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The Hashemite  
Kingdom of Jordan

**Union for the Mediterranean Ministerial Meeting on Environment and Climate Change  
13 May 2014, Athens**

*Declaration*

The Ministers in charge of Environment and Climate Change, and other Heads of Delegation, under the Union for the Mediterranean Co-Presidency of H.E. Mr. T. Al Shakhshir, Minister of Environment for the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and of H.E. Mr. J. Potočník, Commissioner in charge of Environment, for the European Union, meeting in Athens on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2014,

*Recalling*

- the Joint Declaration of the Summit for the Mediterranean held in Paris on 13 July 2008, the Marseille Declaration of November 2008 and relevant UfM Ministerial Conferences;
- the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (the “Barcelona Convention”), its protocols and decisions, and in particular the Declaration of the 18th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties (the “Istanbul Declaration”) and Decision IG 21/14 on the adoption of a Memorandum of Understanding and Joint Programme of Work with the UfM; as well as the Mediterranean Action Plan and Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development;
- the Euro-Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Environment held in Cairo on 20 November 2006 which endorsed the Horizon 2020 Initiative for the de-pollution of the Mediterranean Sea (“H2020 Initiative”);
- The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, its guiding principles, as well as Rio+20, and its political outcome document "The Future We Want" and the ongoing work in the UN institutions towards the development of Sustainable Development Goals;
- The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Conventions on Biological Diversity and to Combat Desertification and relevant Protocols and Decisions;
- The post-2015 Hyogo Framework for Action for Disaster Risk Reduction;
- The conclusions and recommendations of the stakeholder conference held in Amman on 10 and 11 March 2014;

*Deeply concerned* by the growing environmental and climate-related challenges facing the entire region, which may be exacerbated by rapid population growth and urbanisation together



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with unsustainable use of natural resources and unsustainable production and consumption trends, and *acknowledging* that, if not adequately addressed, these may increasingly become a source of instability and prejudice the living conditions of current and future generations in the region;

*Deeply concerned* by the impacts of climate change on the region, and on particularly vulnerable countries, as further evidenced by the latest findings from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and in particular concerned that, as a major climate change hotspot, the Mediterranean faces aggravating climate-related vulnerabilities and impacts on freshwater resources, water security, extreme weather events, farming systems and food security, human health and urban infrastructure, energy, tourism, and economic growth;

*Further stressing* the need for countries causing and discharging pollution into the Mediterranean marine ecosystem and/or coastal areas to take immediate and concrete actions to eliminate such pollution;

*Recognising* the negative effects of conflicts on the environment and sustainable development;

*Stressing* the need to protect the natural heritage and resources from any destruction and deterioration in the Mediterranean region;

*Stressing* the need to preserve national heritage from the adverse effects of climate change;

*Stressing* the opportunities offered by Sustainable Consumption and Production for green, low-emission and blue growth in the context of sustainable development in the region;

*Recalling* the continued need for strengthening international cooperation, particularly in the areas of finance, technology transfer and capacity-building as per the Rio+20 Declaration;

*Reaffirming* that coherent and efficient regional cooperation is necessary to deal with these challenges, and *underlining* the role of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM).

### **As regards the H2020 Initiative for the De-pollution of the Mediterranean Sea**

Welcome the mid-term review of the H2020 Initiative, as the leading element of the UfM flagship De-pollution of the Mediterranean Sea Initiative, take note of the conclusions and recommendations of the various studies, as presented in the synthesis report, and welcome the progress in its components (capacity building, review and monitoring, research, and pollution reduction). In particular, welcome the significant achievements in moving forward investments in critical infrastructures, in building human capital, and in mainstreaming environment into other policies, and stress the strategic focus provided by UNEP/MAP hotspots list and National Action Plans (NAPs).

However, recognise that progress, in some cases, has been delayed by insufficient implementation of national policies and measures providing for the sustainable financing and



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management of the infrastructures, that new priorities are emerging, and also that challenges remain to have an accurate picture of the state of the Mediterranean Sea.

Stress that unless the efforts to de-pollute the Mediterranean Sea by 2020 are considerably intensified, the goal will not be fully met.

