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## COVER NOTE

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From:	European Commission
date of receipt:	21 November 2019
No. Cion doc.:	C(2019) 8519 final - ANNEX
Subject:	Draft Ministerial Declaration to be adopted at the occasion of the 21st meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP 21) to the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Maritime Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean

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Delegations will find in the Annex the draft Ministerial Declaration that is to be adopted at the occasion of the 21st meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP 21) to the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Maritime Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean, to be held on 2-5 December 2019 in Naples, Italy, as well as the related Commission information note to the Council.

The Commission seeks the authorisation of the Council in view of adopting the Ministerial Declaration on behalf of the EU in respect of matters falling within Union competence.

Amendments to the draft Ministerial Declaration made during the meeting of the Contracting Parties will have to be considered and agreed through coordination on the spot and can only be accepted to the extent they are in line with existing Union policies and legislation.

The Council preparatory bodies on 4 September 2019 were informed of the Commission's intention to enter into this Ministerial Declaration (WK 9363/2019). The Working Party on the Environment (WPE) on 22 November 2019 will be invited to consider the authorisation of the Commission to adopt the Ministerial Declaration on behalf of the Union in respect of matters falling within Union competence.

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ANNEX

**ANNEX**

**to the**

**Commission Decision**

**on the adoption of the Ministerial Declaration at the 21<sup>st</sup> Conference of the Parties of the  
Barcelona Convention**

## ANNEX –Naples Ministerial Declaration

We, Ministers and Heads of Delegation of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (the Barcelona Convention) and its Protocols, meeting in Naples, Italy, on 4 December 2019,

*Being aware of* the undisputed importance of the Mediterranean region, our common home to safeguard and protect, where our communities lived and prospered for millennia, and whose perspectives of sustainable development, well-being and peace rely upon the health of the *Mare Nostrum*, connecting and unifying us since the beginning of the human civilization;

*Being aware as well of* the key role of our region, complex and yet unmatched for its richness of biodiversity, natural resources, and historic and cultural bonds, and of the importance of Regional Seas Conventions and Programmes to implement global strategies and agendas;

*Recalling* that the global context includes important elements such as the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), the UN Environment Assembly resolutions, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, the implementation of the Paris Agreement under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) Strategic Framework 2018-2030, and its land degradation neutrality approach to tackle climate crisis and enhance water supply;

*Welcoming* the action plans and decisions of the pollution-related Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), and the G7 and G20 to combat marine litter in synergy with the Regional Seas Conventions, as a global momentum towards the long-term elimination of discharges of litter and microplastics to the oceans;

*Recognizing* the year 2020 as a critical turning point for the conservation and sustainable management of the Mediterranean Sea and coast, on the basis of the science-based reports delivered in 2019 by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the forthcoming international fora like the UN 2020 Ocean Conference and the IUCN World Conservation Congress, the 2020 ministerial meetings of the Union for the Mediterranean, the 2021-2030 UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, and 2021-2030 UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration;

*Recognizing* the need to build on our long-standing cooperation and commitments for a green New Deal with the participation of all stakeholders and especially the younger generations, to strengthen our environmental conscience and a mature sense of responsibility;

*Welcoming* the wide and inclusive participatory process leading to the 21<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Contracting Parties (COP 21) of the Barcelona Convention promoted by the Host Country Italy and the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention Secretariat, with Contracting Parties, Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (18<sup>th</sup> Meeting, Budva, Montenegro, 11-13 June 2019), Mediterranean Youth (Youth Event, Naples, Italy, 23 October 2019), and Stakeholders (Regional Stakeholder Consultation Meeting, Athens, Greece, 24-25 October 2019);

*Reaffirming* our commitment to the major role of the United Nations Environment Programme/Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP/MAP) and the Barcelona Convention system, and its unique institutional, regulatory and implementation framework for the protection of

marine environment and sustainable development of its coastal regions, to scale up the enforcement of global and regional commitments in our region, to advance together through common legal instruments, strategies and policies, as well as scientific and technical programs, projects and initiatives;

*Recalling and welcoming* the main achievements and the ongoing work of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system during the past five decades, especially the last two biennia for the implementation of the UNEP/MAP Medium Term Strategy 2016-2021, and the need for further reinforcing and supporting its governance and capacity;

