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Regional Meeting on Climate Change Adaptation

Istanbul, Türkiye, 8-9 July 2025

Report of the Regional Meeting on Climate Change Adaptation

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UNEP/MAP
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Introduction

1. In accordance with the Rules of Procedure for Meetings and Conferences of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols and with the kind support of the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change of the Republic of Türkiye and of the Climate Change Regional Activity Center (CC/RAC), the Regional Meeting on Climate Change Adaptation was convened in Istanbul, Türkiye, on 8-9 July 2025 at the kind invitation of Ms. Tatjana Hema, Coordinator of the UNEP/MAP – Barcelona Convention, hereby the Coordinator.
2. The primary objective of the Meeting was to review the updated UNEP/MAP 2016 Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework (RCCAF) for the period 2026-2035, and presented in the document UNEP/MED WG.631/3 and for submission to the MAP Focal Points Meeting (16-19 September 2025, Athens, Greece) and subsequently to the 24th Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (2-5 December 2025, Cairo, Egypt) (COP24), for endorsement.
3. The list of participants is provided in Annex I of the present report.

Agenda Item 1: Opening of the Meeting

4. The meeting was opened at 14:30 local time in Türkiye (GMT+3), on Tuesday, 8 July 2025, by H. E. Ms Fatma Varank, Deputy Minister for Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change of Republic of Türkiye. In her remarks she highlighted the visionary approach of UNEP/MAP in setting up a new Regional Activity Center on Climate Change (CC/RAC) which is located in Istanbul. This important and timely decision of COP23 (5-8 December 2023, Portoroz, Slovenia) confirms the leadership of Contracting Parties on pressing issues affecting the healthy development of the Mediterranean and the protection of its coastal and marine ecosystems. She also highlighted that the update of the Regional Meeting on Climate Change Adaptation timely complements the commitment of UNEP/MAP on climate change. RCCAF will provide key guidance to the Contracting Parties on climate change adaptation measures and solutions while the CC/RAC will play a key role in supporting the process. She also informed that at the beginning on July 2025 the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye adopted the Climate Law and that Türkiye has submitted its candidacy to host UNFCCC COP31 in 2026. (Full statement is provided in Annex IV to this report).
5. The Coordinator thanked the Government of Republic of Türkiye for the support and vision in setting up and hosting the Regional Activity Centre on Climate Change (CC/RAC). She also thanked France for the voluntary contribution to the Programme of Work and Budget 2024/2025 that has allowed the organization of the meeting. She highlighted the RCCAF is a regional key tool to assist policy makers, national authorities, and local communities in adapting to climate change through concrete measures and solutions, and in navigating climate risks with foresight, coherence, and urgency. Its update for the period 2026-2035 and its implementation, facilitated by the CC/RAC, will be key to progressively upscale the capacities of the Contracting Parties to enhance climate resilience capacities. Accordingly, COP24 will be a pivotal moment as both the decisions on the updated RCCAF for the period 2026-2035 (RCCAF 2026-2035) and on the CC/RAC mandate are expected to be endorsed. (Full statement is provided in Annex IV to this report).

Agenda Item 2: Organizational Matters

6. As per Rules of Procedure for Meetings and Conferences of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols which apply mutatis mutandis to the Meeting (UNEP/IG.43/6, Annex XI, Art. 20), the Meeting elected the following officers from among the participants, as follows:

President:	Mr. Mehmet Tamer Çobanoğlu, Türkiye
Vice-President:	Mr. Arthur Belaud, France
Vice-President:	Mr. Milica Ojdanic, Montenegro
Rapporteur:	Ms. Sabina Hadziahmetovic, Bosnia and Herzegovina

7. The Meeting reviewed and adopted the Provisional Agenda, as presented in the Working Document UNEP/MED WG.631/1 and the timetable included in the Provisional Annotated Agenda (UNEP/MED WG.631/2).

8. The agenda was adopted by the participants, as provided in Annex II to the present report.

Agenda Item 3: Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework

Agenda Item 4: Mechanisms for financing Climate Change Adaptation

9. The Coordinator presented the process, the rationale and the main elements for the update of the RCCAF 2026-2035 as detailed in Document UNEP/MED WG.631/3.

10. She specified that the RCCAF has been updated in parallel with the process of the preparation of the MSSD 2026-2035, and especially its objective addressing climate change with emphasis to adaptation. This approach is part of the efforts made so far and that will be made to ensure full complementarity of the implementation of the RCCAF 2026-2035 with the MSSD 2026-2035, to maximize impacts on the ground. Accordingly, relevant MSSD 2026-2035 Strategic Directions are specifically referenced in the draft RCCAF 2026-2035 objectives, strategic directions and priorities.

11. The Meeting assessed the proposed updated RCCAF in details, going through the new and proposed to be deleted text, engaging into a fruitful discussion both in terms of the global and regional frameworks the RCCAF will contribute to, as well as in terms of concrete priorities needed to achieve the Objectives and Strategic Directions of the updated RCCAF.

12. The Objectives and Strategic Directions were confirmed as relevant and no changes were proposed, while the meeting thoroughly discussed and made changes on the screen as appropriate on the list of priorities that develop each RCCAF Strategic Direction, including those related to the mechanisms for financing Climate Change Adaptation, and mainly confirming the proposed updates.

13. With reference to the proposed monitoring and evaluation matrix (MEL) of the RCCAF which is a novelty compared to the 2016-2025 period, the Meeting acknowledge its importance. The newly introduced MEL will in fact allow a reinforced assessment of the RCCAF implementation and progress, thus better informing on revision needs in the future.

14. The Meeting indicated that the MEL should be an evolving tool to be further detailed and taking into account existing data-sharing and information systems in order to avoid duplication of requests to the Contracting Parties and further administrative burden.

15. Accordingly, the Coordinator proposed to simplify the MEL and to include it as Annex II to the COP24 decision endorsing the updated RCCAF for the period 2026-2035, and not as integral part of the RCCAF itself.

Agenda Item 5: Any Other Matters

a) Mediterranean by 2050: A Foresight by Plan Bleu

b) Unraveling the Impact of Environmentally Harmful Subsidies in the Mediterranean

16. Plan Bleu presented two of its recent reports: the 2025 ‘Mediterranean by 2050: A Foresight by Plan Bleu’¹ (Med 2050 Report) and the 2024 ‘Unraveling the Impact of Environmentally Harmful Subsidies in the Mediterranean’².

17. Main messages from the ‘Mediterranean by 2050: A Foresight by Plan Bleu’ were the following:

- Acceleration of threats in the region and the necessity to identify the major risks of crisis or disruption, to prevent any that could have a negative impact on protection and sustainability
- Dramatically accelerating climate change risks and impacts (tipping points)

¹ <https://planbleu.org/en/publications/discover-the-med2050-report-for-a-sustainable-and-resilient-mediterranean/>

² <https://planbleu.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/EHS-Report.pdf>

- By 2050, the Mediterranean will be in a far more alarming situation than it is today, with a major transformation of the entire marine ecosystem
- In the face of this announced alarming situation, disruptive solutions are required
- The priority is to prepare for it now (adaptation and resilience policies)
- The region will increasingly be unable to rely solely on its own strength to overcome these challenges, hence the importance of the region being actively involved in international policies
- Despite these major constraints, there is still numerous opportunities, notably to prepare the necessary transition which represents an important potential for the deployment of renewable energies

18. Main messages from the ‘Unraveling the Impact of Environmentally Harmful Subsidies in the Mediterranean’ were the following:

- Need to establish a Euro-Mediterranean EHS Phase-Out and Reform Framework to guide the transition away from harmful subsidies through coordinated, transparent, and socially inclusive policies
- Need to develop sector-specific reform strategies, especially in fisheries, energy, water, and tourism, emphasizing compensation mechanisms, gender inclusion, and data transparency
- Replace harmful subsidies with green economic instruments to internalize environmental costs and mobilize sustainable finance
- Promote blended finance
- Reinforce intersectoral cooperation, regulatory enforcement, and the development of a region-specific Sustainable Finance Framework aligned with the MSSD 2026-2035

19. Conclusions

- a) The Meeting appreciated the presentations on Med 2050 Report and the Report on Unraveling the Impact of Environmentally Harmful Subsidies in the Mediterranean and recommended that more awareness and dissemination of these important documents are undertaken in the future within the UNEP/MAP System and beyond.**

Agenda Item 6: Conclusions and Closure of the Meeting

20. The Meeting agreed on the draft Conclusions and Recommendations, which are presented in their final form in Annex V to the present report.

21. The meeting was closed by the Coordinator at approximately 18:30 local time in Türkiye (GMT+3), on Wednesday, 9 July 2025.

Annex I
List of Participants

**REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES / REPRESENTANTS DES PARTIES
CONTRACTANTES**

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA / BOSNIE ET HERZEGOVINE	Ms Dragana Selmanagić Senior Lead Researcher/Engineer Hydro-Engineering Institute Sarajevo Ms Sabina Hadziahmetovic Leading Engineer Hydro-Engineering Institute Sarajevo
CYPRUS/CHYPRE	Mr Konstantinos Antoniadis Officer of Fisheries and Marine Research Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment
EGYPT/ÉGYPTTE	Ms Heba Sharawy Head of Loans and Grants Follow up Unit, Head OF ICZM Central Department, General Manager for Environmental Economy, Ministry of Environment Mr Mohamed Said Attea Expert, Impact of Climate Change Ministry of Environment
FRANCE/FRANCE	M. Arthur Belaud Climate Policy Advisor Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Etrangères
GREECE /GRECE	Ms Ioanna Tsalakanidou Officer in Department of Climate Change Hellenic Ministry of Environment and Energy
LIBYA/LIBYE	H. E. Minister Munir Minister of the Environment Ministry of Environment Mr Ahmed Alsoudani Director of the Geographic Information Systems Department, Ministry of Environment Libya National Focal Point for the Adaptation Fund – Libya
MONTENEGRO/ MONTENEGRO	Ms Milica Rudic Head of Department for Marine and Coastal Ecosystems Directorate for Nature Protection Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Northern Region Development Ms Milica Ojdanic Head of Department for Mitigation and Adaptation on Climate Change Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Northern Region Development

SPAIN/ESPAGNE	Mr Patricio Poulet Head of Coastal Departament in Cádiz Ministry of Environment
TUNISIA/TUNISIE	Ms Dhekra Gharbi General Director Ministry of Tourism and Environment Mr Aymen Mahdi Kilani Chef de Service
TÜRKİYE/TÜRKİYE	H. E. Ms Fatma Varank Deputy Minister for Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change Mr. Fatih Turan General Director Directorate General of Environmental Management Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change Mr Orhan Solak Deputy Director Directorate of Climate Change Ministry of Environment Urbanization and Climate Change Ms Vildan Bolukbasi Atay Head of Marine and Coastal Department Ministry for Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change Mr Mehmet Tamer Çobanoğlu Expert Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change Ms Serdar Sağdıç Engineer Directorate General for European Union and External Relations Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change Mr Ömer Öztürk Climate Change Expert Department of Adaptation to Climate Change and Local Policies Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change
MAP REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRES	
PLAN BLEU/RAC – CAR/PLAN BLEU : PLAN BLEU REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRE / CENTRE D’ACTIVITES REGIONALES PLAN BLEU	Mr. Robin Degron Director E-mail: rdegron@planbleu.org

PAP/RAC – CAR/PAP: PRIORITY ACTIONS PROGRAMME REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRE / CENTRE D’ACTIVITÉS RÉGIONALES POUR LE PROGRAMME D’ACTIONS PRIORITAIRES	Ms. Daria Povh Skugor Director E-mail: marko.prem@paprac.org
SCP RAC- MEDWAVES: SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRE / CENTRE D’ACTIVITÉS RÉGIONALES POUR LA CONSOMMATION ET LA PRODUCTION DURABLES	Mr. Matías Ibáñez Sales Coordinator of Operations E-mail: matiasibanez@gencat.cat
SPA-RAC – CAR/ASP: SPECIALLY PROTECTED AREAS REGIONAL ACTIVITY CENTRE / CENTRE D’ACTIVITÉS RÉGIONALES POUR LES AIRES SPÉCIALEMENT PROTÉGÉES	Mr. Atef Ouerghi SPA/RAC Programme Officer E-mail: director@spa-rac.org
UNEP/MAP SECRETARIAT	
	Ms. Tatjana Hema MAP Coordinator Email: tatjana.hema@un.org Ms. Patrizia Busolini Socio-Economic and Sustainable Development Officer E-mail: patrizia.busolini@un.org

Annex II
Agenda of the Regional Meeting on Climate Change Adaptation

Agenda

Agenda Item 1 Opening of the Meeting

Agenda Item 2 Organizational Matters

Agenda Item 3 Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework

Agenda Item 4 Mechanisms for financing Climate Change Adaptation

Agenda Item 5 Any Other Matters

- a) Mediterranean by 2050: A Foresight by Plan Bleu
- b) Unraveling the Impact of Environmentally Harmful Subsidies in the Mediterranean

Agenda Item 6 Conclusions and Closure of the Meeting

Annex III
Conclusions and Recommendations

**Regional Meeting on Climate Change Adaptation
Istanbul, Türkiye, 8-9 July 2025**

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the Agenda Items of the Meeting and related discussion, the following conclusions and recommendations have been agreed by the Regional Meeting on Climate Change Adaptation:

1. The Meeting welcomed the opening remarks of H. E. Ms Fatma Varank, Deputy Minister for Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change and thanked Türkiye and CC/RAC for the kind support in organizing the Meeting.
2. The Meeting thanked France for the voluntary contribution to the UNEP/MAP Programme of Work and Budget 2024/2025 that has supported the organization of the Meeting.
3. After a detailed review of the draft updated Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework (RCCAF) and a productive and detailed discussion, **the Meeting approved the RCCAF 2026-2035, as attached as Appendix to these conclusions.**
4. The Meeting recommended the submission of the RCCAF 2026-2035 to the MAP Focal Points Meeting (Athens, Greece, 16-19 September 2025) for its consideration and approval.
5. The Meeting requested the Secretariat to review the document for editorial purposes, making sure that they are limited to the extent possible.
6. The Meeting appreciated the presentations on Med 2050 Report and the Report on Unraveling the Impact of Environmentally Harmful Subsidies in the Mediterranean and recommended that more awareness and dissemination of these important documents are undertaken in the future within the UNEP/MAP System and beyond.

