

PORTOROZ DECLARATION

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

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

Recognizing the valuable contribution that the Barcelona Convention and its related Protocols have made to improving the quality of the marine environment and promoting sustainable development in the Mediterranean;

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

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

Recalling that there should be a synergy between the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) and other MAP components, on the one hand, and the forthcoming European Strategy for the Conservation and Protection of the Marine Environment and the European Union Maritime Policy, on the other hand;

Moreover, recognizing the valuable work undertaken by the MAP Secretariat, the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) and the MAP components, in particular the Blue Plan Regional Activity Centre (BP/RAC), and recognizing the contributions from NGOs and civil society throughout the preparatory process of the MSSD;

Taking note of the outcomes and proposals of the Tenth Meeting of the MCSD (Athens, June 2005), in particular the finalized text of the MSSD and the Athens Charter;

Reaffirming the necessity for achieving sustainable development at regional, national and local levels in line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Mediterranean Declaration for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, the UN Decade for Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) and the Catania Declaration;

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

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

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

With regard to the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD), agree that,

1. The MSSD constitutes an opportunity for Mediterranean countries to achieve progress in environmental protection, as well as social, economic and cultural advancement in a sustainable manner, thus contributing to peace, stability and shared prosperity in the region, as well as to the fulfilment of the commitments made by the Contracting Parties at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002 and the MDGs,
2. The MSSD is a framework strategy which defines key challenges, principles, steps and actions to guide the promotion and implementation of sustainable development at the regional, subregional and national levels, as well as to rationalize regional and international cooperation and promote dynamic partnerships for the sustainable development of the Mediterranean region,
3. The MSSD does not concern only MAP and the Contracting Parties, but also all other actors and stakeholders from the private sector, civil society and other major groups, as well as relevant regional and international institutions; it provides an excellent opportunity to undertake coordinated efforts and achieve joint progress,
4. The MSSD is a flexible framework allowing for adaptation to major developments and the integration of determinant emerging issues,
5. The implementation of sustainable development strategies requires serious policy and institutional reforms together with the promotion of a dynamic culture of change, in particular concerning unsustainable production and consumption patterns,
6. The MSSD constitutes an essential contribution to a proactive win-win-win scenario based on synergies, efficient management and cultural diversity for a codeveloped ecoregion and a shared destiny,
7. The implementation of sustainable development strategies requires the application of various principles, including the satisfaction of the basic needs of all citizens, in line with the commitments of the Contracting Parties for the implementation of the MDGs, the promotion of education for sustainable development, access to information, a multistakeholder participatory approach, the precautionary and polluter/user-pays principles, as well as common, shared but differentiated responsibility,

The Contracting Parties decide,

1. To adopt the MSSD and make the commitment to do their utmost to implement its objectives, orientations and proposed actions as appropriate,
2. To prepare and/or update the respective National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSDs), giving due consideration to the MSSD,
3. To integrate sustainable development principles in their development and other relevant policies and legislation, in particular through the adequate revision of legal frameworks and relevant policy reforms,
4. To mobilize and provide relevant adequate human, technical and financial means for the implementation of the MSSD and NSSDs,
5. To demonstrate their commitment to the implementation of the MSSD by promoting education for sustainable development in their education programmes.
6. To demonstrate clearly their commitment to implementing the MSSD through the identification and implementation of specific and relevant projects at the regional, subregional, national and local levels,
7. To renew their commitment to the implementation of the WSSD Mediterranean Type II Partnership Initiative and to propose or actively participate in the elaboration and implementation of partnership initiatives that correspond to the objectives, orientations and proposed actions of the MSSD and the respective NSSDs,
8. To promote consultation mechanisms and awareness-raising campaigns to ensure broader ownership and stronger support from the concerned actors, in particular the private sector and NGOs, in their implementation,
9. To evaluate progress in the implementation of the MSSD at the regional and national levels, using an adequate set of indicators, to revise the MSSD as appropriate, if necessary in two years, and to undertake an overall assessment and review of the MSSD after five years,
10. To request the partners, concerned actors and funding agencies at the regional, subregional and national levels to give due consideration to the MSSD's objectives, orientations and proposed actions in their cooperation programmes and to contribute actively to the implementation of the MSSD and NSSDs, and the elaboration of the latter, where necessary.