With this in mind, Ministers

- renew their support for the Horizon 2020 Initiative, reaffirming the continued relevance of its four components and the three sectors targeted (waste water, solid waste and industrial emissions); and agree to strengthen its pollution prevention dimension and to pay attention to emerging and related issues, such as hazardous waste and marine litter;
- call for further strengthening of synergies with the Barcelona Convention, between the key regional actors, and other regional initiatives, including those aiming to accelerate the shift towards Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP);
- undertake to take firm steps to ensure the full implementation and enforcement of policies supporting the H2020 Initiative goals, in line with the Ecosystem Approach (ECAP) and the priorities included in the NAPs, and, when required, with the support of the capacity building component;
- undertake to address data needs by applying the principles of Shared Environment Information Systems (SEIS) in line with the commitments under the ECAP Decisions of the Barcelona Convention, also contributing to its regional integrated monitoring programme;
- undertake to take steps to accelerate the necessary reforms to create a favourable and sustainable investment environment, and to ensure adequate project preparation and implementation;
- undertake to take into account the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities between Euro-Mediterranean partners and develop the necessary incentives for increasing knowledge and technology transfer. In this context, call for intensifying the efforts to transfer research results into policy decision-making;
- reaffirm their commitment to support the elaboration of a pipeline of relevant projects and welcome MeSHIP II, the project preparation facility; and invite all relevant actors to continue the collaborative work to develop criteria for sustainable investments prioritisation, building amongst others on the results of the study delivered by the Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM Secretariat), and aligning as appropriate with the NAPs revision process currently undertaken by UNEP/MAP;



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- emphasise the need to revamp the H2020 Pollution Reduction sub-group, and call in particular for the full involvement of the UfM Secretariat;
- mandate the H2020 Initiative Steering Committee, including the UfM Secretariat and UNEP/MAP, to develop a work programme for the second phase by December 2014 on the basis of the guidance provided in this and previous declarations; and request it to regularly report on its progress to Senior Officials. Ministers call for cooperation between the Secretariats of the UfM and the Barcelona Convention through the implementation of the 2013 Memorandum of Understanding; and call for exploring ways to streamline MAP and H2020 Initiative focal points and related meetings.

### **As regards sustainable consumption and production**

Ministers acknowledge that shifting towards sustainable consumption and production patterns is essential to reduce pollution and waste, as well as to increase resource and energy efficiency and hence the prevention of climate change impacts. This transition to a green and low-emissions economy will provide real opportunities for preserving natural resources, job creation, improvement of the quality of life for all and ensure a sustainable future.

Ministers welcome the adoption of the Ten Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns (SCP) by the Heads of State at Rio+20;

Ministers take note of the SCP Decision under the Barcelona Convention, and support the development of a Regional SCP Action Plan and Roadmap in line with this Decision;

With this in mind, Ministers

- will endeavour to initiate policy reforms required to provide the appropriate incentives and signals to accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production patterns, while paying attention to the unequal economic development and social disparities among Mediterranean countries;
- express their support for green and low-emission economy and the required innovations, and technology transfer in the area of sustainable products and services and new sustainable business models, as well as tools such as eco-design. In addition, acknowledge the potential for sustainable blue growth and note the necessity to promote the development of innovative and sustainable marine and maritime activities. In this context, Ministers welcome the various platforms for the development and dissemination of best practices that demonstrate the economic benefits and technical solutions for making production processes and consumption patterns more efficient and environmentally friendly;
- undertake to develop activities to ensure the full coverage of the region;



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- strongly support the complementary efforts of the European Union and of the UfM Secretariat on SCP. In this context, welcome the initiation of the SWITCH-Med programme with the support from the European Union and the labelling of the UfM project Mediterranean ReScp. These programmes are recognised to be an important support to the transition to sustainable consumption and production and to the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its protocols.

### **As regards climate change**

Ministers note with great concern the impacts of climate change on economic growth and development, which will inevitably worsen if climate change is not adequately and urgently tackled with the necessary determination and action. Water availability and quality have been significantly impacted, thereby negatively affecting related economic sectors in the Mediterranean region, particularly in the most vulnerable Southern countries. Rising sea levels and their coastal impacts, as well as desertification are also a matter of concern. They recognise the growing need for the region and its future prosperity to enhance its resilience to climate change, notably in key sectors of the economy, such as agriculture, water, also with respect to food security. While recognising the challenges arising from the transition towards sustainable low-emission development economies, Ministers also point at the benefits and opportunities, including for growth and job creation, arising from such a transformation and express their readiness to enhance their cooperation in that regard;

