

The Draft Strategy Declaration has been prepared by the Drafting Committee, established by the extraordinary meeting of MAP Focal Points in Catania in November 2006 led by Italy

DRAFT STRATEGY DECLARATION

(1) *We*, the Environment Ministers and Heads of Delegations of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention), meeting in Almeria, Spain, from XX to XX January, 2008;

(2) *Knowing* that the Mediterranean Sea has always played a vital role in all aspects of the life of the Mediterranean peoples;

(3) *Aware* that a healthy environment in the Mediterranean Sea area contributes to human well-being, and constitutes a resource indispensable to economic development and job creation and whose protection, and appropriate planning and management within the principles of sustainable development is, therefore, of paramount importance;

(4) *Recognize* the many accomplishments achieved since the Barcelona Convention first entered into force almost 30 years ago, on 12 February 1978. Driven by their commitments under the Convention and its related Protocols and in the context of the Mediterranean Action Plan, the Contracting Parties have put into place relevant legislation and structures and established and implemented significant programmes for protecting and improving the quality of the marine environment and the coastal regions of the Mediterranean;

(5) *Take note*, however, that the environmental priorities of the Mediterranean have changed over the decades, and although environmental awareness has flourished since when the Convention was adopted, and particularly since it was amended in 1995, this awareness has not been sufficiently translated into action on the ground. Maintaining a '*business as usual*' approach will not be sufficient to tackle the challenges of the foreseeable future;

(6) *Aware* of the many and interlocking challenges that still remain to be addressed in order to effectively combat environmental degradation and to promote sustainable development in the Mediterranean Sea area, taking into account of new challenges that have arisen in recent years. The challenges to be faced include the high levels of pollution which persist in our sea, inland waters, air and soil; the continued overexploitation at unsustainable rates of natural resources; loss of biodiversity; desertification; accelerated coastal erosion; and the continued loss and degradation of unique landscapes;

(7) *Acknowledge* that the driving forces behind this continued environmental degradation include unplanned coastal development, exploitation of marine resources; expansion of aquaculture; coastal erosion; invasive alien species; climate change; increase of pollution due to urban and industrial development; increase of maritime traffic; and further *acknowledge* their underlying causes which include poverty; socio-economic inequality; inappropriate valuing of natural resources; poorly formulated macroeconomic policies and a lack of success in de-coupling economic growth from environmental degradation; unsustainable production and consumption patterns;

(8) *Observe* with alarm that environmental protection has not yet been sufficiently mainstreamed and integrated into other policies;

(9) *Reaffirm* our commitment to ensuring a viable future for the Mediterranean, through the promotion of the implementation of the ecosystem approach as the main strategy to achieve the sustainable development in line with our obligations under the Barcelona Convention to

prevent, abate, combat and, to the fullest possible extent, eliminate pollution of the Mediterranean Sea Area and to protect and enhance its marine and coastal environment

(10) *Recognize* that there are numerous regional and global initiatives and programmes whose objectives and activities contribute to improving the environment of the Mediterranean, including through the possibility of integrating environmental concerns into sectoral policies, and *stress* the importance of developing effective synergies between MAP and these other initiatives and partnerships;

(11) In order to do so, we *recognize* that the attention already given to addressing pollution hotspots through inter alia the formulation and endorsement of National Action Plans, should be translated into further immediate action, including introducing policies and launching actions to tackle the underlying causes and driving forces behind continued environmental degradation. Such actions should lead to a reversal of adverse trends and the achievement of a sustainable future for the Mediterranean;

(12) *Emphasize* that the required principles and targets for action have already been established in the Barcelona Convention, its protocols and the strategies adopted by the Contracting Parties of the Barcelona Convention, including the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD). We *reaffirm* these principles and targets (as summarized in doc. UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.320/Inf.20), and *continue to believe* that they are appropriate to addressing the challenges at hand, and blend appropriately into the international policy framework;

(13) *Assert* that the overriding objective of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) is to ensure the proper implementation of the Barcelona Convention, its protocols and strategies, and to overcome the obstacles hindering their proper implementation;

(14) *Decide* that MAP shall be implemented through the following tools and approaches:

- (14a) Analysis of the reasons behind the incomplete implementation of the commitments under the Barcelona Convention, its protocols and strategies. On the basis of this analysis, MAP shall undertake and reinforce activities designed to assist the Contracting Parties to ratify and implement the provisions of the Barcelona Convention, its protocols and related strategies including the MSSD. Such actions shall include capacity building and assistance to the Contracting Parties in formulating, implementing, monitoring and revising their environmental and sustainable development policies and in mainstreaming environmental concerns into other policy processes and decisions, including decisions by socio-economic partners. In parallel, an effective compliance mechanism for the Convention shall be developed and implemented;
- (14b) Effective implementation of a good governance scheme for the MAP system that further promotes the most effective and efficient use of the human and financial resources, and whereby the various components of MAP work in synergy, as further described in document UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.320/4.
- (14c) Development and implementation of a Resource Mobilization Plan, designed to augment the resources available for the implementation of the Barcelona Convention, its protocols and strategies. This plan, to be developed by the MAP Secretariat, shall comprise an effective strategy for attracting resources additional to those already provided by the Contracting Parties for the MAP Trust Fund and for ensuring the efficient and sustainable use of these resources for the promotion of concrete actions on the ground;
- (14d) Collection, analysis and dissemination of reliable and comparable data through comprehensive national marine pollution monitoring programmes based on agreed common criteria and standards, leading to the preparation and evaluation of reports on the State of Environment. Such reports should include assessments of the economic and

social costs and benefits of environmental degradation and the costs and benefits of environmental regulation. This knowledge base shall be used, inter alia, to help steer the evolution of the work programme of the MAP system and to improve MAP information campaigns and reporting. It should also support knowledge-based policy making and the mainstreaming of environmental concerns into economic and social policies formulated by the Contracting Parties:

- (14e) Supporting targeted information diffusion, education, awareness raising, greater visibility and enhanced participation of civil society in development and implementation of policy related to the environment. These measures should include a focus on the economic, social and environmental significance of the Mediterranean coastal and marine resources, on the related threats, real and potential, confronting these resources and on the role and responsibility of the Mediterranean population in driving political, social and economic changes towards sustainable development in the region. This shall be accomplished through the development of effective information and communication policies for the MAP system, as well as through contributing to other relevant national and regional monitoring and information activities:
- (14f) Promotion of economic, social and financial instruments to catalyze the potential of market forces to trigger sustainable production and consumption both within the Contracting Parties and at the regional and global level and thus bolster the implementation of the Barcelona Convention, its protocols and strategies:
- (14g) Creating and enhancing synergies in objectives, content and timing with other conventions for the protection of the marine environment, relevant national, regional and international organizations and initiatives, including the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership's H2020 Initiative and the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative:
- (14h) Enhancing cooperation among all the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention in order to agree and pursue common positions for achieving sustainable development in the Mediterranean region within all relevant international fora:
- (14i) Establishment of targeted partnerships between donor countries, IFIs, civil society and private sector stakeholders at both regional and national level to ensure their full involvement in ensuring a vibrant future for the Mediterranean through proper implementation of the Barcelona Convention, its protocols and strategies.