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MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

14th 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

DRAFT PORTOROZ DECLARATION

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The Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region in the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention), meeting in Portoroz, Slovenia, from 8 to 11 November 2005, in the framework of the United Nations Environment Programme/Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP),

Recalling that the Mediterranean Action Plan was approved in 1975 by the Governments of the Mediterranean States and the European Community to assist Mediterranean Governments to assess and control marine pollution, to formulate their national environment policies, to improve the ability of governments to identify better options for alternative patterns of development and to make better and rational use of resources;

Recognizing the valuable contribution that the Barcelona Convention and its related protocols have made to improve the quality of the marine environment and promote sustainable development in the Mediterranean;

Recognizing that over the last three decades, MAP has been a significant instrument for change and progress concerning environmental matters in the Mediterranean;

Recalling the entry into force in 2004 of the Convention for the Protection of the Marine and Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (amended Barcelona Convention) and the Protocol concerning Co-operation and Preventing Pollution from ships and, in cases of emergency, Combating Pollution of the Mediterranean Sea (Prevention and Emergency Protocol);

Moreover, recognizing the valuable work undertaken by the MAP Secretariat, the MCSD and the MAP components, in particular BP/RAC throughout the preparatory process of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development;

Taking note of the outcomes and proposals of the Tenth Meeting of the MCSD, in Athens, June 2005, in particular the finalization of the MSSD and the Athens Charter;

Reaffirming the necessity for achieving sustainable development at regional, national and local levels in line with the Millennium Development Goals, the Mediterranean Declaration for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Catania Declaration;

Noting with satisfaction the recognition by the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, through the Second Conference of the Ministers of Environment, Athens, July 2002, and the Seventh Conference of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Luxembourg, May 2005, of the importance of the MCSD and its MSSD for mainstreaming sustainable development throughout the Partnership;

Convinced that promoting sustainable development is a vital necessity to meet development challenges in the Mediterranean Region;

Convinced also that the elaboration and implementation of sustainable development strategies are necessary steps for promoting equity, shared prosperity and stability through valuing the Mediterranean assets, reducing disparities, changing unsustainable production and consumption patterns, ensuring the sustainable management of natural resources and improving governance at all levels;

Acknowledging that the MCSD is an Advisory Body and a Forum for Dialogue of the Mediterranean Action Plan, and that the MSSD is a framework and non-binding strategy for environmental sustainability and shared prosperity;

Agree that,

1. The MSSD constitutes an opportunity for the Mediterranean countries to achieve progress in the social and economic fields, environment protection and cultural advancement in a sustainable manner, thus contributing to peace, stability and shared prosperity in the Region,
2. The MSSD is a framework and non-binding strategy that defines key challenges, principles, steps and actions for guiding the promotion and implementation of sustainable development at regional, sub-regional and national levels, as well as for rationalizing regional and international cooperation and promoting dynamic partnerships for the sustainable development of the Mediterranean Region,
3. The MSSD does not concern only MAP and the Contracting Parties but also all other actors and stakeholders from private sectors, civil society and other major groups as well as relevant regional and international institutions; it provides an excellent opportunity to make coordinated efforts and joint progress,
4. The MSSD is a flexible framework to allow for adaptation to major developments and integration of determinant emerging issues,
5. The implementation of sustainable development strategies requires serious policy and institutional reforms together with the promotion of a dynamic culture of change, in particular concerning the unsustainable production and consumption patterns,
6. The MSSD constitutes an essential contribution to a pro-active win-win-win scenario based on synergies, efficient management and cultural diversity for a co-developed eco-region and a shared destiny,
7. The implementation of sustainable development strategies requires the application of various principles, including access to basic needs to all citizens, access to information, multi-stakeholders participatory approach, precautionary and polluter/user pays principles as well as common, shared but differentiated responsibility,

Decide,

1. To adopt the MSSD and commit themselves to do their utmost to implement its objectives, orientations and proposed actions,
2. To prepare and/or update respective National Strategies for Sustainable Development, giving due consideration to the MSSD,
3. To integrate sustainable development principles in policies and laws, in particular through the adequate revision of legal frameworks and relevant policy reforms,
4. To mobilize and provide relevant adequate human, technical and financial means for the implementation of the MSSD and the NSSDs,

