



United Nations Environment Programme



UNEP(DEPI)/MED IG.20/4
3 February 2012

ENGLISH



MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

17th 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

Paris (France), 8-10 February 2012

DRAFT PARIS DECLARATION

PARIS DECLARATION

We, Heads of Delegation of the 22 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 Paris, France, on 10 February, 2012

Recalling the regional cooperation framework established through the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) since 1975 and now *wishing* to adapt it to the new political context and *determined* to reinforce effective regional cooperation for the protection of the marine environment and sustainable development in the Mediterranean through strong political commitment;

Acknowledging the value and significance of the Mediterranean Action Plan, its contribution to the definition of a shared legal and regulatory framework, its forerunning role at the global level in the definition and implementation of protection and sustainable development measures and policies for the Mediterranean marine environment and its coastal zone;

Deeply concerned by the threats which continue to menace the marine environment in the Mediterranean, including pollution from land-based sources, from offshore exploration and exploitation activities, waste, the over-use and potentially dangerous exploitation of vulnerable natural resources, the loss of biodiversity, soil degradation, coastal erosion, and *recalling* that if the Mediterranean Sea and its coastal zone ecosystems are protected and managed with a view to sustainable development, this will allow goods and services provided by the marine environment to be used sustainably over the long term;

[Recognising that recent political developments in the region, as well as the consequences of the global economic crisis may affect the environment and sustainable development in the Mediterranean region; calling upon the Parties to take due account of the emergent opportunities and threats associated with these political and economic developments in the formulation of future policies and strategies for the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols;]

Calling on the Parties that have not yet done so to sign or ratify the other protocols adopted and *recognizing* the need for the Contracting Parties to fulfil their obligations in relation to the Convention, its Protocols and relevant multilateral environmental agreement, and their commitments under the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development ;

Reaffirming the political commitments made at previous Conferences of the Parties to the Barcelona Convention, and particularly the outcome of the Conference of the Parties held in Almería in 2008 on, among others, the adoption of the ecosystem approach, Integrated Coastal Zone Management and governance;

Also reaffirming the commitments made at the Conference of the Parties held in Marrakech in 2009 on actions related to climate change and the promotion of better governance within MAP;

Noting the progress made in reinforcing MAP, and particularly the entry into force in 2011 of the "Offshore" protocol and the Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the Mediterranean, the first legally binding instrument of its type in the world, and *seeking* to ensure their effective, collective and responsible implementation and aware of the necessity to timely implement them through action plans;

Convinced on the need to to adapt the operational structure of MAP to contemporary institutional developments, the plurality of political, civil and environmental and financing actors, and aware of the need for sound budgetary management, financial sustainability and the effective use of resources;

Aware that the effectiveness of future structural reforms and the implementation of programmes of work require a prompt implementation of the adopted resource mobilization strategy, involving the regional and global actors concerned;

Reaffirming the importance of the overall regulatory system of the Convention as a legal platform for policy decisions;

Recalling the framework for Euro-Mediterranean cooperation offered, amongst others, by the Union for the Mediterranean and the European Neighbourhood Policy and their calling to promote sustainable development and in particular depollution of the Mediterranean; notably through the EU-Horizon 2020 Initiative amongst others;

Welcoming the results of the Tenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Nagoya in 2010, which achieved a global agreement for the protection and development of world biodiversity and the adoption of a new strategy aimed at halting biodiversity loss, with a programme for the preservation of the marine environment.

Determined to implement the recommendations of the Tenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity regarding the marine habitats and species, and particularly on the use of marine protected areas as an instrument for protecting the marine environment and on the designation of marine ecologically and biologically significant areas (EBSA);

Emphasizing the need to improve cooperation between all actors in the marine and coastal environment of the Mediterranean and *welcoming* the on-going cooperation with the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean, the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the International Maritime Organization and the future cooperation with other relevant organizations, such as IUNC;

Resolved to work together to preserve the wealth and sustainability of the Mediterranean ecosystems, goods and services to serve as an example for other regions of the world and thus contribute to the adoption at the worldwide level of global measures for the protection, and sustainable development and management of the marine environment;

Conscious of the opportunity represented by the United Nations Conference for Sustainable Development in 2012, known as Rio+20, to make real progress, among others, in the governance of sustainable development and the green economy, and determined to address marine environment concerns among the major challenges to be tackled at the Conference;

