

**Decision IG.19/16**

**"Decision concerning the recommendations of the 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) on sustainable tourism, agriculture and sustainable development"**

*The 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Contracting Parties,*

*Reaffirming* the role of the MCSD in the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD),

*Taking into account* the need to strengthen implementation of the principle of participation and consideration of long-term concerns based on a MCSD reinforced by contributions from the participation of a diversity of Mediterranean actors, local authorities, economic actors, NGOs, experts,

*Acknowledging the* MCSD's advisory role in providing recommendations to the meetings of the Contracting Parties, on the basis of the comprehensive analysis of sustainable development issues in the region,

*Recalling* the multi-annual MCSD programme of work identifying tourism and agriculture and rural development as priority themes for the 2008-2009 biennium,

*Recalling also* the relevant Recommendations of the Action Plan adopted at the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development, as well as the objectives and priority fields of action of the MSSD,

*Considering* the central role that tourism plays in the development of the Mediterranean coastal states,

*Convinced* that it is possible in the Mediterranean to achieve environmentally-friendly tourism, which is at the same time financially viable and rewarding for all the stakeholders in the industry,

*Committed* to implementing the provisions of the MSSD, and particularly those relating to the promotion of sustainable tourism,

***Takes note*** of the MCSD's thematic working group recommendations on sustainable tourism, which are attached as Appendix I to this decision;

***Considering*** also the role of rural development and agriculture in development of the Mediterranean countries,

***Recognizing*** furthermore the essential role that medium-scale farming plays in rural development,

***Takes note also*** of the MCSD's thematic working group recommendations on agricultural and rural issues, which are attached as Appendix II to this decision;

***Decides*** to entrust the MCSD Steering Committee with the task of making proposals for adjustments to the composition and working methods of the MCSD for consideration at the next Meeting of the Contracting Parties.

## **Appendix I**

### **Recommendations of the MCSD working group on sustainable tourism**

*Having regard* to the central role that tourism plays in the development of Mediterranean coastal states and the new constraints based as a result of an increasingly competitive market, impending climate change, the rising cost of raw materials, with particular reference to fossil fuels, and the crisis in the real estate sector;

*Convinced* that it is possible in the Mediterranean to achieve environmentally friendly tourism, which is at the same time financially viable and rewarding for all stakeholders in the industry;

*Committed* to implementing the provisions of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development, and particularly those relating to the promotion of sustainable tourism;

The participants of the MCSD working group, at their workshop on "Promoting sustainable tourism in the Mediterranean", organized in Sophia Antipolis on 2 and 3 July 2008 by the Blue Plan, recommends that the political leaders of Mediterranean countries:

- Develop long and medium-term visions at the national level, specifying the scope of the tourism sector in the national economy and taking into account as fully as possible the global challenges to be addressed, particularly climate change and the preservation of biodiversity;
- Draw on strategic planning instruments to better organize the development of the sector, opening discussions to all of the stakeholders concerned, and in particular, the representatives of the private sector and of civil society;
- Share analyses of and approaches to the development of sustainable tourism within the framework of regular regional meetings gathering together the various actors;
- Introduce systems at the national level to provide full and reliable information that is comparable between countries and which characterizes the tourism sector and monitors its development;
- Place particular emphasis on informing the public and training stakeholders for the promotion of sustainable tourism;
- The MCSD also calls for further work to be carried out on indicators to characterize Mediterranean tourism more fully, and particularly its impact on the environment and the social equilibrium, and for prospective analysis to be undertaken on tourism to pre-empt future developments, as well as economic analyses focussing in particular on the impact of tourism on the environment.

## Appendix II

### **Recommendations of the MCSD working group on the agricultural and rural issues**

#### **General considerations:**

The Mediterranean is a contrasted but relevant region for dealing with agricultural and rural issues;

Small and medium-scale farming has an essential role to play in rural environment. It also needs to be mobilized to increase the security of the local and national food supply in the Mediterranean basin, while environmental and soil-friendly farming practices, such as the principles of conservation agriculture, need to be encouraged;

Sustainable development needs to build on territorial dynamics tailored to the individual country, but just as rural areas cannot thrive without agricultural production being boosted and supported, nor can there be agricultural development in the absence of dynamic rural areas. A share of the wealth generated by farming therefore needs to benefit rural areas;

Mediterranean lands are complex areas supporting multiple integrated functions (agro-food production, biodiversity, landscape preservation, cultural diversity,...), and involving numerous stakeholders. Their characterization and the establishment of the conditions for their sustainability will depend on in-depth analysis, which is as yet virtually non-existent;

Territorial development must be based on a gradual process during which the various social stakeholders learn to shape a shared vision of the future and to work together in joint projects.

The participants of the MCSD working group, at their Bari Workshop, held in May 2008, organized jointly by the Blue Plan and CIEHAM, recommends that the Contracting Parties:

- Include the promotion of a sustainable agricultural and rural sector among their development priorities, and reflect this political priority in budgetary terms;
- Integrate soil degradation and the effects of desertification as well as climate resilient ecosystems management into agricultural and rural development strategies; and anticipate, plan and assess the adaptation measures to be implemented for this purpose;
- Before 2012, set up a regional sustainable agriculture and rural development information system with a view to making available reliable and harmonized data collected at regular intervals as a means of shaping the relevant policies;
- In particular, undertake work to characterize and quantify the diversity of agricultural production systems and the related farms, as well as the diversity of local systems;
- Provide the stakeholders involved in agricultural research and rural development with the means to extend and share their work and knowledge with a view to proposing by 2012 measures to encourage mobility and exchanges between Mediterranean research institutes;
- Invite stakeholders from the field of research and rural areas, based on their respective competence and responsibilities, to identify jointly environmentally-friendly agricultural production systems based on a system of property and access rights and secure usage arrangements, that can ensure a regular food supply for Mediterranean populations;
- Draw up an inventory of territorial development projects, identifying the arrangements adopted to involve local stakeholders and reinforce twinning and networking between projects conducted in different countries;
- Continue and reinforce innovatory forms of training for farmers and local stakeholders enabling them to participate fully in the design, implementation and evaluation of the operations which concern them;

- Assess on a two-yearly basis the progress made by Mediterranean coastal States in implementing the MSSD chapter on “Sustainable agriculture and rural development”; and
- Establish a Mediterranean platform for exchanges of information on the local development processes initiated by coastal States, with emphasis on the various tools used to encourage the effective participation of the populations concerned in the design, implementation and follow up of their local projects.