

The way forward: A renewed commitment for effective conservation and sustainable development in the Mediterranean Region

Meeting on the occasion of the 15th Conference of the Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona, 1995), in Almeria (Spain) on xx-xx November 2007, the Contracting Parties:-

1. *Reaffirm* the importance of regional cooperation and coordination in the framework of the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) and the commitments made at previous meetings, in particular those held in Barcelona (Spain), in 1995; Monaco, in 2001; Catania (Italy), in 2003; and Portoroz (Slovenia), in 2005;
2. *Recall* that with the amendments of 1995 the Barcelona Convention extended its field of application to the coastal region and adopted the concept of sustainable development as a paradigm for equitable social and economic development with due consideration to the environmental dimension;
3. *Recall further* the Resolution on the Environment and Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean Basin adopted at the Meeting of the Contracting Parties in Barcelona (Spain), in June 1995;
4. *Recognize* the important contribution made through the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols over the last three decades in improving the marine environment and for the promotion and establishment of an environmental legal system and institutional structure at the regional and national levels in the Mediterranean region;
5. *Acknowledge* the significant value of the MAP process as the only mechanism in the Mediterranean region with an international legal framework for consultation and cooperation on environmental and sustainable development issues, involving on an equal footing all the countries of the Mediterranean and the European Community, and with the active involvement of civil society;
6. *Recognize* the value of MAP in contributing towards achieving at the Mediterranean level internationally agreed development goals such as those contained in the UN Millennium Declaration and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation;
7. *Recall* the adoption by the 14th Conference of the Parties to the Barcelona Convention of the *Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD)*, which offers an excellent opportunity for the countries in the region and MAP to contribute towards sustainable development;
8. *Welcome* the endorsement of the MSSD by the Euro-Med Summit in Barcelona in November 2005, and the commitment by the Euro-Mediterranean Partners to promote sustainable development and implement the MSSD;
9. *Recognize* the need for fundamental changes in the countries through the adoption and implementation of national policies that integrate environment and development considerations in order to reverse the unsustainable trends in the Mediterranean region highlighted in the *Environment and Development Report*;

10. *Welcome* the development in the European Union (EU) of policies and initiatives closely related to the areas covered by MAP, in particular the European Marine Strategy, the Environment Strategy for the Mediterranean including Horizon 2020 initiative, and the Green Paper on Maritime Policy;

11. *Welcome* the agreement on the Joint Work Programme between MAP and the European Commission for the enhancement of cooperation at the institutional level and to increased cooperation in support of the implementation of the relevant EC environmental policies and the achievements of MAP objectives;

12. *Emphasize* the importance of reducing duplication of efforts and overlap of activities in the Mediterranean between MAP and the European Commission as well as the promotion of efficient use of resources through improved cooperation and coordination;

13. *Recognize* the importance of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean Large Marine Ecosystem to assist countries in implementing their National Action Plans adopted in the framework of the Strategic Action Programmes to address land-based sources of pollution (SAP/MED) and protect biodiversity (SAP/BIO);

14. *Recognize* that considerable funds from domestic and external resources and investments are still needed to implement the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols as well as sustainable environmental policies, projects and programmes;

15. *Welcome* the continued support of UNEP's Regional Seas Programme to MAP in the implementation of programmes and activities for the protection of the marine and coastal environment in the Mediterranean;

16. *Acknowledge* that after 30 years of MAP and of the Barcelona Convention there is a need for a renewed commitment and a strategic vision towards effective conservation and sustainable development in the Mediterranean in order for MAP to reinforce its political clout and enhance its relevance in the region; and

17. *Reaffirm* that the most important contribution of MAP to the quest of sustainable development in the Mediterranean region is the effective implementation of the Barcelona Convention its Protocols and the MSSD;

18. The Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention therefore:

The MAP Mission

19. *Agree* that the main objective of MAP is to contribute to the process of achieving sustainable development in the Mediterranean region by promoting and supporting the Contracting Parties to implement and comply with the provisions of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, so as to prevent, abate, combat and, to the fullest extent possible, eliminate pollution in the Mediterranean Sea and to conserve marine and coastal biodiversity and to protect and enhance the Mediterranean marine and coastal environment through the sustainable use of its natural resources;

20. *Agree* that in the implementation of its activities towards sustainable development, MAP will promote the fundamental principles and provisions of the Barcelona Convention, including

the precautionary principle, the polluter pays principle, best environmental practice and best available techniques, environmental impact assessments, integrated management of the coastal zone, and the application of the ecosystem approach;

21. *Declare* that MAP's vision for the future is a healthy Mediterranean marine and coastal environment with a rich and protected biodiversity, managed in a sustainable manner based on the ecosystem approach, and supporting a variety of economic, social and recreational activities for the enjoyment of all the peoples living in and visiting the Mediterranean region;