Taking note with appreciation of the inter-institutional report opening the way to the United Nations Conference for Sustainable Development, the “Blueprint for Oceans and Coastal Sustainability”, presented at the UNESCO 36th session;

Determined to be involved in the United Nations Conference for Sustainable Development in 2012, with a view to achieving global commitments on the green economy in the context of the eradication of poverty and the institutional framework of sustainable development including the related marine issues;

Hereby declare that we are resolved to:

- **Take all the necessary measures to make the Mediterranean a clean, healthy and productive sea with preserved biodiversity and ecosystems**
 - by reaffirming our political commitments to protection and sustainable development of the Mediterranean Sea and its coastal zone through an ecosystem approach to the management of human activities , to be implemented by stages in regular cycles.
 - by developing a coherent, well-managed network of marine protected areas in the Mediterranean, including on the high seas and implementing the Aichi Plan of Action adopted by the Convention on Biological Diversity, in particular to meet the target of 10 per cent of marine protected areas in the Mediterranean by 2020;
 - by reinforcing regional cooperation for the scientific evaluation of ecologically significant marine areas, in relation with the global work undertaken by the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations General Assembly;
 - by intensifying efforts to curb pollution from land-based sources, such as marine litter, through the adoption and implementation of legally-binding measures, and pollution from offshore activities and sea based activities, through regional action plans;

- **Strengthen the integrated management of Mediterranean coastal zones**, as a unique instrument at the service of Mediterranean States, an integrated vision of coastal areas and the basis for their sustainable development
 - by implementing the Action Plan and approved by the Parties as rapidly as possible;
 - by recognizing the need to improve coherence between the different levels of coastal governance, supplemented by optimal national frameworks for integrated coastal zone management;
 - by ratification of the ICZM Protocol by the Barcelona Convention Parties
 - by liaising with other relevant regional and global plans and programmes, in particular through the maritime spatial planning, to strengthen and optimize the achievement of the overarching goals of the Barcelona Convention;

- **Address major concerns on the marine environment at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development**
 - by supporting and undertaking strong commitments in our capacity of UN Member States on sustainable management of marine resources and preservation of marine biodiversity
 - by calling on the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development to propose policies to the MAP Parties for the implementation of a “blue” economy for the Mediterranean, as a version of the “green” economy applied

to the seas and oceans; having the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development as appropriate strategic policy framework;

- by supporting consideration of the theme of oceans and the initiation of negotiations for a process initiated by the General Assembly, with a view to ensuring that the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction effectively addresses those issues by identifying gaps and ways forward, including through the implementation of existing instruments and the possible development of a multilateral agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. This agreement would include a series of regimes covering marine protected areas, access to genetic resources and the sharing of the benefits of their use, and impact assessments of human activities;
- by promoting the achievements of the objectives of Agenda 21 and Johannesburg Plan for Implementation in the Mediterranean;
- by supporting the preparation by 2014 of the report of the state of the marine environment including the socioeconomic aspects mandated by the United Nations General Assembly;
- by seeking real progress in the governance of sustainable development and the environment and by supporting, in this regard, the positions expressed by the African Regional Preparatory Process for the United Nations Conference for Sustainable Development in its Africa Consensus Statement (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 20-25 October, 2011), by the UNECE Regional Preparatory Meeting for the UN Conference for Sustainable Development (Geneva, Switzerland, 1-2 December 2011) and by the European Union in its Rio+20 contribution to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations (1st November, 2011);

Establish the conditions for transparent, effective and enhanced institutional governance to ensure the good environmental state of the Mediterranean sea

- by consolidating synergies with regional and global partners, with the aim of the optimal financing of the MAP activities and allocation of resources;
- by encouraging the Secretariat in its efforts to conclude, as soon as possible, cooperation agreements with the secretariats of the Union for the Mediterranean, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean;
- by pursuing reflection on an institutional reform of the MAP, involving all marine and coastal environmental actors in a project-based approach, with a view to strengthening the governance of MAP;
- by calling for the consideration, at the 18th Conference of the Parties, of a proposal for the institutional reform of the MAP, formulated in close cooperation with the Contracting Parties.