Appendix to Annex III, Conclusions and Recommendations

INTRODUCTION-

Purpose and scope of the Framework

1. The development of the Framework is guided by the following vision:

By ~~2035~~ 2025 the Marine and Coastal Areas of the Mediterranean countries and their communities have increased their resilience to the adverse impacts of climate variability and change, in the context of Sustainable Development. This is achieved through common objectives, cooperation, solidarity, equity, transparency, accountability and participatory governance.

2. Climate change is one of the most critical challenges that the Mediterranean region is facing and with a demographic standpoint with approximately 30% growth between 2025 and 2050 (from about 500 to 650 million people). It is also one of the regions with the greatest ecological deficit (difference between ecological footprint and biocapacity) and is home to 60% of the world's water-poor human populations.

- i. Pressing climate change challenges are expected to rapidly worsen the already acute climatic conditions present in the region and aggravate existing pressures including increased health risks for Mediterranean citizens. Even societal stability might be compromised: demographics in the Basin are on the rise and the more the population grows, especially in the South, the more the Governments and population will have to face civil security issues and an increase of human losses.

2.3. The adverse climate change context for the Mediterranean Region requires urgent and ambitious preventive remedial action. The Mediterranean has long been identified as a global climate change hotspot, one of the two most responsive regions to climate change globally³. A series of landmark scientific reports have confirmed the climate change fragility of the Mediterranean region, with warming 20 percent faster than the global average, verifying its “hot spot” reputation. Climate change impacts, therefore, will continue to exert further pressure on already strained ecosystems and on vulnerable economies and societies. And coastal zones will face heightened disaster risks, including flooding, droughting –and erosion, and the salinisation of river deltas and aquifers that sustain food security and livelihoods⁴. Historically ~~currently~~, responses to climate-related pressures and hazards in the Mediterranean region have often been limited to short-term and reactive local emergency measures.

3.4. However, Building on environmental and socioeconomic resilience against climate change at regional, national, regional and local levels requires pro-active, long-term integrated planning that addresses the root causes of vulnerability and guides the economic development of the region in a more sustainable direction. The Mediterranean countries need to turn the challenges they face under a changing climate into opportunities to increase their resilience by addressing the reasons that have so far led many environmental parameters into almost critical status.

³ Giorgi, F. (2006), Climate change hot-spots, Geophysical Research Letters, 33, L08707.

⁴ First Mediterranean Assessment Report (MAR1) on “Climate and Environmental Change in the Mediterranean Basin – Current Situation and Risks for the Future”, MedECC, 2020

4.5. At their 23rd Meeting, the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols (COP23, 5-8 December 20023, Portoroz, Slovenia) confirmed their commitment to “enhance actions to address climate change in the Mediterranean and increase protection of the marine ecosystems against the detrimental impacts from climate change, and strengthen scientific knowledge and expertise in this area”.

5.6. Resolution 15 of the 6th United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-6) on Strengthening ocean efforts to tackle climate change, marine biodiversity loss and pollution, calls upon all Member States ‘to encourage investment in sustainable, climate-resilient water and sanitation infrastructure and nature-based solution and/or ecosystem-based approaches’.

6.7. Climate Change, including risks and vulnerabilities is a global common challenge faced by all with local, subnational, national, regional and international dimensions⁵, caused by climate change extend beyond territorial boundaries, and therefore international/regional cooperation is required to do the necessary measures to address them. The Mediterranean region will need a strengthened, cross-border collaborative and coordinated approach to adaptation ~~is in line~~ consistent with the UNFCCC and ‘s 2015 the Paris Agreement’s, Article 7, Global Goal on National Adaptation Plan process for “enhancing adaptive capacity, in order to strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability”, including National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) which among others urges countries to promote “coordination and synergy at the regional level and with other multilateral environmental agreements”⁶ COP 28 Decision on the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience, including its thematic and dimensional targets (Para 9 and 10):⁷ and with the

7.8. 2021 EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change, ~~that will~~ ‘promotes sub-national, national and regional approaches to adaptation..... and resilience implement the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans and strong partnerships with its neighbourhood, in particular the Mediterranean region’⁸. EU countries to “*establish contact with neighbouring countries to inform about the adaptation process and areas of concern with regard to cross-border impacts and identify approaches for coordination over different political, legal and institutional settings*”⁵.

8.9. The Main Objective of the Updated Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework 2026-2035 (RCCAF 2026-2035) is to set consolidate regional strategic approach to increase the resilience of the Mediterranean marine and coastal natural and socioeconomic systems to the impacts of climate change, assisting policy makers and stakeholders at all levels across the Mediterranean in the development and implementation of coherent and effective policies and measures by identifying strategic objectives, strategic directions and priorities that:

- promote the right enabling environment for mainstreaming adaptation into national

⁵ Art 7.2, 2015 Paris Agreement

⁶ UNFCCC Secretariat, Technical guidelines for the national adaptation plan process, December 2012.

⁷ COP30 expected elements of the final outcome of the UAE-Belém work programme to be agreed include no more than 100 indicators that are globally applicable and can inform analysis of global trends, and constitute a menu of indicators that Parties can choose to report on in light of their national circumstances.

⁸ Communication From The Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic And Social Committee And The Committee Of The Regions, Forging a climate-resilient Europe - the new EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change. COM(2021) 82 final, 24.2.2021

- and local planning;
- promote and exchange best practices and low-regret measures;
- promote leveraging of necessary funding; and
- exchange and access best available data, knowledge, assessments and tools on adaptation.

9.10. The RCCAF focus, ~~coherently~~ consistently with the legal framework set by the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols is on the marine and coastal environments of the Mediterranean. The geographical scope of the Framework is that of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, that is the Mediterranean Sea and the coastal zones of the 21 countries that border it. The Framework recognizes that climatic change is having and will have heavy impacts that do not respect the boundaries of a coastal zone as it is usually defined and that coastal adaptation actions may be required further inland, in particular in inland watersheds.

10.11. At national level, the implementation of this strategic framework is ~~should be~~ linked to the work carried out under the Barcelona Convention, and is complementary to the ~~implementation provisions~~ of the ICZM protocol, MSSD implementation, and other relevant instruments. The time scale of the Framework is aligned with the ~~updated~~ MSSD ~~for the period 2026-2035~~. 20, ~~that is 2016-2025~~.

11.12. The Framework is structured around four Strategic Objectives. Each Strategic Objective includes separate Strategic Directions and suggested priorities for their realization.

~~12.13. The Framework builds upon and is supported by two reports prepared by the UNEP/MAP Secretariat. The “Background document to the Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework⁶” provides an overview of key concepts and perspectives around adaptation to climate change, of the latest knowledge regarding the climate change-related challenges that the Mediterranean is facing, of the relevant national and international capacities and efforts, of recommended responses and approaches and of available and emerging financing options. In addition an “Analysis on how Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework priority fields of action and climate-related issues in general are already reflected in Protocols and other strategic instruments of the MAP”⁷ was prepared to show how climate change adaptation considerations have been taken into account throughout the Barcelona Convention’s Protocols, strategies and plans, and to provide a basis on how the Framework can bring together these elements towards a coordinated approach towards enhancing the resilience of the Mediterranean marine and coastal environment to the impacts of climate change by ensuring marine and coastal environment conservation and good environment status (GES) is achieved.~~

13.14. ~~These two reports are~~ It takes into consideration integrated by key recent documents of the UNEP/MAP System:

- The *State of the Environment and Development (SoED) UNEP/ MAP/Plan Bleu, 2020* provides an analysis of the region’s climate policy and institutional landscape, noting the varied climate change response needs of different sub-regions and pointing to the importance of the integration of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) into climate change adaptation planning.
- The *Climate and Environmental Change in the Mediterranean Basin, The First Mediterranean Assessment Report (MAR1), MedECC⁹, 2020* presents a synthesis of available climate scientific knowledge, covering most climate-sensitive sectors and

⁹ The Mediterranean Experts on Climate and Environmental Change (MedECC) is an open and independent international scientific expert network, providing information to decision-makers and the general public on the basis of available scientific information and on-going research.

sub-regions. It supports local and vulnerable communities via resilience policies for climate adaptation which take into account poverty, inequalities, gender imbalances, social inclusion and redistribution.

- The *Summary for Policy Makers of the MedECC Special Report on Climate and Environmental Coastal Risks in the Mediterranean 2023*, presents current and future climate scenarios and risks. It also notes that “available knowledge concerning the risks studied by MedECC has significant gaps, often due to limited monitoring systems or scientific research capacity”.
- “*The Mediterranean by 2050: A Foresight by Plan Bleu*”,¹⁰ 2025, a milestone report in understanding the sustainable development issues in the Mediterranean region that offers future perspectives for the next thirty years.

15. The ~~updated~~ RCCAF 2026-2035 ~~has been~~ was updated in parallel with the ~~update of the process of the preparation of the~~ 2026-2035 Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) and especially its ~~priority~~ Objective addressing climate change with emphasis to adaptation. ~~Every effort will be made to ensure full complementarity of the implementation of the RCCAF 2026-2035 with the MSSD 2026-2035 implementation to maximize impacts on the ground.~~ Relevant Strategic Directions are specifically referenced in the RCCAF objectives, strategic directions and priorities, as described in the next sections.

Background – The Mediterranean Changing Climate

14.16. The Mediterranean region climate is characterized by mild winters and hot and dry summers. From the West, the Atlantic Ocean regimes have a great intra-seasonal and interannual variability influences in the Mediterranean reaching mainly the northeast part of the Mediterranean land and sea, whilst the Eastern and Southern climatic regimes provide the characteristics of the southern Mediterranean areas.

— The Mediterranean coast is one of the region’s most endangered areas. Over the past 60 years, coastal population growth has been rapid and sustained, resulting in one-third of the region’s population now living along the coast. The Mediterranean hosts approximately one-third of global tourism, with a large share concentrated in coastal zones. High concentrations of population and tourism resulted in intensive coastal build-up, often well above national averages. Minimal tidal variation has historically allowed infrastructure and settlements to be placed very close to the sea. This now heightens the risk of coastal and compound flooding, especially in low-elevation coastal areas. At the same time, wildfire risks are intensifying, making Mediterranean coasts a hotspot for converging climate-related hazards

¹⁰ <https://planbleu.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Rapport-MED-2050-EN.pdf>

15.17. For the marine environment, the available data indicates that since the 1980's, documented impacts on marine Mediterranean species and habitats were attributed to climate change. These included frequent and drastic mortalities of sessile benthic species of the infralittoral and circalittoral communities. For the deeper Mediterranean ecosystems, recent scientific articles reported that in the 1990's, Climate change caused an accumulation of organic matter on the deep-sea floor and altered the carbon and nitrogen cycles.¹¹

16.18. Climate change poses significant challenges to the Mediterranean countries and is expected to worsen already acute climatic conditions experiences situations present in the region. Essential resources like fresh water, clean air, fertile soil, agricultural production and fish provisions are may become endangered while coastal communities, ecosystems and infrastructure will be are challenged by increased physical risks. More importantly, human lives may become endangered, health risks increased and even societal stability compromised in a changing climate. A Mediterranean-wide response to these risks should reduce the vulnerability and exposure of the region's society, economy and ecosystems to climate-related hazards, and increases the overall resilience of the Mediterranean marine and coastal areas.

