Mediterranean,
- *Put in place necessary measures to prevent pollution from Offshore and Shipping based activities in the Mediterranean* including by the adoption or revision of corresponding Action Plans by COP 19,
- *Make all efforts to accelerate* implementation of the Action Plan on Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) as adopted by the Parties in COP17 and in particular define set back zones and develop plans that protect coastal populations against rising seas and permit the integrated planning and the resolution of conflicts among the increasing multiple economic and social uses of the coastal and marine space,
- *Strengthen our commitment* to accelerate the shift towards Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) patterns by adopting an Action Plan on SCP, which is in line with the commitments adopted at Rio+20 and which aims to reduce the impacts of human activities in the marine and coastal ecosystems,

And reaffirm our commitment to strengthen our cooperation under the Barcelona Convention/MAP system by enhancing its implementation and its articulation at local, national, sub-regional and global level in full cooperation and synergy with our partners and stakeholders and by extending cooperation to local authorities and priority sectors, and in this context we,

- *Encourage* the Contracting Parties that have not yet done so to sign or ratify the Protocols to the Barcelona Convention and to make particular efforts to ensure the entry into force of the revised Dumping Protocol by COP 19 and thus achieve that all revised Protocols are in force by the 40th Anniversary of the Convention in 2016,
- *Recognize* the importance of coastal cities as key actors for the implementation of the Barcelona Convention, its Protocols and relevant Strategies and Action Plans and *resolve* to engage with them in addressing pressures to the marine and coastal environment associated with urban development such as urban sprawl,
- *Commit* to promote an integrated approach to planning and building Environment Friendly cities and urban settlements, including through working with local authorities in finding solutions that improve the sustainable management of waste including through the application of the waste hierarchy (reduce, reuse, recycle and recover) and *call* to international and regional Financial Institutions and Cooperation Organizations to devote financial and technical resources to support countries and local authorities in this important task,

- *Enhance* cooperation with local governments of coastal cities by acknowledging and promoting their precious efforts on applying integrated coastal zone management principles to urban planning, introducing green technologies to reduce environmental pollution and adhere to the ecosystem based management of human activities,
- *Establish* the “Environment Friendly City” award to be conferred to coastal cities by setting out nomination and selection principles and criteria for such award till COP19,
- *Welcome the cooperation established* between the Barcelona Convention/MAP and relevant international and regional Organizations such as the GFCM, the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) and the IUCN and *ask* the Secretariat to extend cooperation with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the ACCOBAMS and other relevant Organizations with whom synergy is needed for reaching the objectives of the Barcelona Convention/MAP,
- *Acknowledge* the efforts carried out and decisions taken in COP17 to enhance the effectiveness of the MAP governance system and improve its financial sustainability and *fully commit* to implement the agreed institutional reforms in order to achieve: effective fund allocation following a stepwise approach; coherence between MAP Components based on thematic priorities and Component’s comparative advantages; and, sound cooperation and coordination between and among MAP Components towards common goals through an integrated planning,
- *Strengthen* the coordination of MAP activities at national level, particularly between MAP national and thematic focal points as well as with other relevant national institutions, including NGOs, with a view to exchanging information and achieving coherence and integration for the sustainable use of resources, reinforcing the impact and visibility of national activities implementing the Barcelona Convention/MAP.

Thus preserve the wealth and sustainability of Mediterranean ecosystems, goods and services to serve as an example for other regions of the world and thus contribute to the adoption of global measures for the protection and sustainable development and management of the marine and coastal environment