Taking into consideration the fifth assessment report of the IPCC, Ministers recognise the urgent need for actions to cut global greenhouse gas emissions before and after 2020 in order to limit the increase in global temperature to below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, acknowledging that this is achievable and that this can also generate significant co-benefits;

Ministers reiterate their full determination to work together towards the adoption of a global, ambitious, fair and legally binding international agreement in Paris in 2015, as agreed in Durban. Ministers recall the need to intensify domestic preparations for "intended nationally determined contributions" to be submitted well in advance of Paris, and in the first quarter of 2015 for those ready to do so, as agreed in Warsaw, as well as the importance of adaptation and climate finance, in the context of the 2015 agreement; Ministers agree to further work together to explore ways and means to enhance support (notably capacity building) for domestic preparations;

Ministers also take note of the UN Secretary General's initiative to host a Leaders' Summit in September 2014 as an opportunity to generate high-level momentum towards the conference in Lima in December 2014, and the 2015 agreement more generally and to catalyse support



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for climate action with all relevant actors before and after 2020. Ministers welcome the preparations for the Leaders' Summit made at the Abu Dhabi Ascent meeting in May 2014;

Ministers acknowledge ongoing efforts on climate action and recent developments in climate policies and measures across the Euro-Mediterranean region, note with appreciation the progress made to date through projects, initiatives and investments in areas of low-emission development, as well as in building resilience, and underline the importance of intensifying efforts to further support the development of low-emission, and climate-resilient economies, consistent with national circumstances and priorities, poverty eradication and sustainable development objectives;

Ministers underline the importance of the regional vulnerability assessment to determine climate change hotspots and support the regional climate change adaptation framework under the development by UNEP-MAP;

Ministers further note the potential to build on relevant initiatives, tools and mechanisms, addressing among others sustainable consumption and production, green economy/green growth, energy efficiency and renewable energy, integrated coastal zone management, sustainable urban development, sustainable land management, disaster risk reduction and management, but also mainstreaming of climate change considerations into other key policies (e.g., water, agriculture, energy, transport, tourism, waste management and construction); and emphasise the need to further exploit synergies of these sectors with other related fields and projects;

Ministers underline the potential to fully exploit existing initiatives and mechanisms, such as in particular the EU's Neighbourhood Investment Facility, the Low Emissions Capacity Building Programme, the Partnership for Market Readiness, the Integration of climatic variability and change into national strategies to implement the Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) protocol in the Mediterranean, the Technology Needs Assessment, the Green Technology Transfer, the Global Climate Change Alliance, as well as regional projects specifically targeting technical assistance and capacity building on climate change (namely CLIMA South and ECRAN);

Ministers also welcome the EU commitment that 20% of the EU budget 2014-2020 shall be devoted to climate expenditure, and underline the importance of investment facilities for climate-related projects and initiatives;

With this in mind, Ministers

establish a "UfM Climate Change Expert Group" and agree its first meeting to take place by October 2014;



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request the Expert Group to meet at least once a year and bring together governments, agencies, civil society, relevant international institutions including international donors, private sector representatives and other experts, as appropriate, from the Union for the Mediterranean region on a regular basis in order to

- promote better knowledge about common climate change challenges across the region, in order to address regional, national, local concerns;
- provide, as appropriate, multilateral and multi-stakeholder exchanges on cross-border and regional cooperation on climate change, including exchange of information and best practices;
- stimulate and advance discussion on climate change priority actions on adaptation and mitigation including but not limited to low-emission and climate-resilient development in the region and related costs, co-benefits, and feasibility;
- catalyse the identification, development and support of concrete projects and initiatives related to low-emission and climate-resilient development, including green growth/green economy with key stakeholders and potential public and private donors and investors; namely foster the elaboration of Low Emission Development Strategies (LEDS) including basic supporting tools (e.g., monitoring, reporting and verification systems), Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and adaptation policies, including scenario development and impact assessments, and, where relevant, in close synergies with disaster risk management actions;
- support and further stimulate climate-relevant work of local and regional authorities, as well as civil society and the private sector, including the Covenant of Mayors or sustainable cities initiatives;

The Expert Group will be co-chaired by the UfM co-Presidencies. The UfM Secretariat will act as secretariat to the group;

Ministers request a follow-up on this Declaration and invite the Expert Group to report on its progress in the second semester of 2015 at senior officials level.