The Region's climate is has already changed changing

17.19. Climate change is one of the most critical challenges that the Mediterranean region is facing. After the Arctic, the Mediterranean is the second fastest-warming region in the world. It is also one of the regions with the greatest ecological deficit (difference between ecological footprint and biocapacity) and is home to 60% of the world's water-poor human populations. Over the two decades to 2020, the frequency and duration of marine heat waves increased by 40% and 15 percent respectively. The magnitude and pattern of observed precipitation trends also exhibit pronounced spatial variability dependent on the time period and season.¹²

18.20. In its Sixth Assessment Report the IPCC concluded that "during the 21st century, climate change is projected to intensify throughout the region. Air and sea temperature and their extremes (notably heat waves) are likely to continue to increase more than the global average (high confidence)". The report predicted (i) a decrease in precipitation in most areas by 4–22%, depending on the emission scenario, (ii) a further rise in the Mediterranean Sea level during the coming decades and centuries, likely reaching 0.15 to 0.6 m in 2050 and 0.6 to 1.1 m in 2100 (relative to 1995–2014) and the process is irreversible at the scale of centuries to millennia; (iii) coastal flood risks will increase in low-lying areas along 37% of the Mediterranean coastline with an increase in the number of people exposed to sea level rise, especially in the southern and eastern Mediterranean region, and may reach up to 130% compared to present in 2100; (iv) ocean warming and acidification will impact marine ecosystems, with however uncertain consequences on fisheries¹³.

19.21. Climate change affects the whole of the Mediterranean coastal region's terrestrial and marine costal zones. The near surface air temperature of the Mediterranean region in 2020 was 1.5°C warmer than pre-industrial times (1850–1900), with an increasing trend of 0.01–0.05°C since the 1980s. Satellite data since the 1980s show spatially different warming rates of the sea surface between +0.29°C and +0.44°C per decade, and stronger in the eastern basin. Mediterranean coastlines have experienced relative sea level rise at an accelerated rate during the last three decades. Mean sea level rise shows an approximate trend of ~1.4 mm per year

¹¹ Mediterranean Quality Status Report 2023

¹² MED 2050, The Mediterranean by 2050, A foresight by Plan Bleu - Summary, Jacques Theys, with contributions from Denis Lacroix and Khadidja Amine, Plan Bleu, 2025, Marseille, 19 pages.

¹³ IPCC, Climate Change 2023, Synthesis Report

during the 20th century, and has accelerated to 2.8 ± 0.1 mm per year in the three decades up to 2018. The interannual and decadal variability that is superimposed on this trend can temporarily mask it. Coastal flooding in the Mediterranean due to storm surges and wind waves threatens the flood-prone areas in the waterfronts (river mouths and deltas) and low-lying coastal plains in many Mediterranean countries. The estimated decrease of the pH of the Mediterranean Sea surface waters is between 0.055 and 0.156 pH units since the preindustrial period with serious implications for acidification¹⁴.

Climate variability and change is becoming increasingly evident in the Mediterranean. According to observations and studies referenced in the recent IPCC Fifth Assessment Report (AR5)⁸ and in IPCC's SREX Report⁹, in recent decades, summer heat waves' intensity, number, and length have increased alongside extreme precipitation events and soil dryness. Major increases have been observed in warm temperature extremes. The shallow waters of the Mediterranean Sea have already warmed by almost 1°C since the 1980s. Trends of decreasing precipitation and discharge indicate a trend toward increased freshwater deficits. The Mediterranean also exhibits variability regarding the observed sea level rise. According to the latest EEA indicators assessment¹⁰, in the Mediterranean Sea there are areas with increases of more than 6 mm/year, and with decreases of more than -4 mm/year.

Projections for the future

20.22. The IPCC AR5 had already considered the Mediterranean Region as “highly vulnerable to climate change” that it “will suffer multiple stresses and systemic failures due to climate changes”. Different sub-regions of the Mediterranean will witness different changes to their climate. On average however for the whole Region, estimates mentioned in the IPCC AR5 for the medium low emissions scenario (RCP 4.5) and for the period 2081-2100 compared to 1986-2005 include an increase in surface mean air temperature of 2-4°C, 10-20% decreases in mean annual precipitation, increased risk of desertification, soil degradation, an increase in duration and intensity of droughts, summer heat waves and heavy precipitation events, changes in species composition, increase of alien species, habitat losses and agricultural and forests production losses.

21.23. Sea level rise in the Mediterranean Sea involves local as well as global contributions. Thus multi-decadal regional projections involve larger uncertainties than those for the global ocean. A rise of 0.4-0.5m is projected for most of the Mediterranean under IPCC AR5's medium low emission scenario RCP 4.5. The effect of sea level rise due to global warming is more important in most of the Mediterranean Sea where, due to the small tidal range, coastal infrastructure and coastal communities are located closer to mean sea level. In addition, vertical land movements caused by tectonic as well as other causes pose additional risks for such areas.

22.24. In the future, warm temperature extremes will increase and heat waves will intensify in duration and peak temperatures. For 2°C of global warming above the pre-industrial value, maximum daytime temperatures in the Mediterranean will likely increase by 3.3°C. With 4°C global warming, nearly all nights will be tropical (nighttime temperature for at least five days above a location-depending threshold) and there will be almost no cold days¹⁵.

23.25. Mean surface air temperature relative to pre-industrial, is projected to increase by 2.1°C [1.6 to 2.7°C] for the 2041-2060 period under the low (GHG) emissions scenario, and by 2.2°C [2.3 to 3.6°C] over 2041-2060 under the high emissions scenario. Heat waves will increase both over land and over sea. Mean sea surface temperature is expected to increase by mid-21st century compared to the end of the 20th century, in the range from 0.6°C to 1.3°C

¹⁴ The Summary for Policy Makers of the MedECC Special Report on Climate and Environmental Coastal Risks in the Mediterranean 2023

¹⁵ The Summary for Policy Makers of the MedECC Special Report on Climate and Environmental Coastal Risks in the Mediterranean 2023

under the high GHG emissions scenario. Warming is expected to be stronger in summer than in winter and associated with longer and more intense marine heat waves. The projected increase of dry spell length is larger in the south than in the north Mediterranean. Precipitation will decrease over most of the Mediterranean though heavy rainfalls will increase in some areas of the northern Mediterranean. Global warming will further increase the existing difference in intensity of precipitation and hydrological extremes between the northern and southern Mediterranean areas.

24.26. Sea levels are expected to continue to rise during the coming decades at a rate dependent on the future emissions of GHGs. The increase of relative sea level will cause more frequent coastal floods covering larger coastal areas. Mean sea level is projected to rise during the coming decades reaching 0.15–0.33 m by mid-21st century under the low GHG emissions scenario, and by 0.63–1.01m under the high emissions scenario. The frequency of an extreme sea level event that occurs one in a 100 years is likely to increase by 10-30% by mid-21st century under and intermediate moderate and high emission scenarios.

25.27. Seawater acidification is projected to continue both off-shore and at the coast with pH levels decreasing between –0.25 and –0.46 units in Mediterranean surface waters by the end of the century under the very high emission scenario. The future evolution of sea surface salinity of the Mediterranean Sea remains largely uncertain with low confidence in its sign of change. Any change will likely be spatially and temporally irregular due to the primary role of the river and near-Atlantic freshwater inputs.

26.28. Future reduced precipitation, associated with increased evapotranspiration will lead to droughts, with drier soils and a decline of runoff and of coastal freshwater supply, and will become more severe under moderate and high emission scenarios. and strongly enhanced under severe emission scenarios. ¹⁶

Overview of expected climate change-related impacts and risks

27.29. Climate change ~~will~~ ~~is expected to~~ apply additional stresses on ecosystems and socioeconomic sectors and systems, by ~~adversely modifying~~ ~~increasing~~ land degradation rates, ~~and the frequency and intensity recurrence~~ of droughts, floods and other extreme climate events, as well as through changes in temperatures, in precipitation ~~regime patterns~~ and in the level of sea acidity.

28.30. *Natural and managed resources and systems:* The Mediterranean region is among the richest in biodiversity of global importance. However, many of its ecosystems have already been weakened by pollution, overexploitation, fragmentation of habitats, and biological invasions. Such stresses ~~are expected to~~ ~~are and will be~~ further amplified under climate change. The composition of most of the present marine and coastal ecosystems ~~has~~ ~~changed and~~ will further ~~probably~~ change. There ~~is will be~~ a greater risk of extinction of species, especially those with a restricted climatic distribution, those that need highly specific habitats and/or those small populations which are naturally more vulnerable to modifications in their habitats.

29.31. Climate change is also expected to amplify biological invasions and proliferation of pathogens and diseases fostered by the rise in temperature of the marine waters¹⁷ ~~and alter~~

¹⁶ See the Summary for Policy Makers of the MedECC Special Report on Climate and Environmental Coastal Risks in the Mediterranean 2023.

¹⁷ UNEP/MAP SPA/RAC, 2010. Impact of climate change on marine and coastal biodiversity in the Mediterranean Sea.

the distribution of some species as a response to changes in the availability of their preys¹⁸.

At the same time, sea acidification is currently occurring at an unprecedented rate, subjecting some marine organisms to additional and worsening environmental stress.

~~30.~~³². The region's water resources are ~~already~~ subject to various interacting pressures such as rapid population growth, urbanization, tourism, alongside environmental degradation. These stresses ~~would be~~ **are** multiplied under climate change because of projected declines in precipitation and runoff, and depletion of groundwater resources. Agriculture in the coastal zones will be affected by increased temperatures, land degradation, and reduced water availability, with significant decreases in some crop yields which could reach alarming levels under high emissions scenarios, threatening food security especially for poor communities.

~~31.~~³³. Changes in the geographical distribution of wild fish stocks can lead to ~~possible~~ decreased catch potential for some species. Climate change can also influence where aquaculture is possible, which species are raised, and the efficiency of production. The coastal zones which face high risks due to sea-level rise, host ~~most of~~ one third of the world tourism that visits **the coastal areas** of Mediterranean countries. The region's coastal systems and low-lying areas ~~would be~~ **are** subject to submergence and erosion due to increased sea-level rise and sea flood surges. Coastal aquifers, already overexploited, ~~would~~ become increasingly threatened by salt water intrusion due to rising sea levels and/or over-extraction. Warming and reduced rainfall ~~is expected to~~ leads to a decrease in trees and plant growth while annual burned area due to forest and wild land fires is ~~projected to~~ are significantly increasing in many areas bordering the Mediterranean Sea.

~~32.~~³⁴. *Human Settlements, Industry, and Infrastructure*: As coastal populations and assets in coastal areas continue to grow, exposure to climate change-related hazards, and especially those associated with sea-level rise, is also increasing. The key impacts of climate change in coastal urban areas include inland flooding; coastal flooding and storm surges in low-lying and unprotected coastal zones; heatwaves exacerbated by the urban heat island effect; wind storms; water shortages and drought; ~~enhanced~~ air pollution; and other geo-hydrological hazards such as saltwater intrusion and landslides.

~~33.~~³⁵. The crucial tourism industry ~~could~~ faces negative consequences due to ~~possible~~ loss of beaches, natural attractions, tourism infrastructure **and ambient comfort**, especially during the summer months because of heat waves, drought and the associated risk of fires. Impacts on the sector will not be uniform across the region and occupancy rates may increase during spring and autumn in some areas. Port infrastructure, but also coastal roads, railways, and airports, are ~~expected to be~~ at risk due to temporary and permanent flooding arising from sea-level rise, high winds and storm surges.

~~34.~~³⁶. Energy transmission infrastructure also is at risk. Changes in water availability will affect hydropower generation and may lead to increased deployment of energy-intensive desalination options. Higher temperatures ~~will~~ increase the overall and peak demand for cooling in the summer months but at the same time reduce heating demand during the winter.