MAP's Strategic Directions

22. *Decide* that in pursuance of MAP's objective and vision, its strategic directions for the period 2008 – 2012 are the following:

- a. to increase its activities aimed at assisting the Contracting Parties to comply with the provisions of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols by helping them to fully integrate those provisions in their national environmental policies and the wider national development agendas;
- b. to enhance its contribution towards sustainable development in the Mediterranean through local, national, regional, sub-regional and global partnerships and initiatives with relevant social, economic and environmental stakeholders for the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development;
- c. to reduce pollution of the Mediterranean marine environment from land-based sources and conserve biological diversity by assisting the countries in the long-term implementation of the Strategic action programme to address pollution of the Mediterranean Sea from land-based activities (SAP/MED) and the Strategic action programme for the conservation of biological diversity in the Mediterranean region (SAP/BIO), and their related measures;
- d. to coordinate in an effective manner the activities of the MAP Regional Activity Centres, including their fundraising efforts, to ensure that they are planned and implemented in a mutually reinforcing manner, carrying out also annual evaluations of the implementation of their work plans;
- e. to incorporate the application of the ecosystem approach in all MAP activities and to provide support to the Parties to reinforce their capacity for implementing the ecosystem approach;
- f. to contribute, through appropriate partnerships and synergies, towards the effective application of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and to the achievement of the targets of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), in particular MDG 7 related to environmental sustainability;
- g. to reinforce the effective and mutually beneficial collaboration with the European Union, and in particular with the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, for the attainment of common objectives for the benefit of the Mediterranean region;
- h. to promote synergies with other Regional Seas Programmes for developing common regional objectives and coordinated regional implementation of relevant multilateral

environmental agreements (MEAs), global and regional initiatives and responsibilities of other UN agencies and other international actors, as a contribution to the sustainable management of the coastal and marine environment;

- i. to develop MAP's cooperation and partnership with regional institutions and processes in particular those relevant to the Southern and Eastern parts of the Mediterranean and those with a sub-regional scope, including, but not limited to, the Arab League, the Islamic Bank, the New Partnership for Africa Development (NEPAD), the Adriatic-Ionian Initiative (All), and the Quadripartite Commission for the Protection of the Adriatic;
- j. to establish closer working relationships with donors and international financing institutions in order to develop a strong environmental financing framework for the implementation of sustainable development activities at the regional level;
- k. to develop synergies and complementarity with programmes and initiatives of other relevant international global and regional organisations through cooperation and coordination of activities and the participation in relevant national, regional and global fora;
- l. to enhance MAP's visibility in the Mediterranean countries and at the global and regional level through an effective information and communication strategy in order to raise public awareness on the economic, social and environmental importance of coastal and marine resources and their sustainable use;
- m. to support knowledge-based policy making, enhanced public participation, education, awareness and improved reporting on the state of the coastal and marine environment, their resources and possible threats to them, including through contributing to appropriate national and regional monitoring activities;
- n. to reinforce MAP's cooperation with regional and international non-governmental organizations through their active involvement in its activities, in order to give due consideration to the views of civil society and the private sector in its decision making process; and
- o. to reinforce the political clout of MAP and the Barcelona Convention, improving its *modus operandi* at the global, regional and national level by strengthening the relations with the Parties to the Barcelona Convention and enhancing its relations with other Conventions as well as regional and global organizations and institutions;

Specific targets at the national and regional levels

23. *Commit themselves* to undertake more decisive actions at the national level and to cooperate more actively among themselves for the effective and full implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols within the framework of the MAP in general and of the MSSD in particular;

24. *Commit themselves* to improve cooperation and coordination at all levels in order to deal with issues related to the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols in an integrated manner and to incorporate the integrated management and sustainable use of river basins and seas into national development policies;

25. *Commit themselves to undertake the necessary actions so that by 31 December 2010, the Convention for the protection of the marine environment and the coastal region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona, 1995), the Protocol for the prevention and elimination of pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by dumping from ships and aircraft or incineration at sea (Barcelona, 1995), the Protocol Concerning Co-operation in Preventing Pollution from Ships and, in cases of Emergency, Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea (Malta, 2002), the Protocol for the protection of the Mediterranean Sea against pollution from land-based sources and activities (Syracusa, 1996), the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and biological diversity in the Mediterranean (Barcelona, 1995) will be in force in all States and regional economic groupings which are eligible to accede to the Barcelona Convention as per its Article 30;*

26. [Agree that by 31 December 2010, the newly approved *Protocol on integrated coastal area management* (Spain, 2007) should be in force in all Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention;]

27. *Agree also that further efforts need to be made in order for the Protocol for the protection of the Mediterranean Sea against pollution resulting from exploration and exploitation of the continental shelf and the seabed and its subsoil (Madrid, 1994), and the Protocol on the prevention of pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by trans-boundary movements of hazardous wastes and their disposal (Izmir, 1996) to enter into force by 31 December 2008;*