With regard to the National Action Plans (NAPs)

Concerned with the significant impact of land based pollution on the Mediterranean marine and coastal environment and its ecosystems;

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

Reaffirming the compatibility and concurrence of the SAP's targets with those of the EU Marine Strategy, the related EU directives and international Conventions;

Recognizing the necessity to involve all concerned stakeholders, including civil society and NGOs, in the implementation of the SAP and the related NAPs;

Considering that the process of the implementation of the NAPs, which will require adequate financial resources, will enhance economic, technological and social development at the local level, and also that the proposed GEF Partnership for the Mediterranean large marine ecosystem will contribute to their implementation;

Keeping in mind that, with the entry into force of the Protocol for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution from Land-based Sources and Activities (the LBS Protocol), a legally-binding regional plan containing measures and a timetable for the gradual reduction of pollution, based on the SAP and other relevant international developments, will have to be formulated and adopted;

Considering that SAP and the NAPs provide useful tools already in place to contribute to the achievement of the proposed strategic goal for the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership to depollute the Mediterranean by 2020.

The Contracting Parties decide,

1. To endorse the NAPs and integrate them into their national development plans, national strategies and pollution control plans, including prevention and reduction measures, as appropriate,
2. To encourage the involvement of all stakeholders in the implementation and monitoring of the NAPs,
3. To mobilize all necessary resources for the full implementation of the NAPs through national regular budgets and innovative financial instruments, as well as from international institutions,
4. To contribute to the implementation of the proposed Euro-Mediterranean Partnership initiative, once it has been endorsed, to depollute the Mediterranean by 2020, based on MAP's ongoing and future work, in particular on the SAP and the NAPs.

With regard to the conservation of the Monk Seal

Considering that the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (the SPA and Biodiversity Protocol) entered into force in 1999, and *aware* of the urgent need to implement the Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Marine and Coastal Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean region (SAP-BIO), adopted in 2003 as a response to safeguard Mediterranean biodiversity and achieve the WSSD's targets;

Concerned at the high risk of extinction of the Mediterranean Monk Seal, mostly due to human activities, deliberate killings and habitat losses;

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

Noting with satisfaction the success stories of the integration of the conservation of this species into local development processes;

Recognizing the necessity of having an appropriate legal framework and participatory mechanisms for the protection and conservation of this species and its habitats;

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

The Contracting Parties decide,

1. To take as quickly as possible all necessary measures for the implementation of the Action Plan for the Mediterranean Monk Seal (*Monachus Monachus*) and to strengthen their cooperation to reverse the decline of the species,
2. To seriously address the problem of deliberate Monk Seal killing, combined with habitat loss, through action tailored to local communities and involving fishermen and other stakeholders,
3. To promote information on relevant success stories regarding the protection of the Monk Seal and exchange experience with all concerned parties and partners,
4. To further develop, implement and enforce legislative measures relevant to the conservation of the Monk seal, including incentive and regulatory measures, together with adequate operational management plans for targeted human activities,
5. To contribute to the implementation of relevant activities by concerned countries, the Specially Protected Areas Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC) and its partners through bilateral cooperation and voluntary contributions.

With regard to the future orientation of MAP

Acknowledging the need to review, after 10 years, the role and mandate of MAP, taking into account the developments that have taken place in social, economic and environmental fields at the international and regional level;

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

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

The Contracting Parties decide,

1. To request the MAP Secretariat to draft a vision statement for MAP, taking note of the MAP evaluation report,
2. To convene an extraordinary meeting of the MAP Focal Points as soon as possible to discuss the new vision for MAP and to submit recommendations for MAP's future orientation to the meeting of the Contracting Parties in 2007.