~~35.~~³⁷. The energy transition toward renewable energy sources can both mitigate Green House Gas (GHG) emissions **in line with the temperature goal of the Paris Agreement and enhance resilience to climate change impacts, bearing in mind that greater levels of**

¹⁸ Mediterranean Quality Status Report 2023

mitigation can reduce the need for additional adaptation efforts. The scale up of renewable energies can play an important role in climate change adaptation. Examining the intersection of renewable energy and climate adaptation measures presents a critical opportunity for addressing climate impacts and supporting sustainable development. Promoting renewable energy as a strategy for adaptation requires well informed policy-making as well as raising awareness of its benefits.¹⁹ However, further research is needed to establish the risks posed by the implementation of renewable energy projects (wind, solar and wave energies, hybrid systems) to the unique biodiversity of Mediterranean coastal ecosystems.²⁰

36.38. Human Health, Well-Being, and Security: The overall health effects of a changing climate are likely to be negative. Extreme air temperatures contribute directly (through heat stress) and indirectly (through raised levels of ozone and other secondary pollutants) to an increase in the number of heat-related illnesses and deaths. These include cardiovascular and respiratory diseases particularly among the elderly, but also children, people with medical conditions, and the poor. Extreme heat also raises pollen and other aeroallergen levels which trigger asthma.

37.39. Rising sea levels and increasingly extreme weather events may destroy homes, medical facilities and other essential services therefore increasing risks to public health. Lack of safe water can compromise hygiene and increase the risk of diarrheal disease while floods can contaminate freshwater supplies, heighten the risk of water-borne diseases, and create breeding grounds for disease-carrying insects, threatening especially those with already limited access to water and sanitation. Decrease in the production of staple foods will increase the prevalence of malnutrition and undernutrition and food insecurity in general, especially among those on low incomes. Finally, changes in the climate are likely to lengthen the transmission seasons of important vector-borne diseases and to alter their geographic range, while some toxic marine species could expand their distribution range.

38.40. A threat Multiplier: Finally, climate change could act as a threat multiplier in the Mediterranean region, predominantly in countries outside of the EU, by placing additional pressure on already scarce resources (especially water and land), reinforcing preexisting threats as political instability, poverty, migration flows, unemployment, and overstretching societies' adaptive capacities.

Other Relevant Policy and Institutional Frameworks and Initiatives

39.41. Alongside the activities ongoing under the auspices of UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention in relation to climate change adaptation, there exist various other regional initiatives and frameworks, global and regional, with which cooperation will be is a necessity, noting that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) during the 20th and 25th Meetings of the UNFCCC Contracting Parties (COP 20 and COP 25) expressing the intentions of Parties to cooperate and engage through multilateral, bilateral and regional complementary initiatives that aim to raise awareness and enhance education on climate change and its impacts, opportunities, and co-benefits.

~~40. For the purpose of this document, we mention the following ones global and regional initiatives and frameworks.~~

¹⁹ IRENA (2025), Renewable energy in climate change adaptation: Metrics and risk assessment framework, International Renewable Energy Agency, Abu Dhabi.

²⁰ MedEcc, 2024 Climate and environmental coastal risks in the Mediterranean Summary for Policymakers

41.42. Since entering into force in 1994, the UNFCCC has provided the basis for international climate negotiations, including the landmark Paris Agreement of 2015 that provides the overarching framework for the countries who have joined the UNFCCC. Its Article 7 provides the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) for enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate change, with a view to ensuring an adequate adaptation response.

42.43. In 2023 the UNFCCC COP 28 adopted the Framework for Global Climate Resilience which positions adaptation as a top priority for all nations. It includes a range of thematic and dimensional targets for climate adaptation and resilience (inter alia water scarcity, food systems, biodiversity and ecosystems) and UAE Belem Worka Programme for the development of indicators for measuring progress towards the Framework targets. Signatories-Parties also committed to enhance cooperation with subnational governments in the planning, financing, implementation, and monitoring of climate strategies.

43.44. In November 2024 COP 29 reached an agreement on a new climate finance goal calling on all actors to scale up financing to developing countries for climate action from all public and private sources to reach at least \$ 1.3 trillion per year by 2035 for climate actions in developing countries and the goal to mobilize of at least \$300 billion per year by 2035 (for mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage) to be provided from the developed with the developed countries taking the lead. world by 2035.

44.45. The European Commission adopted in February 2021 ~~April 2013~~ the ~~new~~ EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change. The new strategy sets out how the European Union can adapt to the unavoidable impacts of climate change and become climate resilient by 2050. It identifies ~~three priority areas~~ four principle: to make adaptation smarter, swifter and more systemic, and to step up international action on adaptation to climate change. The new Strategy will support the further development and implementation of adaptation strategies and plans at all levels of governance with three cross-cutting priorities: 1. integrate adaptation into macro-fiscal policy; 2. nature-based solutions for adaptation; 3. local adaptation action. In order to support the development and implementation of climate change adaptation strategies and actions in Europe, the European Climate Adaptation Knowledge Platform Climate-ADAPT²¹ ~~has been launched since 2013 is operational.~~ ~~Promoting action by Member States, through encouraging the adoption of comprehensive adaptation strategies and providing funding to help them build up their adaptation capacities. 2. 'Climate proofing' action by further promoting adaptation in key vulnerable sectors and ensuring that Europe's infrastructure is made more resilient, and 3. Better informed decision making by addressing gaps in knowledge about adaptation. The Commission states that priority will be given to adaptation flagship projects that address key cross-sectoral, trans-regional and/or cross-border issues.~~

45.46. “Towards 2030: Agenda for a Greener Med – Contributing to Achieving the Environmental SDGs in the Mediterranean” (2030GreenerMed) of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) addresses key environmental issues in the Mediterranean that require cooperation across borders and sectors in order to accelerate the transition of the Mediterranean region towards a green, circular and inclusive economy.

46.47. ~~is a multilateral partnership created in July 2008, consisting of the 28 member states of the EU and 15 other Mediterranean partner countries. Its climate-related policy framework provides for the development of regional policy and action frameworks and~~

²¹ <https://climate-adapt.eea.europa.eu/en>

projects in response to climate change challenges. The 2021 UfM Ministerial Declaration on Environment and Climate Action intend to join efforts and step up the implementation of relevant global and regional commitments to achieve a balance between anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and removal as soon as possible during the 2nd half of the century, while promoting fair, resilient and resource-efficient economies, reducing pollution and protecting biodiversity and ecosystems in the Mediterranean region. In this context, the UfM Climate Change Expert Group and the UfM Working Group for Environment and Climate Change regularly take place, were established. UfM Conference on Environment and Climate Change (13 May 2014, Athens, Greece) aim at enhancing coherence of and promoting joint action within a Mediterranean climate change agenda.

47-48. The 2022-2025 Climate Change Strategy for the Arab Region elaborated by UN-Habitat Arab Framework Action Plan on Climate Change, 2010-2020 which was elaborated in the League of Arab States (LAS) framework, aims at curbing the impact of climate change on Arab cities and communities through resilience building, reduction of urban vulnerabilities, advancing adaptation and mitigation actions for the development of sustainable cities and mainstreaming climate considerations in urban policies and plans. Linkages have been secured with other relevant LAS strategies such as the Pan Arab Renewable Energy Strategy 2030, the Arab Strategy for housing and sustainable development 2030, Arab Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction 2020 and the Arab Water Security Strategy 2010-2030, in order to enhance the Arab-respective countries' capacity to take appropriate measures for addressing climate change issues while achieving sustainable development targets and SDGs, in the Arab Region. Its adaptation focus is on:

- Vulnerability assessments of climate change impacts on economic and social development;
- Adaptation strategies in a range of sectors;
- Preparation and implementation of strategies for disaster risk reduction.

Key elements for the update of the 2016 RCCAF

1. Information on 2016 RCCAF implementation is not streamlined since monitoring and reporting of RCCAF progress, at regional and national level, was fragmented. Notwithstanding, there are numerous studies which have demonstrated considerable activity around the topic of climate change adaptation in the Mediterranean region, while it has to be noted that the involvement of national authorities and stakeholders has progressed at a different pace.
2. The MAP Components have progressively built climate change related knowledge, experience and guidance on adaptation to climate change in the region. This includes work on legal frameworks alignment, concrete projects and pilots on tackling climate change, local level adaptation planning and measures, accessing adaptation finance, Nature-based Solutions (NbS) and resilient city development. Despite progress, significant challenges remain as climate hazards and risks intensify.
3. The 2020 IPCC Paper on the Mediterranean Region found that “currently incomplete knowledge of climate impacts and risks in the southern and eastern part of the basin hinders the implementation of adaptation measures, creating a need for ... enhanced

and cooperative research and monitoring capacities between the north, south and southeast countries”.²²

4. Gap analysis from key documents prepared during the RCCAF 2016-2025 time frame and consultations with MAP Components, MAP Partners and Members of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSO), finds that the most frequently referenced key elements for the update of the 2016 RCCAF are the identification of practical climate change adaptation solutions, the need to develop policy and institutional frameworks and to integrate Nature-based Solutions (NbS), strengthen climate adaptation awareness and engagement, integrate climate adaptation into local planning processes, access domestic and international climate finance.
5. Therefore the 2016 RCCAF confirms being a relevant framework of Objectives, Strategic Directions and Priorities whose vision and architecture provides a solid set of climate change aspiration and guidance for the Mediterranean and its multilevel stakeholders, together with a planned framework for monitoring its implementation that will allow a reinforced assessment of the RCCAF progress and revision needs in the future.
6. The updated RCCAF 2026-2035 provides the directions and the priorities to effectively act on climate change adaptation and accelerate implementation, while in parallel the role of national, local and subnational levels through the National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and National Determined Contributions (NDC) is crucial to operationalize the Framework's implementation.

THE FRAMEWORK'S OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND PRIORITIES

48.49. The Framework is structured around four Strategic Objectives, each of them identifying several Strategic Directions with Priorities for Consideration. The Strategic Objectives and Strategic Directions are presented below and are elaborated in the following section:

7.1. *Appropriate institutional and policy frameworks, increased awareness and stakeholder engagement, and enhanced capacity building and cooperation:*

- 7.1.1.1. *Enhancing awareness and engagement of key stakeholders on climate adaptation*
- 7.2.1.2. *Promoting adequate institutional and policy frameworks*
- 7.3.1.3. *Promoting a regional approach on Disaster Risk Management*
- 7.4.1.4. *Improving implementation and effectiveness of adaptation policies through monitoring and reviewing progress*
- 7.5.1.5. *Integrating climate adaptation into local plans for the protection and management of areas of special interest*

8.2. *Development of best practices (including low regret measures) for effective and sustainable adaptation to climate change impacts:*

- 8.1.2.1. *Identifying adaptation needs and best practices*
- 8.2.2.2. *Mainstreaming, exchanging and adopting best practices*

9.3. *Access to existing and emerging finance mechanisms relevant to climate change*

²² IPCC 2020 AR6 Cross Chapter Paper 4 on the Mediterranean Region.

adaptation, including international and domestic instruments:

9.1.3.1. Prioritizing public spending relative to climate adaptation and mobilizing national sources of climate finance

9.2.3.2. Accessing international financing

9.3.3.3. Building alliances with the banking and insurance sectors

10.4. Better informed decision-making through research and scientific cooperation and availability and use of reliable data, information and tools:

10.1.4.1. Understanding of the vulnerability of natural and socioeconomic systems and sectors and of possible impacts

10.2.4.2. Building capacities for and promoting the use of vulnerability and risk assessment at regional to local levels

10.3.4.3. Strengthening Science-policy interface and accessibility of related knowledge

10.4.4.4. Developing Regional climate information at a resolution suitable for adaptation planning

Strategic Objective 1: Appropriate institutional and policy frameworks, increased awareness and stakeholder engagement, and enhanced capacity building and cooperation

49.50. Climate change and its impacts are placing Mediterranean stakeholders in a position that requires maximum coordination, harmonization and integration of different national and regional sectoral policies. The water-poor scarce Countries in the South and East countries will have to cope face the challenge of managing with sharp population increases/rises, with the number of inhabitants in the South rising from 200 million to almost 300 million, and in the East from 122 million to 160 million. By 2050, these two regions could account for almost 70% of the Mediterranean population, compared with just over 60% today.²³

50.51. In order to reach results, institutional capacities, relationships, policies and practices to assess and manage climate change risks and opportunities and national development goals must be strengthened.

51.52. Coordination within and between national institutions on climate change adaptation in the coastal and marine areas with Nature-based Solutions at the forefront, is a vital necessary prerequisite to create an enabling environment for the formulation and implementation of efficient solutions for the complex and cross-cutting problems created by climate change.

52.53. Alongside the coordinated and aligned preparation of national planning dedicated to climate change, e.g. via NAPs and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), it is equally important to embed climate change adaptation into national, subnational and sectoral development planning and budgeting processes. This will help sensitize and raise awareness and engagement of all stakeholders including the general public.