#### **As regards other environmental issues**

Furthermore, Ministers

- reaffirm the fundamental value of biological diversity, in particular the marine and coastal ecosystems that provide goods and services essential for sustaining the livelihoods of people across the Mediterranean region;
- in this context, reaffirm their commitment to achieve the Aichi Targets of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the commitments under the Barcelona Convention, in



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particular relating to marine protected areas, the ecosystem approach, and the action plan on ICZM. In this context, Ministers welcome the creation by Monaco, France and Tunisia of a Trust Fund for Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean, open to all parties;

- underline the importance of a rich avifauna and welcome recommendations under the Bern Convention, in particular the Larnaka and Tunis action plans as well as initiatives under the African Eurasian Waterfowl Agreement;
- call for the application of the cross-cutting policy tools available under Integrated Maritime Policy, such as marine spatial planning, to integrate environment and climate change concerns into relevant horizontal policies;
- recognise that the Mediterranean region is becoming increasingly urbanised. While the region's cities concentrate environment and climate challenges, they also provide the opportunity for focused and effective solutions, which will improve the quality of life of their citizens. Initiatives such as the Eco-Cities of the Mediterranean launched by Jordan, or the UfM, EU, Barcelona Convention and Covenant of Mayors initiatives on sustainable cities are recognised as important vehicles for advancing action and sharing engagement.

#### **As regards environmental and climate change governance and stakeholder involvement**

Ministers endeavour to take appropriate measures to ensure environment and climate change are mainstreamed into sectoral policies and institutional structures, promoting and reinforcing the cooperation between ministries, agencies, local and regional authorities, and the private and public sector;

Ministers stress the significant role that civil society, including recognised and registered NGOs, academic, financial and research institutions, local and regional authorities, the private sector, and other stakeholders can play in achieving environmental and climate-related objectives. Ministers recognise that steps are necessary to enhance the opportunities and capacity for them to participate in decision-making processes.

#### **As regards the need for increased awareness and education,**

Ministers recognise the importance of education and awareness as a prerequisite to address the environment and climate-related challenges and therefore endorse the Mediterranean Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development annexed to this Declaration, and encourage all countries, stakeholders and media in the region to implement it in the best way possible.

#### **As regards ensuring implementation of required environment and climate investments**

Ministers recognise the need to ensure that the measures and policies required to address environment and climate challenges are clearly identified as priorities, fully integrated in their national development strategies and adequately resourced, and more importantly, detailed



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with clear and precise work plans. This will provide a clear message to international, regional and bilateral donors, International Financial Institutions (IFIs), the Green Climate Fund (which needs to be fully operationalised), and the private sector about the importance of their contribution, alongside national resources, to the implementation of the investments required.

Ministers also recognise that increased resources will be required to address the challenges in the Mediterranean region identified amongst others in this declaration as well as a more strategic planning of environment and climate investments, and invite relevant IFIs and donors, including the Global Environment Facility (GEF) as well as private investors to consider providing the needed financial resources to support the priorities identified in this declaration;

Ministers call for the UfM Secretariat and the UfM to continue the labelling of projects in line with the above recommendations and in close cooperation with all relevant actors, to further enhance visibility, ownership and access to financing, and recommend relevant IFIs and donors, including the GEF, to prioritise both existing and planned UfM-labelled projects for funding;

Ministers acknowledge the EU-Twinning instrument as an important tool to establish administrative partnerships to strengthen national policies and capacities;

Ministers stress the need to promote integrated approaches to project investments, highlighting the UfM-labelled *Integrated Programme to protect the Lake Bizerte against pollution* as a successful example, and invite IFIs to fully engage in existing sustainable project preparation facilities and to develop or strengthen other financial tools deemed necessary to incentivise such projects.

Ministers invite high level experts and officials to meet regularly, at least every two years, and where appropriate in synergy with other regional meetings dealing with environment or climate issues, as long as such meetings remain relevant, in the form of a "UfM Working Group on environment and climate change" to follow-up on this Declaration and assess the progress made. The Working Group will be co-chaired by the UfM co-presidencies and the UfM Secretariat will act as a secretariat to the Working Group.

Finally, Ministers would like to express deep gratitude to the Government of Greece for its warm hospitality and to the UfM Secretariat for helping to convene this meeting.