5. To demonstrate clearly their commitment to implement the MSSD through the identification and implementation of specific and relevant projects at the regional, sub-regional, national and local levels,
6. To propose or actively participate in the elaboration and implementation of partnership initiatives that correspond to the objectives, orientations and proposed actions of the MSSD and respective NSSDs,
7. To promote an interactive consultation mechanism and awareness-raising campaigns to ensure larger ownership and stronger support from concerned actors, in particular the private sector and the NGOs, in their implementation,
8. To evaluate progress in the implementation of the MSSD at the regional and national levels, using an adequate set of indicators, to revise as appropriate, if necessary in two years, and to undertake an overall assessment and review of the MSSD after five years,
9. To request the Partners, concerned Actors and Funding Agencies at regional, sub-regional and national levels to give due consideration to the MSSD objectives, orientations and proposed actions in their cooperation programmes and to actively contribute to the implementation of the MSSD and respective NSSDs.

Moreover,

Concerned with the significant impact of land-based urban and industrial sources of pollution on the state of the Mediterranean marine and coastal environment and its ecosystems;

Aware of the important contribution of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) adopted in 1997, the related National Action Plans (NAPs) and the process of reduction of industrial pollution by the Mediterranean countries to the implementation of the MSSD;

Reaffirming the compatibility and the concurrence of the SAP targets with those of the EU marine strategy, the related EU directives and global Conventions;

Recognizing the necessity for involving all concerned stakeholders including the civil society in the implementation of the SAP and related NAPs;

Considering that the process of implementation of the NAPs, that will require adequate financial recourses, will enhance the economic, technological and social development at the local level;

Keeping in mind that, with the entry into force of the LBS Protocol, a legally-binding text based on the SAP, containing measures and timetable for the gradual reduction of pollution, will have to be formulated and adopted;

The Contracting Parties decide,

1. To endorse the NAPs and integrate them in the national development plans, national strategies and pollution control plans, as appropriate,
2. To allocate to all stakeholders, in particular national and local authorities together with the civil society, an active role in the implementation, control and monitoring of the NAPs with easy access to all related information,

3. To mobilize all necessary resources for the full implementation of the NAPs through regular budgets, innovative financial instruments, as well as from international institutions.

Furthermore,

Considering that the SPA and Biodiversity Protocol entered into force in 1999, and *aware* of the urgent need for implementing the SAP-BIO, adopted in 2003 as response to safeguard the Mediterranean Biodiversity and achieve the WSSD targets;

Convinced that the implementation of the Action Plan for Monk Seals is a necessary step for protecting this important species;

Concerned by the high risk of extinction of the Mediterranean monk seal mostly due to human activities, deliberate killings and habitat losses;

Aware that the recovery of this species is a major challenge for the conservation of Mediterranean biodiversity;

Recognising the necessity of having an appropriate legal framework and participatory mechanisms for the protection and conservation of their species and their habitats;

Acknowledging the need for having adequate operational tools together with appropriate human and financial resources for targeted conservation and efficient management;

The Contracting Parties Decide,

1. To take as quickly as possible all necessary measures for the implementation of the Action Plan and to strengthen their cooperation to reverse the species decline,
2. To seriously address the problem of deliberate monk seal killing combined with habitat loss, tailored to local communities and targeting fishermen and other stakeholders,
3. To promote information on relevant success stories regarding the protection of monk seals and exchange experience with all concerned parties and partners,
4. To develop and implement legislative measures relevant to the conservation of monk seals, together with adequate operational management plans,

Finally,

Acknowledging the need to reorient, after 30 years, the role and mandate of MAP taking into account the developments that have taken place in social, economic and environmental fields at the international and regional level;

Convinced that a Strategic Vision for MAP can further contribute to sustainable development in the Mediterranean Region;

Considering that the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the external evaluation of MAP constitute a good basis to launch the process to introduce any necessary reforms to strengthen MAP's future role in the Mediterranean;

The Contracting Parties decide,

1. To take note of the report on the external evaluation when defining MAP's future orientation for the next decade,
2. To convene an extraordinary meeting of the MAP Focal Points in the next biennium to discuss the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the report on the external evaluation of MAP involving all concerned parties and MAP partners and to submit recommendations to the meeting of the Contracting Parties in 2007.