Strategic Direction 1.1: Enhancing awareness and engagement of key stakeholders on climate adaptation

53.54. Public support and engagement are essential for the acceptance and implementation of adaptation activities. This will requires an appreciation of the importance of the issues involved and the potential actual costs of inaction as well as the environmental socio-economic benefits of adaptation. Improving awareness of climate change, its impacts,

²³ MED 2050, Plan Bleu

adaptation options and engagement in RCCAF activities is something that must also permeate at the heart of the education, the business sector, local authorities and civil society including women, and youth, people with disabilities and migrants all of whom are valuable partners. Building awareness on the adaptation needs is a slow and complex process which requires immediate, sustained and well-resourced action. Competent civil society actors are valuable partners in this effort.

54.55. In this context priorities for consideration include:

- i. ~~Cross-party~~ Enhance High-level national political interest, support and commitment including awareness and capacity building to country negotiators on climate change matters.
- ii. Integrated awareness-raising campaigns addressing the general public, public bodies and the private sector, communicating a consistent and effective messages about climate change risks, vulnerabilities and adaptation measures, including financial technical support to countries, and options.
- iii. Targeted awareness campaigns tailored for specific audiences, sectors or circumstances aiming to integrate adaptation measures in a most efficient way.
- iv. E-learning and massive open online course (MOOC) programmes on climate change impacts in the Mediterranean.
- v. Deepening engagement and Involvement of networks and stakeholder organizations (including local authorities, civil society institutions, farmers, fishermen, tourism managers and coastal and marine protected areas managers, private sector) in order to promote awareness raising, provide salient information and enhance their ability to respond to hazard events and take advantage of potential opportunities created by climate change.-
- vi. Involvement of journalists including through the establishment of a central information e-desk for the provision and communication of relevant information.
- vii. Assessing Use effectively, as appropriate, the role of the UNEP-MAP IMAP Info System and the its interoperability of different public country information systems in developing evidence based information and communication contents.

Strategic Direction 1.2: Promoting adequate institutional and policy frameworks

55.56. Planning for adaptation to climate change and increased resilience to its impacts should not be considered as a separate policy field, disconnected from other aspects of sustainable development, but should rather be integrated across strategies and plans, including those related to development and economic strategies and plans. Accordingly, the COP23 Decision IG.26/10 on the Conceptual Framework for Implementing Marine Spatial Planning in the Mediterranean, renews the central role of Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) as the main tool/process for the implementation of ICZM in the marine part of the coastal zone, and by integrating climate action into MSP as a novel approach. In fact, when integrated approaches to adaptation are used, this not only prevents maladaptation, but also contributes to mitigation. UNEP/MAP ICZM Plans routinely mainstream climate change into their design.

56.57. Adaptation planning via the NAPs and NDCs should be further embedded across national, sectoral and subnational development strategies and plans. Accordingly, this Direction is closely related to the Strategic Direction 1.4 of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) to “encourage institutional, policy legal and legislative reforms and initiatives for the effective mainstreaming of climate change responses into national and local development frameworks in all sectors”.

57.58. Vital support is required needed to develop countries’ capacities to use the available

knowledge base in the decision-making processes and access the right tools, also considering that practical adaptations especially for livelihoods take place at the community and household levels therefore decentralised processes are particularly important.

~~58.59.~~ In this context priorities for consideration include:

- i. ~~Promote~~ Regional policy instruments ~~to promote adopted under MAP Barcelona Convention related adaptation~~ to the ~~adaptation to the~~ impacts of climate change. ~~Assessment on how the Barcelona Convention can be a tool~~ to assist countries build coastal resilience, and on the future implementation of its protocols and action plans in the light of climate change.
- ii. Take into account marine spatial planning, ICZM and related land-sea interactions by prioritizing interaction between ~~regional~~, national, ~~regional~~ and ~~local subnational~~ institutions for promoting climate change adaptation across development planning and policy processes. These processes should take account the benefit of designing of coastal and marine adaptation measures ~~to~~ against impacts of climate change.²⁴
- iii. Identification and addressing of relevant institutional, legal and cultural barriers to adaptation policies, beginning with the transposition of the concepts of “adaptation”, “resilience”, “vulnerability” and “risk” into legislative procedures.
- iv. Support to countries to develop and adopt comprehensive ~~coastal national climate~~ adaptation plans and strategies which integrate socioeconomic considerations into climate analytics, also by utilizing the ICZM adaptation piloting work carried out in some Mediterranean Countries by the UNEP/MAP System with the support of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), ~~by the MAP RACs~~, as a tool to assist countries to build coastal resilience into both ~~national~~ climate and development planning. ~~and share them with neighboring countries.~~
- v. Support and guidance on best practices and fully integrated approaches to mainstream ~~and embed~~ climate change considerations into national and sectoral developmental and environmental plans and strategies.
- vi. Coordination between sectoral plans in order to derive synergies and co-benefits and avoid maladaptation.
- vii. Integrated approaches for the reduction of non-climate related threats that have a strong influence on risk and undermine the capacities of communities and ecosystems to adapt to climate change (land and water pollution, water extraction, overfishing, sand mining, damming, distortionary subsidies/taxes/incentives).
- viii. Strategic Environmental Assessments carried out by national competent authorities, ~~environment agencies~~, including the assessment of climatic factors and adaptation implications for all major national development and climate plans and strategies.
- ix. ~~Environment Risk and Impact Assessments~~ which include in relation to climate change, carried out prior to major infrastructure and commercial investments in coastal and marine areas.
- x. ~~Maritime planning process, taking into account land-sea interactions including climate change effects.~~

²⁴ UNFCCC’s Article 4, paragraph 1 (e) invites countries to prepare ICZM Plans. And 2023 United Nations General Assembly Resolution calls for strengthening cooperation for ICZM.

Strategic Direction 1.3: Promoting a regional approach on Disaster Risk Management

59.60. Despite many overlaps, Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and climate change adaptation have traditionally evolved separately, but recently, the two approaches need to be closely are increasingly being linked. As climate change and socioeconomic trends boost the number of people exposed to extreme events, hazards—such as floods and heatwaves, improved early warning systems, anticipatory actions—and greater coordination of disaster management activities will be needed to manage risks and protect lives and property. In this context priorities for consideration include:

- i. Promoting integration of regional climate related data into national and subnational disaster risk assessments and management, incorporating gender and vulnerable group aspects in order to advance a more fair and just society.
- ii. Regional and transboundary cooperation and assistance to cope with climate-related extreme events and emergency situations.
- iii. Exchange of best practices on disaster risk management in the region, including disaster risk assessments at regional and national levels, and for disaster risk management financing.
- iv. Innovative climate services and products to inform Risk Management, tailored to the needs of key public and private stakeholders.
- v. National and regional contingency plans to handle crisis situations, incorporating environmental, social and economic aspects.

Strategic Direction 1.4: Improving implementation and effectiveness of adaptation policies through monitoring and reviewing progress

- i. Appropriate measurement and reporting of the progress towards achieving the objectives of adaptation policies and plans, at both the national and regional level, is essential for transparency, effectiveness transparency and accountability. It is therefore necessary that adaptation policies are designed through a continuous and flexible process of learning including feedback through monitoring, reviews and evaluation, both in terms of the validity of the underlying scientific assumptions and of the appropriateness and effectiveness of projects and policies. In this context priorities for consideration include: Reporting on the implementation of national climate adaptation policies related to the coastal and the marine environment with results aligned with the relevant Protocols, MSSD and RCCAF processes and linking with IMAP and its knowledge management platform.
- ii. Development of a RCCAF monitoring, evaluation and learning framework taking into account of existing national and international environment monitoring systems and the efforts under UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, and which includes objectives, benchmarks, indicators²⁵ and timescales for reviews and reporting to take place.
- iii. Identification of institutions responsible for monitoring and review and evaluation with mechanisms in place at national, sectoral and local levels ensuring the availability of good quality data.
- iv. Dynamic updating and refining of adaptation plans as more data on impacts becomes available and lessons are learned.

²⁵ Incusing the Climate Change indicators developed in the framework of the updated EcAp RoadMap and Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme

Strategic Direction 1.5: Integrating climate adaptation into local plans for the protection and management of areas of special interest

60-61. Not all marine and coastal areas of the Mediterranean face the same climate-related risks. Some areas may exhibit specific characteristics that render them particularly vulnerable to climate hazards; others may host very significant historical, cultural or socioeconomic assets exposed to climate change impacts; while others have an iconic or special interest status. Early planning and implementation of adaptation measures in such areas should be a regional priority and take into account that adaptation activity is being activated at local levels.

61-62. In this context, the Land-Based Sources Protocol, Article 5, is being supportive of local planning where Contracting Parties shall elaborate and implement national and regional action plans and programmes containing measures and timetables for their implementation.

62-63. In this context priorities for consideration include:

- i. Work with local governments to ensure the integration of urgent adaptation action for:
 - a. coastal zones especially urbanised low-elevation coastal zones²⁶
 - b. coastal infrastructure, settlements and assets
 - c. safety for human lives
- ii. Identification and preservation of areas of special interest (such as heritage sites, nature reserves, biodiversity and ecosystems, coastal mega-cities, river deltas etc.) as well as Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and undertaking their risk assessments against various climate change scenarios.

Development of methodologies and guidelines for subnational levels for the integration of climate adaptation dimensions into their development and management plans, using Nature-based Solutions and ICZM as priority tools.

Strategic Objective 2: Development of best practices (including low regret measures) for effective and sustainable adaptation to climate change impacts

63-64. Improved knowledge and understanding are essential for more reliable forecasts of future conditions that would will guide policy makers and implementers of adaptation solutions. While, However, global climate uncertainty will remain inherent to adaptation decision making processes and the need for providing further guidance to decision makers will increase, adopting a forward-looking vision over the medium and long term, both assessing risks and vulnerabilities and planning adaptation measures, taking into account various climate scenario is essential.

64-65. Adaptation solutions can be location, time and sector specific. Grey adaptation, as engineering solutions for sea defenses, may be applied across different geo-climatic zones, but livelihood sectors, agriculture, forestry, water management, fisheries, nature conservation, tourism, are dependent on locality-specific conditions.

65-66. There exist low-regret measures, such as rainwater harvesting, water efficiency and reuse, sealing back ground water use for irrigation, drought resistant crops etc., with proven developmental benefits and effectiveness and practically no negative side effects the implementation of which should not be delayed while waiting for more certain information climate change related. and knowledge to be available.

²⁶ The 2023 UNEP/MAP Mediterranean Quality Status Report (QSR) mentions giving priority to low-lying zones in adaptation planning.

66-67. Progress is being made with many of these low-regret measures which produce co-benefits, help address other development goals, and help minimize the scope for maladaptation. This includes elevating the emerging Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems (WEFE) Nexus in the design and implementation of adaptation policies ²⁷

67-68. Livelihoods adaptation take place at the community and household levels and are frequently time and space specific. These processes need guidelines which provide good practice for identification, testing and piloting which should be as decentralized as possible. This is closely aligned with MSSD Strategic Direction 1.2 to “accelerate the uptake of climate smart and climate resilient responses”, while scaling of adaptation solution can build on pilot adaptation and resilience work from the GEF supported MedProgramme in Montenegro and Morocco.

~~11. Local adaptation demonstration/pilot projects are planned for the RCCAF 2026-35, in the Southern Mediterranean, in the North and in the Ionian/Adriatic sub regions. These will address a range of Protocol related climate change issues with a coastal focus such as urban development, natural resources management, sustainable tourism, landscape and heritage protection, coastal and soil erosion, transport and infrastructure, pollution and waste, specific coastal ecosystems and climate change.~~

Strategic Direction 2.1: Identifying adaptation needs and best practices

68-69. In the face of identified key climate risks (and opportunities) for a country or a region, decision makers need to focus on the most pressing needs and the best available and most efficient options to manage these risks. These latter include the planned MSSD Strategic Direction 1.6 on “strengthen national and local capacities on the application of Nature-based solutions”.

69-70. In this context priorities for consideration include:

- i. Identification by countries of their adaptation needs for the coastal and marine environment, and of relevant technology needs and inclusion in their National Adaptation Plans
- ii. Identification of criteria and processes to select and prioritize the most effective best and adaptation options practices for the coastal and marine environment²⁸.
- iii. Identification and addressing challenges and constraints for the transfer and adoption of best practices (including low-regret measures) and technologies across the Mediterranean basin.
- iv. Testing and piloting adaptation actions including Nature-based Solutions at national and sub-national levels as key enablers for scaling up especially for livelihoods adaptations, and by taking account of the experience of the ICZM adaptation piloting work carried out by the UNEP-MAP System with the support of Global Environment Facility (GEF)RACs, including engagement, capacity-building, cooperation and gender-sensitive risk and vulnerability assessments which are especially important for livelihoods.
- v. Strengthening national and local capacities on the application of Nature-based Solutions for climate change adaptation, including via pilots in the Southern

²⁷ Medecc report

²⁸ Building on the 2020 MedECC First Mediterranean Assessment Report which presents climate adaptation assessments, scenarios, solutions and best practices across a range climate-sensitive sectors.