28. *Decide to undertake all possible efforts, by 2012, to fill the existing gaps in national legislation that prevent an effective implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, requesting, if so required, the support of the Secretariat and/or the Parties which may be in a position to provide assistance in this matter;*

29. *Agree that by 31 December 2008 all Parties should have assessed the measures taken "to give to the public appropriate access to information on the environmental state in the field of application of the Convention and the Protocols, on activities or measures adversely affecting or likely to affect it and on activities carried out or measures taken in accordance with the Convention and the Protocols" (Article 15);*

30. *Agree to the reduction by 2010 of (MED POL targets, such as eliminating hot spots and achieving a substantial reduction of main pollutants having clear adverse effects on the Mediterranean sea);*

31. *Agree to (REMPEC targets, if appropriate reduction of operational pollution from ships, etc.);*

32. *Commit themselves to substantially contribute to the achievement of the 2010 global biodiversity target with respect to the Mediterranean marine and coastal biodiversity through efficient implementation of the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and biological diversity in the Mediterranean;*

33. *Further commit themselves:*

- a) to identify, survey and describe by 2010 all the marine areas that would deserve designation as Special Protected Area of Mediterranean Importance (SPAMI);
- b) to initiate as soon as possible the formal designation of the SPAMIs that have been identified; and

- c) to ensure that the SPAMIs that have already being designated and those that will be designated in the future have in place effective management plans, with the required means for their application;

34. *Agree* to the halting of the further degradation of the coastal zones by (concrete targets to be proposed by PAP/RAC);

35. *Decide* that by 30 June 2008, the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) should have held its re-launching meeting with the new composition, scope and road map agreed at the Ministerial Segment of COP15;

36. *Request* all relevant MAP components to submit to the 16th meeting of the Contracting Parties concrete proposals in their respective areas of work, with identified sources of funding, concerning scientific and technological cooperation directed at improving the capacities of the Parties to implement the Convention and its Protocols. These proposals should be submitted in a consolidated document prepared by the Secretariat;

37. *Request* the Secretariat to seek to develop as soon as possible Memoranda of Cooperation (or review them when they are already in existence), which includes clear and concrete actions with identified resources for their implementation, with the institutions and treaties that have particular relevance to the MAP process. The Secretariat shall submit a proposal to the Bureau in 2008, for its approval, on the priorities for the development of such memoranda;

38. *Decide* that MAP cooperation with national, regional and international non-governmental organizations should be reinforced on the basis of their potential contribution to the goals of the Convention. To this end, the Secretariat should prepare, in consultation with NGOs, a revision of the existing criteria and a strategic vision for establishing an effective partnership, including the funding that could be provided for NGO projects. The criteria and strategic vision should be submitted for approval to the 16th meeting of the Contracting Parties in 2009;

39. *Decide* that by 31 December 2008, all Parties shall submit their national reports for the period 2006-2008 in electronic form and using the format approved at COP15 in 2007. As from 2009, the reporting should be undertaken as a constant updating of the on-line reporting system, which should be up to date by 31 December each year,

40. *Decide also* that as from the 17th meeting of the Contracting Parties, and pursuant to Article 27, the Contracting Parties should devote sufficient time "to assess the compliance with the Convention and the Protocols as well as the measures and recommendations..." and "recommend, when appropriate, the necessary steps to bring about full compliance with the Convention and the Protocols and promote the implementation of the decisions and recommendations"

41. *Request* the Bureau and the Secretariat to consider planning at regular intervals politically visible events to address the major challenges facing the Mediterranean in the areas that are of the competence of the Convention;

Appeal for partnerships

42. *Appreciate and will continue* their joint work with bodies established under the UN, inter-governmental, governmental and non governmental organizations and institutions active in the

field of work of MAP, and invite them to maintain an active cooperation with MAP, so that all parties will benefit from each others experience;

43. *Call upon* the European Commission to work in close partnership with MAP to achieve the objectives of the Horizon 2020 initiative and of the NAPs established in the framework of the revised LBS protocol and to deploy adequate financial resources to support their implementation;

44. *Appreciate* the other initiatives in the Mediterranean, launched at bilateral, sub-regional and regional levels, which are contributing to sustainable development in the region and are closely related to MAP's implementation, and commit themselves to ensure mutual cooperation and synergies;

45. *Invite* intergovernmental organizations, financial institutions, and non-governmental organizations as well as other social and economic actors to associate themselves with and support this renewed commitment for the effective conservation and sustainable development in the Mediterranean; and

46. *Invite* developed countries, international and regional financial institutions and mechanism to increase their contribution to the further implementation of the Convention and its Protocols in order to ensure the Mediterranean's long term sustainability through financial and technical assistance to developing countries in order to implement concrete actions and investment projects to substantially reduce the pollution and conserve the biodiversity of the Mediterranean.