



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 26 February 2019
(OR. en)

6875/19

ENV 220
MED 3
ONU 18

NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: Preparation for the 21st Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Naples, 2-5 December 2019)
- Information from the Italian delegation

Delegations will find in Annex an information note from the Italian delegation on the above subject, to be dealt with under 'Any other business' at the Council (Environment) meeting on 5 March 2019.

Preparation for the 21st Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Naples, 2-5 December 2019)

- Information from the Italian delegation -

From 2 to 5 December 2019 Italy will be hosting the 21st Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean, in Naples.

The Meeting of the Contracting Parties, which is the decision-making body of the Convention, gathers the institutional representatives of the Parties, as well as NGOs and associations involved in the topic as observers. They discuss the main environmental issues related to the Mediterranean marine and coastal areas, and adopt the necessary decisions for the achievement of the Convention's goals, as well as the work programme for the following two years and the related programme budget. The meetings of the Contracting Parties are held every two years and they are hosted by the Contracting Party that presented its candidacy at the previous meeting. Among the Members of the European Union, the Contracting Parties to the Convention are: Cyprus, Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Slovenia and Spain. The European Union is also a Party to the Barcelona Convention. Although the coordination mechanism for the meeting usually does not require the adoption of Council conclusions, EU Member States which are Parties to the Barcelona Convention coordinate on the main topics of discussion, agreeing on shared positions that are presented by the Presidency at the meeting.

Under the principle of sincere cooperation with its European partners and in light of the importance of the Mediterranean and of environmental protection in that sea basin, Italy deems it appropriate to inform the Council of the aforementioned event, which, as usual, will result in a ministerial statement adopted on the occasion of the High-Level Ministerial Segment in the framework of the Conference of the Parties. The content of the statement is currently being decided and Italy will be asking for contributions from all the Parties – starting with the EU Member States involved. The statement will deal with synergies on priority topics with global processes such as the post-2020 Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement on climate change, the fourth session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA4), the Intergovernmental Conference On Marine Biodiversity Of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ), the G7 and the G20. It may also have the following specific focuses:

- **marine litter**, in particular 'plastic-free' initiatives;
- **marine protected areas (MPAs)**, in particular the Italian initiative to promote 'twinning' among the Mediterranean MPAs and the preparation of a memorandum of understanding between the United Nations Environment Programme/Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) and UNESCO to strengthen the synergies between MPAs and biosphere reserves;
- **resilience of the Mediterranean to climate changes**, in particular coastal erosion and integrated management policies for coastal areas;
- **biodiversity**, and, in particular, the safeguarding of large migrators and cetaceans;
- the **blue economy**, in particular sustainable transnational tourism and maritime spatial planning policies.