Mediterranean, North and Ionian/Adriatic sub-regions, and based on the best practices developed in the framework of the 2020-2024 Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF) established the Project for “Enhancing regional climate change adaptation in the Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Areas”.

- v. Taking advance of existing traditional techniques that could provide effective adaptive solutions, forming an integral part of the Mediterranean tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

Strategic Direction 2.2: Mainstreaming, exchanging and adopting best practices

~~70.~~71. In this context priorities for consideration include:

- i. Mainstreaming and implementation of best practices into national adaptation planning processes.
- ii. Maximization of synergies with relevant mitigation efforts (e.g. climate smart agriculture and forestry, energy efficiency in buildings, “blue carbon” policies etc.) and minimization of possible conflicts.
- iii. Local authorities and communities implement adaptation actions tailored effectively to localized impacts of climate change including **application of** innovative, grass root responses and applying participatory science to monitor progress.
- iv. ~~Ecosystem~~ **Nature-based Adaptation Solutions** approaches the ICZM Protocol and **Post 2020 SAP/BIO adaptation practices** as priority policy **and actions** tools for encouraging adaptation efforts.
- ~~iv-v.~~ Opportunities for integrating climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience measures into maritime policies compatible with a 1.5 C trajectory, in line with 2023 IMO Strategy for the reduction of GHG from ships (and in line with IMO Net Zero Framework²⁹)
- ~~v-vi.~~ **Strengthen North-South-East regional exchanges of adaptation knowledge and expertise across the Mediterranean Region to draw on adaptation experience from differing geographical climatic and socioeconomic, human and financial resource conditions.**
- ~~vi-vii.~~ Innovative information sharing tools for the exchange of best practices and stakeholders' engagement at all levels.

Strategic Objective 3: Access to existing and emerging finance mechanisms relevant to climate change adaptation, including international and domestic instruments

~~71.~~72. In the face of a ~~changing~~ climate **change** and related risks, the cost of inaction can be **considerable** ~~huge~~. The measures to increase the resilience of our natural and socioeconomic systems should therefore not be considered as economic costs but rather as investments that are even economically profitable as they reduce risks and expected damages and losses, while at the same time exploiting opportunities towards sustainable development.

~~72.~~73. Even if global GHG emissions are deeply reduced to the level required to meet the goal of the Paris Agreement of limiting the increase in global average temperature to well **Even if the optimistic scenario is that global emissions are cut reduced to the level required to keep global warming below 2°C, and pursuing efforts to limit the increase to 1.5 degrees, thus avoiding the most catastrophic consequences of climate change, the total costs according to**

²⁹ Formal adoption expected in October 2025

UNEP the global investment of adaptation according to UNEP could exceed for developing countries \$387 billion per year up to 2030, excluding domestic and private sector flows³⁰. In contrast, international public finance flows to developing countries were just US\$27.5 billion/year in 2022 for adaptation, and compared with US\$46 billion for mitigation. While international public finance flows for adaptation have increased, a still dramatically large adaptation finance gap exists. Such a finance gap will mean higher losses and damages for developing countries, but will also impact adversely on developed countries through international and transboundary spill-overs such as population displacement.³¹ Such financial resources should not be expected to come from only one or a few sources. For developing countries, international assistance ~~is~~ could be the primary source of adaptation finance but mobilizing public and private funds domestically is also essential.

73.74. Historically, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) has been a major source of environment and climate finance. More recently, the Green Climate Fund (GCF), established under the Cancun Agreement in 2010 and headquartered in the Republic of Korea, is now the main dedicated climate financing vehicle for developing countries, serving as the financial mechanism of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement. The UNFCCC Adaptation Fund, managed by the World Bank, is another dedicated source of climate finance dealing with smaller scale projects. Both the IMF and the World Bank have their own climate-related funds. And EU provides climate financing which has been used by the region's countries while bilateral donor sources continue to be important depending on their developmental interests.

74.75. Most adaptation actions especially those for livelihood areas will be implemented by the private sector. The private sector needs to be drawn into financing its own adaptation through a combination of regulation and/or financial incentives and regulation. When sensitized to risks and the potential benefits of climate change adaptation, the private sector will mobilize resources to integrate technologies into its production and service functions. The MAP system and its Contracting Parties should develop inter-stakeholder cooperation for close working relations between the public and private sectors and civil societies to construct a platform of trust and synergy through which 'win-win' collaborations can be established.

Strategic Direction 3.1: Prioritizing public spending relative to climate adaptation and mobilizing national sources of climate finance

75.76. Country-led approaches are essential for a strategic allocation of funds to key areas, especially taking into account that national sources are expected to cover most of the costs of adaptation measures. Beyond public resources, the involvement of the private sector which ~~could be~~ is essential for the sharing of investments costs, risks, rewards and responsibilities, needs to be fully tapped and engagement strategies developed. Fiscal and other existing and emerging economic instruments can foster adaptation by providing funds as well as incentives for anticipating and reducing impacts. It should be noted that mainstreaming climate-related considerations into sectoral policies would also allow to pursue adaptation objectives to take advantage partially relying on already available financial resources.

76.77. At the country level, NDCs and NAPs together with annual planning and budgeting are the main instruments for mobilizing public finance. In this context priorities for consideration include:

³⁰ UNEP, Come hell and high water, 2024 Adaptation Gap Report.

³¹ UNEP, Come hell and high water, 2024 Adaptation Gap Report.

- i. Discussions with financial authorities and review of the national portfolio of climate response options to facilitate more effective and efficient climate-resilient and disaster-responsive funding allocation and decisions, e.g. through a Climate Public Expenditure and Institutional Reviews.
- ii. Discussing with financial authorities the government subsidies adversely affecting adaptation, and fiscal incentives which could promote adaptation, linked to the MSSD Strategic Direction 5.5 on Mediterranean sustainable Guidelines/Taxonomy of public and private finances
- iii. Economic valuations of the costs of climate change as a foundation for governments to allocate national funding on adaptation.
- iv. Avoidance of maladaptive actions and non-efficient “hard” infrastructures and seek for low-regret measures that improve climate resilience.
- v. Appropriate share of public spending to climate adaptation as part of an integrated sustainable development agenda, and coordinated with the actions foreseen under the 2026- 2035 MSSD Strategic Direction 1.3 “Leveraging existing and emerging climate finance mechanisms, including international and domestic instruments, and enhancing the engagement of the private and finance sectors”.
- vi. Socially sensitive and transparent public-private partnerships for adaptation action encouraging the involvement of the private sector in related schemes.
- ~~vi-vii.~~ Mainstreaming adaptation considerations into the existing financial frameworks and programmes

Strategic Direction 3.2: Accessing international financing

~~77.78.~~ The Contracting Parties to the UNFCCC have set up a number of dedicated funding mechanisms for channeling international assistance envisaged in the Convention such as the Adaptation Fund and the Green Climate Fund as prominent ones. On July 2015, UNEP was accredited as a partner institution to the Green Climate Fund, thus opening new opportunities and enhancing capacities for adaptation-related activities.

~~78.79.~~ Other global funds have also been set up through multilateral agencies such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. In the Mediterranean context, dedicated international financing for adaptation measures can be available through international banking institutions such as the European Investment Bank (EIB)³², its Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP) which addresses funding gaps in the EU’s Southern Neighbourhood, the European Bank for Regional Development (EBRD), the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the African Development Bank and the Islamic Development Bank, as well as the Blue Mediterranean Partnership to support transition to blue economy in the Southern Mediterranean Region. Bilateral donor sources continue to be important depending on their portfolio interests.

~~79.80.~~ However, Some many countries in the region have been unable are not yet fully prepared to take advantage of opportunities offered by existing and emerging financing instruments related to adaptation, mainly due to demanding compliance and review requirements. The GCF is reforming its *modus operandi* to be more supportive, t-he massive scale up of global climate finance mobilization needed to meet the targets adopted at COP29, –combined with working with UNEP’s Climate Change Division, should make international adaptation finance more accessible. Efforts should be made to accommodate countries with political and

³² With its seven key adaptation investment areas.

economic instabilities, in order ~~not~~ to leave no ~~onebody~~ behind.

for climate action from all public and private sources to reach at least \$ 1.3 trillion per year by

80.81. In this context priorities for consideration include:

- i. Developing guidelines to support countries' capacities to prepare bankable adaptation schemes and projects proposals in order to effectively access and manage international and regional funding for climate change adaptation.
- ii. Maximization of multilateral and bilateral funding for areas of common interest and concern related to adaptation
- iii. Coordination mechanisms between donors and key actors in the Region and beyond in order to agree on an integrated funding strategy and priorities, for avoiding overlapping or duplication of efforts and activities.
- iv. Feasibility and potential of a regional approach to adaptation finance and risk transfer mechanisms.
- v. Innovative financing mechanisms such as the issuance of Green Bonds, carbon markets, biodiversity offsets, etc.

Strategic Direction 3.3: Building alliances with the banking and insurance sectors

81.82. Integrating banking and insurance risk management into businesses practices could be best achieved through pricing them into commercial processes. Communicating risks associated with climate change through pricing may raise ~~impact on~~ awareness better than any other communication tool. Therefore, alliances between government, banks and the insurance sector could result with smarter risk management and reduced future climate related costs for the society.

82.83. In this context priorities for consideration include:

- i. Study of climate risk banking, reinsurance and insurance practices with a focus on the Mediterranean countries.
- ii. Development of a Climate Risk Banking and Insurance Strategy for the Mediterranean.
- iii. Integration of climate risk management into business and management practices.
- iv. Cooperation with the insurance (including re-insurance) and banking sectors in the Mediterranean countries.
- v. Standardized international metrics related to climate risk and exposure.

**~~Assessment of reinsurance and insurance practices in the Mediterranean countries,~~
Exchange of best practices and provision of targeted information for different coastal stakeholders.**

Strategic Objective 4: Better informed decision-making through research and scientific cooperation and availability and use of reliable data, information and tools

83.84. Decisions on adaptation policies should be informed by scientific research, results from pilot projects and knowledge of the changes in the region's climate system, the impacts of climate change, the vulnerabilities of natural and socio-economic systems to those impacts and the effectiveness of adaptation options.

84.85. This Strategic Objective is closely related with the 2026-2035 MSSD Strategic Direction 1.1: "Increase scientific knowledge, education, raise awareness, and develop technical capacities to deal with climate change and ensure informed decision-making at

all levels, recognising and protecting the climate adaptation and mitigation services of natural ecosystems”.

Strategic Direction 4.1: Understanding of the vulnerability of natural and socioeconomic systems and sectors and of possible impacts

~~85.86.~~ In order to formulate informed, effective and sustainable adaptation strategies and plans, it is vital that knowledge is developed and uncertainties are reduced, especially regarding the understanding of ecosystem-scale interactions and of socioeconomic consequences, including the socio-cultural specificities of the Mediterranean communities. ~~Thematic and sectorial assessments have been carried out in the past years by various institutions. Despite the production of a number of landmark scientific reports in the recent years, the 2023 MedECC Special Report acknowledges that "the available knowledge concerning the risks (and vulnerabilities) studied by MedECC has significant gaps". and a significant body of knowledge exists that can be built upon. However, more coordination is needed, knowledge.~~ Knowledge gaps still need to be addressed and socioeconomic trends and scenarios need to be assessed. ~~Better~~ Approaches and methods to assess/identify key vulnerabilities and ~~major~~ climate risks need to be constantly updated and upskilled ~~are required~~ in order to prioritize solutions and actions.

~~86.87.~~ In this context priorities for consideration include:

- ~~iii.i.~~ Strengthening climate scientific knowledge, data and information sharing from research and monitoring.
- ~~iv.ii.~~ Assess climate change science and knowledge, policy, institutional and capacity gaps across CPs to provide a baseline for the development of guidelines for regional and national strategies to address the requirements of the Updated RCCAF 2026-2035.
- ~~v.iii.~~ Sensitivity and adaptive capacity of marine species and ecosystem responses to changes and cumulative impacts in oceanic conditions, including the introduction of non-indigenous alien species and ocean acidification.
- ~~vi.iv.~~ Mapping of coastal and marine ecosystems and assessment of the role of services they provide to climate resilience.
- ~~vii.v.~~ Assessing the effectiveness of the network of Marine and Coastal Protected Areas (MCPA), including their eEnvironmental and socio-economic vulnerabilities and resilience, as well as their governance y of Marine Protected Areas.
- ~~viii.vi.~~ Sea level rise causing coastal subsidence and salt water intrusion affecting groundwater resources and wetlands; current and wave patterns, and sediment movement affecting shoreline dynamics.
- ~~ix.vii.~~ Water resources and the water cycle
- ~~x.viii.~~ Vulnerability and interactions of socioeconomic systems and sectors such as: agriculture and forestry, water resources management, health, tourism, urbanisationUrbanization, fisheries, energy, transport and trade, and key infrastructure.
- ~~xi.ix.~~ Combined effects and interactions of climate change and socioeconomic dimensions, trends and scenarios, taking account of the socio-cultural specificities of the Mediterranean communities, such as migration, demographics, conflict and social stability, gender, and vulnerable groups (children and youth, older people, ~~and~~, local communities and people with disabilities). ~~indigenous populations~~.
- ~~xii.x.~~ Assessment of potential positive opportunities and consequences for different sectors from a changing climate.

Strategic Direction 4.2: Building capacities for and promoting the use of vulnerability and risk assessment at regional to local levels

~~87.88.~~ In order to support policy makers at the regional, national and local levels, capacities and

tools need to be developed for a better understanding of climate change risks, of options for adaptation, and of how climate change adaptation links to national development goals. The risks, ~~which compose of hazard, vulnerability, exposure and capacity~~, need to be assessed in all dimensions: environmental (biodiversity losses of marine and coastal ecosystems), social (health, mortality) and socioeconomic (potential losses in all sectors). Direct and indirect effects of climate forcing on natural hazards must be explored and disentangled. Special attention should be given to the vulnerabilities and exposure of the Mediterranean y component of risk where the level of uncertainties is much higher, such as water supply, flooding, etc.-

88.89. Despite the fact that the Mediterranean is a global climate hotspot, the region ~~has been~~ rather is still under-investigated in terms of comprehensive analyses and assessments.

89.90. Numerous sub-regional projects and initiatives exist whose results need to be brought together in a consistent way in order to move towards the further development of a complete and integrated Risks and Vulnerability Assessment for the whole Mediterranean, both at national and regional level³³.

90.91. In this context priorities for consideration include:

- i. Understanding of the drivers, interactions, impacts and responses within the socioeconomic and environmental nexus.
- ii. Integrated, multidisciplinary risk and vulnerability models introducing natural and socio-economic systems
- iii. Economic valuations of the costs of climate change impacts on vulnerable sectors and hotspots.
- iv. Development of easy-to-use risk assessment methods such as index-based methods to be applied at regional, national and local levels, , and build capacities to apply those methods.-
- v. Technical assistance and capacity building for ~~activities to~~ competent local and national institutions and civil society organizations for the monitoring of climate change impacts and assessing the cost of adaptation options.
- vi. Georeferencing of the Mediterranean Sea and coasts and their resources and threats.
- vii. Auditing of strategically important coastal assets and assessment of their vulnerability.
- viii. Integrating climate change, adaptation and mitigation considerations into School and University Departments curricula and modules on climate change issues, including exchange programmes for climate change experts, researchers and students adaptation scientists.

Strategic Direction 4.3: Strengthening science-policy interface and accessibility of related knowledge

91.92. The strengthening of adaptive capacities requires an increasing systematization and communication of scientific and traditional adaptation knowledge, as well as their integration into public policies and programs. However, institutional and cultural barriers between researchers, policy-makers and the public that sometimes hinder the transformation of knowledge into plans and actions still remain a challenge in the Mediterranean. There is a need to contribute ~~pay more systematic attention~~ to strengthening the science/policy interface, and to recognize the three-way relationship between scientists, policymakers and

³³ GEF UNEP SCCF Project (2020-2024), advances in building capacities have been made by the RACs through ICZM adaptation planning and piloting district-level gender-sensitive climate risk and vulnerability studies in Morocco and Montenegro.

the public, as well as the leveraging role that civil society plays.

1. In this context priorities for consideration include:

- i. Strategy for communicating scientific and other types of knowledge **for sharing and exchanging** to policy makers at all levels as well as key stakeholders.
- ii. Process for science-policy-business-community-managers dialogues at and between all governance levels, both regionally and nationally.
- iii. Development of a Mediterranean Regional Network **and Platform** under the UNEP-facilitated Global Adaptation Network in order to share lessons, knowledge and information and highlight research and guidance needs and priorities.

Regional Clearinghouse / repository / **knowledge platform of best practices and relevant reports and publications.**

Strategic Direction 4.4: Developing regional climate information at a resolution suitable for adaptation planning

92-93. In order for scientists and stakeholders to be able to assess the impacts of climate change and develop **situation-specific** adaptation plans **at a downscaled level**, it is essential that they **will need to** have access to ~~the best possible~~ **high-resolution** information from observation systems that monitor the climate system and detect and attribute climate change. The countries of the Mediterranean have national observation and monitoring systems of varying data quality and availability, with northern countries enjoying more long-term and high-quality climate data than southern ones. ~~Nevertheless~~ **Generally**, monitoring systems related to marine ecosystems (biotic and abiotic components) in the coastal and open waters are still lacking. Infrastructure, spatial coverage and data issues at the national level are challenges that need to be addressed. Crucial coordination issues, however, are also essential to be addressed at the regional level. In this context priorities for consideration include:

- i. **Enhancing** the availability **and quality** of environmental and socioeconomic data required for adaptation, including **provisions for improving data collection and predictions to increase the knowledge of hot-spots and needs, as well as methodologies to apply this data for designing adaptation policies and measures.**
- ii. **Supporting** the maintenance and modernization **and further development** of monitoring programmes and networks in the region, including the creation/upgrade and complementarity of early warning systems for the Mediterranean sea and coasts, taking into account as appropriate existing systems, acknowledging that establishing and improving national inventories of climate impacts over time and building accessible, user driven climate services systems, including early warning systems, can strengthen~~ing~~ the implementation of adaptation actions³⁴.
- iii. Sharing and standardization of collection, quality and storage, of all data relevant to adaptation planning., following the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) Resolution 40¹⁴.
- iv. **Using efficiently** ~~UNEP/MAP~~ **Assessing the potential role of the INFO/RAC, as the knowledge management platform including the one on best practices on for Regional information platform that will contain information on** climate change monitoring and research, interconnecting or harvesting information from relevant databases and platforms, **and taking account of good practice database examples such as the EU Climate-ADAPT platform.**
- v. Development of regional climate models integrating socioeconomic trends and threats.

³⁴ COP 28, Outcome of the 1st Global stocktake (para 49)

- vi. A strategic approach to climate adaptation research in the region involving academic, industry and government bodies and their partnerships.

Monitoring and Evaluation

~~93.94.~~ A comprehensive monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) system will be introduced with relevant indicators and targets for the action planning and implementation of the RCCAF. the system design will be complex due to the large number of countries, and will need to take account of the experience and challenges of the existing IMAP system and of existing indicators of the MSSD dashboard.

~~94.95.~~ The purpose of the ~~adaptation~~–MEL system will be to manage and adjust the implementation of the RCCAF Strategic Directions. It will do this by:

- monitoring the level of implementation progress of the actions recommended in the Strategy;
- identifying successes and gaps and their causes in the implementation of directions/actions; ~~(for example, in relation to the number of countries adhering with an action direction);~~
- adjusting implementation planning in response to successes, gaps and challenges.

~~95.96.~~ UNFCCC provides outline guidance for structuring and operating an indicator-based, MEL-type system which can track progress towards achieving adaptation goals³⁵. The guidance cites examples of existing tracking adaptation and resilience systems which deliver information on climate, climate risks, impacts and vulnerability, and adaptation response measures. These can be backed up by “dash board” or “traffic light” approaches to assess the progress made towards the desired adaptation outcomes.

~~96.97.~~ ~~Given the Barcelona Convention context involving twenty-two Contracting Parties, The Contracting Parties will need national governments and regional organisations will need to~~ support the process through regular and timely provision of relevant data. The design of the system will need to take account at the regional level of the MAP data-sharing and information systems such as IMAP. Care will need to take cognizance of, and coordinate with, existing national and international climate information systems so as to minimize new reporting obligations. Any reporting obligation created under the MEL system for national, regional and local entities will build on existing tools and data used in each country to avoid duplication or further administrative burden.

~~97.98.~~ A Strategic Direction-based performance monitoring matrix setting out the regular monitoring of RCCAF ~~Processes and Actions~~implementation should be approved by the Contracting Parties–is provided at Appendix A. It ~~should~~ provides for monitoring the implementation of RCCAF Strategic Directions with sets of ~~regional and country level indicators, targets and responsibilities.~~

~~12.~~ Responsibility for decentralised actions at country level will depend heavily on the MAP Nation

³⁵ Approaches to reviewing the overall progress made in achieving the global goal on adaptation technical paper by the Adaptation Committee, 2021. https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/AC_TP_GlobalGoalOnAdaptation.pdf

~~to be deleted:~~

Performance Monitoring Matrix Ensuring the Regular Monitoring of RCCAF Processes and Actions			
Strategic Objectives / Directions	Indicators	Targets	Responsible for Execution
1. Appropriate institutional and policy frameworks, increased awareness and stakeholder engagement, and enhanced capacity building and cooperation			
1.1. Enhancing awareness and engagement of key stakeholders on climate adaptation	<u>Regional level</u> Guidelines issued for country/national climate change and adaptation awareness and engagement campaigns. <u>Country level</u> Number of country/national climate change and adaptation awareness and engagement campaigns.		CC/RAC with INFO/RAC MAP National Focal Points
1.2. Promoting adequate institutional and policy frameworks	<u>Regional level</u> Guidelines issued for country aligning national NAP and NDC processes. Guidelines issued for embedding adaptation in national and sectoral development planning processes. <u>Country level</u> Number of country/national NAP and NDC processes and contents aligned. Number of country policy processes to embed adaptation in national development planning updated/implemented.		CC/RAC liaising with other RACs CC/RAC liaising with other RACs MAP National Focal Points Targeting Ministries of Environment and Planning/Finance
1.3. Promoting a regional approach on Disaster Risk Management	<u>Regional level</u> Regional guidelines issued for country coordination of DRR strategies and adaptation plans. <u>Country level</u>		CC/RAC with National Focal Points

	Number of national climate change adaptation and DRR strategies and policies developed and aligned.		MAP National Focal Points with disaster management agencies
1.4. Integrating climate adaptation into local plans for the protection and management of areas of special interest	<u>Regional level</u> Regional guidelines issued for country level integration of adaptation into local ICZM, MSP and other MAP planning. <u>Country level</u> Number of national and local actions and targeted measures to support climate change mitigation and adaptation, including nature-based solution actions, developed and implemented.		CC/RAC with PB and PAP RACs and National Focal Points MAP National Focal Points targeting Ministries of Local Government and Planning.
1.5. Improving implementation and effectiveness of adaptation policies through monitoring and reviewing progress	<u>Regional level</u> Guidelines issued for establishing regional and country adaptation M&E system. <u>Country level</u> Number of country RCCAF monitoring and evaluation reports measured against the RCCAF indicators and targets: - annual RCCAF country progress reports, - three yearly RCCAF country progress reports, - regional and country RCCAF Mid-term Reviews Full-term RCCAF regional and country evaluations		
2. Development of best practices (including low regret measures) for effective and sustainable adaptation to climate change impacts:			

2.1. Identifying adaptation needs and best practices	<u>Regional level</u> Adaptation search guidelines for identification of adaptation solutions especially nature based, published for countries, building on the pilot ICZM adaptation and resilience work from the MedProgramme in Montenegro and Morocco executed by PAP/RAC and Plan Bleu. <u>Country level</u> Number of countries adopting and implementing coastal plans, streamlining climate change adaptation in line with Art. 18 of the testing and pilot adaptation activities building on the ICZM Protocol model.		CC, PB, PAP RACs in liaison with SPA, SCP, INFO RACs, MedECC Secretariat and UNEP Climate Change Adaptation Unit (CCAUI). MAP National Focal Points liaising with climate sensitive Ministries.
2.2. Mainstreaming, exchanging and adopting best practices	<u>Regional level</u> Mainstreaming, exchanging and adoption of best practices guidelines published for CP countries <u>Country level</u> Number of countries mainstreaming, exchanging and adopting best adaptation solutions and practices.		CC, PB, PAP RACs in liaison with SPA, SCP and INFO RACs, MedECC Secretariat and UNEP CCAUI. MAP Country Focal Points
3. Access to existing and emerging finance mechanisms relevant to climate change adaptation, including international and domestic instruments:			
3.1. Prioritizing public spending relative to climate adaptation and mobilizing national sources of climate finance	<u>Regional level</u> Advocacy document for countries to draw on to help in national budget negotiations with Ministries of Environment and Finance in order to sensitise those Ministries to the cost of climate inaction. <u>Country level</u>		CC RAC in liaison with UNEP Climate Change Division and National Focal Points. National Focal Points

	Numbers of Climate sensitive Ministries utilizing argumentation from the advocacy brief.		
3.2. Accessing international financing	<u>Regional level</u> An advisory brief for international resource mobilization approach including potential sources and financing proposal guidance. <u>Country level</u> Numbers of international financing proposals using MAP advisory brief.		CC/RAC in liaison with UNEP Climate Change Division and National Focal Points. MAP Country Focal Points
3.3. Building alliances with the banking and insurance sectors	<u>Regional level</u> A regional advisory brief taking account of regional experience with the banking and insurance sectors and providing guidance on ways forward. <u>Country level</u> Numbers of advisory, policy and regulatory documents for countries able to interact with the banking and insurance sectors.		CC/RAC to organise. MAP Country Focal Points
4. Better informed decision-making through research and scientific cooperation and availability and use of reliable data, information and tools:			
4.1. Understanding of the vulnerability of natural and socioeconomic systems and sectors and of possible impacts	<u>Regional level</u> Climate Risk and Vulnerability Guidelines on the climate hazard—impact—risk—vulnerability—exposure—capacity—resilience—capacity—resilience nexus in relation to natural and socioeconomic systems prepared and circulated. <u>Country level</u> Numbers of countries mainstreaming substantial risk and vulnerability analyses into their adaptation planning.		PB and PAP RACs to lead in liaison with CC/RAC and MedECC MAP Country Focal Points

4.2. Building capacities for and promoting the use of vulnerability and risk assessment at regional to local levels	<u>Regional level</u> Training modules for carrying out risk and vulnerability assessments prepared. <u>Country level</u> Numbers of countries utilising the training modules.		PB and PAP RACs to lead in liaison with CC/RAC and MedECC MAP Country Focal Points
4.3. Strengthening Science-policy interface and accessibility of related knowledge	<u>Regional Level</u> Science-policy Interface Communication Strategy prepared and circulated. Country Meeting programme for MedECC and RACs to implement the Communication Strategy <u>Country level</u> Numbers of countries benefitting from virtual or F2F interactions with MAP climate scientists		MedECC lead in liaison with CC, PB, PAP and SPA RACs on a climate change adaptation science, policy and capacity gap study for the region MAP Country Focal Points
4.4. Developing Regional climate information at a resolution suitable for adaptation planning	<u>Regional level</u> High resolution climate data systems for MAP CPs assessed, developed and advisory disseminated to CPs. <u>Country level</u> Numbers of countries drawing on the central guidance.		MedECC lead in liaison with CC and PB RACs. MAP Country Focal Points

Annex I

2020-2024 Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF), Project for “Enhancing regional climate change adaptation in the Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Areas”.

13. The 2020-2024 Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF) established the Project for “Enhancing regional climate change adaptation in the Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Areas”. This was to contribute to the overarching goal of Component 2 of the MedProgramme to enhance sustainability and climate resilience in the coastal zone. The Project is a response to the need to build the capacity of people, both women and men, and institutions to adapt to the impacts of climate change in coastal areas which are especially vulnerable to these impacts.

14. The challenge which the SCCF Project has sought to address is the limited capacity and coordination in the Mediterranean to adapt to climate change impacts in coastal areas. This includes: i) limited technical capacity among stakeholders from the public and private sector to develop and implement adaptation solutions for coastal management; ii) a lack of access to financial resources to support climate change-related activities; and iii) a limited coordination and knowledge exchange within the Mediterranean region to foster the implementation of climate change adaptation.

15. Through the identification of climate risks affecting the coast, and the development of strategies to cope with these risks, the Project enhances both sustainability and climate resilience in the region by applying a gender-sensitive approach. Technical assistance in this project focuses on two main actions: mainstreaming climate change adaptation strategies in ICZM Plans and facilitating access to climate financing to scale up adaptation measures in the region.

16. The SCCF project proposed to overcome these barriers by

- creating a participatory, gender-sensitive, and evidence-led process for national and local governments, and non-government stakeholders to identify adaptation solutions based on climate risk, vulnerability assessments (Component 1), and diagnostic analysis; (C.P. 2.1);
- mainstreaming climate change adaptation into local ICZM plans for two priority hotspot areas ;(Component 2);
- developing guidelines and proposals to facilitate access to financing for adaptation in coastal areas ;(Component 3);
- convening regional meetings and conducting awareness-raising campaigns to share information and knowledge on climate change adaptation and on the findings and lessons learned from the project. (Component 4).

17. The SCCF project has helped increase climate resilience in two coastal areas in Morocco and Montenegro by designing and testing an innovative participatory methodology based on scientific analysis of available climate risk data and information for the specific coastal areas, including gender differentiated analysis. This methodology was utilised in both pilot sites and the outcomes were reported, illustrated and discussed with multiple coastal stakeholders together with the preparation of gender and climate sensitive ICZM. Workshops and discussions allowed for the identification and prioritization of relevant coastal adaptation

solutions for each area. For each prioritized coastal adaptation solution, the project is preparing a cost/benefit analysis along with a possible implementation timeline. The results will support the integration of identified coastal adaptation measures in the ICZM Plans.

Annex IV
Welcome Speeches and Opening Remarks/ Statements

**RCCAF Meeting Opening Speech By Opening Remarks by Madam Fatma Varank-Deputy
Minister of Environment Urbanization and Climate Change & Chief Climate Change
Negotiator of the Republic of Türkiye 08.07.2025**

**Esteemed Director,
Distinguished Participants,**

As I begin my remarks, I would like to extend my warmest greetings to you all on behalf of myself and my country.

I am delighted to welcome you to Istanbul, one of the world's oldest cities with a history spanning 8,500 years and having served as the capital of three great empires, and to host this important regional meeting. Today, we are gathered here to jointly shape the strategic framework that will guide the Mediterranean region's adaptation to climate change over the next decade.

As is well known, with the decision we took at COP23 in Slovenia, an important step was taken towards establishing the Climate Change Regional Activity Centre in Istanbul, and this decision once again demonstrated the visionary leadership of the Mediterranean Action Plan.

The drought, extreme temperatures and forest fires that have recently affected our region have once again shown us how accurate this decision was.

On this occasion, I would like to convey my best wishes to all Mediterranean countries, especially our country, which are struggling with disasters, and emphasise once again that the spirit of solidarity is more important than ever.

As the Mediterranean, we must demonstrate effective management by using accurate data and information in the region most affected by climate change, act as a whole without leaving anyone behind, and disseminate the most effective and successful practices in our region.

Dear Participants,

As Türkiye, we are taking decisive steps in the fight against climate change and adaptation.

The Climate Law adopted by the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye last week is a strong reflection of our political will and determination in this area.

We continue to move forward with comprehensive and sustainable steps covering all sectors in line with our 2053 Net Zero Emissions and Green Development targets.

The Strategy Document, we will be discussing today is of great importance in guiding the parties on priority issues such as emissions trading systems, voluntary carbon markets, climate justice and greenhouse gas emission reductions. We attach great importance to this document not only as a strategy text but also as a guide supporting administrative, institutional and financial mechanisms in the implementation processes.

Within the framework of the principle of climate justice, action should be taken on the basis of ‘common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities’; the principles of equality, transparency, participation and just transition should be the cornerstones of the strategy document.

The success of this process is only possible with the active participation of not only public authorities but also the private sector, civil society organisations and the public.

Dear Participants,

The CC/RAC (Climate Change Regional Activity Centre), established and financially supported by our country, will play an important role in the development of adaptation and mitigation policies.

The primary objective of this centre is to promote the dissemination of best practices across our region along the north-south and east-west axes, strengthen nature-based solutions, and enhance the sharing of information and data.

In the context of climate change adaptation, it is of great importance to develop comprehensive plans at the local, national and regional levels, along with the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. This process should be carried out in close cooperation with other regional activity centres.

In addition, the quality and scope of marine and terrestrial protected areas should be increased through the effective management of limited water resources in response to the effects of climate change.

Honorable Guests,

We believe that strategic documents that will secure the future of the Mediterranean must be supported by robust implementation plans and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

In this context, we once again request the support of you, our valued partner countries, for Türkiye's candidacy to host COP31. This hosting will not only benefit Türkiye but also enhance the visibility and influence of the Mediterranean region in the global climate agenda.

We sincerely thank you all for your participation and contributions, and we hope for a productive and results-oriented meeting process.

We also hope you will have time to explore the beauties of Istanbul, and we greet you all with respect.

Speech by Tatjana Hema, UNEP/MAP Coordinator
Regional meeting on Climate Change Adaptation
8-9 July 2025 Istanbul, Türkiye

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, partners, and colleagues,

It is with deep appreciation that I welcome you to this timely and strategic gathering here in Istanbul, a city that now also carries special significance for the UNEP/MAP system.

Following the decision taken by the Contracting Parties at COP 23, Istanbul will host our newly established Regional Activity Centre on Climate Change (CC/RAC).

Let me take this opportunity to extend heartfelt thanks to the Government of Türkiye for their support and vision in hosting this key institution.

Today, as we convene for this Regional Meeting on Climate Change Adaptation, our focus is not only technical, but also deeply strategic. We stand at a defining moment for the Mediterranean.

The updated Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework (RCCAF) that we are here to review is more than a document; it is the backbone of our shared vision for a resilient, adaptive, and sustainable Mediterranean by 2035.

We know that the Mediterranean Basin is warming 20% faster than the global average. We also know, with high certainty, that we are likely to surpass the 2°C warming threshold in our region well before mid-century. This trajectory will test our institutions, our economies, and the cohesion of our societies. But these sobering projections must serve as a catalyst, not a constraint. The updated RCCAF is our regional response architecture, a tool to assist policy makers, national authorities, and local communities in navigating climate risks with foresight, coherence, and urgency.

Allow me to underscore a few key pillars of this work:

1. (From Vision to Implementation: A Revised RCCAF)

The updated Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework (RCCAF), to be reviewed during this meeting and submitted for consideration at the MAP Focal Points Meeting in Athens this September, reflects months of scientific and policy consultation involving MAP Focal Points, the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development, and our Regional Activity Centres. Building on the original RCCAF adopted at COP 19 in 2016, this update responds to evolving realities, integrating recent global agreements and incorporating critical tools such as nature-based solutions, disaster risk reduction strategies, and green economy instruments.

It is structured around four key strategic objectives: 1) Enabling mainstreaming of adaptation in national and local planning, 2) Promoting and sharing low-regret measures and best practices, 3) Mobilizing and leveraging financing, and 4) Improving access to data, assessments, and adaptation tools

These are not aspirational points, they are the operational core of our collective adaptation effort.

2. (Anchoring CC/RAC: Istanbul as a Climate Hub)

The establishment of the Regional Activity Centre on Climate Change (CC/RAC), hosted by the Mediterranean Climate Change Research Center (AIDAM), marks a turning point.

CC/RAC will be instrumental in supporting RCCAF implementation through 1) Technical assistance to countries and stakeholders, 2) Data gathering and dissemination, 3) Support for adaptation planning and financing, and 4) Coordination across the MAP system. Its mandate, to be finalized for COP 24 endorsement, will position CC/RAC as a regional driver of innovation and science-policy integration.

3. (From Framework to Impact: Monitoring, Finance, and Synergies)

We will also examine the Performance Monitoring Matrix included in the RCCAF update. This tool will help ensure accountability, with clear indicators, targets, and responsible actors. Critically, adaptation must be financed at scale. The RCCAF calls for: 1) Leveraging international finance mechanisms, 2) Mobilizing domestic budgets, and 3) Engaging the private sector to invest in climate-resilient systems. Experience from the Med-Programme offers a starting point, but we must go further integrating fiscal policy with adaptation goals and fostering conditions for bankable, climate-smart investments.

Importantly, the RCCAF aligns with the recently updated Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD), adopted in June by the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development. With climate change now a top priority, this alignment reinforces the RCCAF as a central instrument in our sustainable development agenda.

4. (Anticipating COP 24 and Building Momentum)

The outcomes of this meeting will directly inform two key milestones 1) The MAP Focal Points meeting in September, and 2) COP 24 in Cairo this December. There, we aim to endorse both the updated RCCAF and the finalized mandate of CC/RAC, equipping us with a strengthened framework to guide regional climate adaptation through 2035.

Dear colleagues,

This meeting is more than a technical exercise. It is a pivotal moment for regional adaptation leadership. The risks are real, but so is our capacity. Let us make this Framework not only robust and realistic, but actionable and ambitious. Let us affirm, together: the Mediterranean is not only ready to adapt. it is ready to lead. Thank you.