*Deeply concerned* for the increasing pressures that human activities are exerting on the natural resources of the Mediterranean Sea and its coastal areas, their impact as also identified in the 2017 Mediterranean Quality Status Report and 2019 State of the Environment and Development Report, and *aware* of the need for a systemic change supported by forward-looking and innovative strategies, policies, and behaviors;

1. *We commit* to take concrete action to enhance the level of safeguard of the Mediterranean Sea and its good environmental status, as a place of peace, dialogue and solidarity, as a bridge between civilizations and as a model for environmental protection in the context of sustainable development and multilateral cooperation, for the benefit of present and future generations;
2. *We are determined* to further address our efforts in particular on four priority areas for action and commitments - by effectively contrasting marine litter, strengthening and expanding the Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) network, responding to the challenges arising from climate change, and sustaining the blue economy and an ecological transition for our region - and to identify the strategic directions to embrace together for the years ahead;

*Concerned* that the Mediterranean Sea and its coastal regions faces significant pollution challenges and is one of the most marine litter-affected areas in the world, with plastics accounting for up to 95% of total floating marine litter and more than 50% of seabed marine litter, mostly originating from single-use plastic products representing more than 60% of the marine litter composition;

*Reaffirming* our commitment to the full implementation of the Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management, adopted at COP 18 in 2013, complemented by the Regional Plan on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP);

3. *We recognize* the urgency to eliminate plastic leakage in the Mediterranean Sea by 2030 with clear commitments to reduce plastic consumption, support eco-design and innovation, resource efficiency and effectively improved waste management, as well as enhanced control and prevention measures such as bans, incentives, taxes and extended producer responsibility schemes;
4. *We decide* to scale-up our efforts to tackle the issue of marine litter by empowering the regulatory framework for reducing single-use plastic products, setting ambitious quantitative targets, and incorporating reduction measures including on microplastics in our national marine litter agenda, and to undertake the following actions:
  - (a) Promoting prevention measures and circular approaches also to open green economy opportunities; supporting long-term viable recycling targets; adopting national plans to progressively achieve 100% plastic waste collection and recycling; and addressing the private sector to minimize plastic packaging;

- (b) Making the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme-based marine litter monitoring in the Mediterranean fully operational, providing an assessment of the impacts of marine litter in the Mediterranean Sea and coasts and;
- (c) Further enhancing the coordinated actions of stakeholders, through the Regional Cooperation Platform on Marine Litter;

*Acknowledging* with concern that only 8.9% of the surface of the Mediterranean sea is under a legal designation/protection status; that only 1.6% and 0.04 % is covered by nationally designated sites and MPAs no-go, no-take or no-fishing zones, and that our region has to play a primary role also for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ);

*Concerned* that our region did not yet achieve the SDG Target 14.5 to conserve at least 10% of marine and coastal areas by 2020; that efforts are still required for a more homogeneous spatial distribution of MPAs in the Mediterranean basin; and that only 10% of our MPAs are duly implementing management plans;

5. *We re-commit* to the sustainable use of natural resources and to implement science-based management for the benefits of the local communities, to mainstream biodiversity conservation into sectoral strategies and programs, to achieve the 10% of coverage of the Mediterranean region with MPAs by 2021 and to support their sustainable financing;
6. *We are engaged* to clearly share responsibilities and targets among actors and stakeholders at global, regional, national and local level, to reach long-term structural solutions, with a view at adopting additional protection measures and, therefore, to:
  - (a) Support a new ambitious plan for biodiversity and ecosystems through the development of the revised Strategic Action Programme (SAP BIO) for the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable management of natural resources, fostering capacity building and synergies with biodiversity-related Conventions;
  - (b) Encourage and support the designation of MPAs, based on scientific and technical information also from the EBSA (Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas) process, accelerate the effective management of the current MPAs network, and enhance the science-policy interface to increase efforts for key species, habitats and ecosystem conservation;
  - (c) Develop mechanisms for exchanging information and promoting cooperation on thematic themes and interdisciplinary approaches in MPAs, as twinning agreements, and for their participatory planning and management to actively involve local socio-economic stakeholders, including fishermen and tourism actors;

*Concerned* that the Mediterranean is recognized as a climate change hot spot, with average annual temperatures above the current global warming trends (+1.1°C), marine acidification and sea level rising at an accelerating rate, frequent and extreme events like droughts and rainfall, exacerbating the existing environmental and social problems;

*Recognizing* that, as evidenced by the 2019 IPCC Special Report on Oceans and Cryosphere, climate change triggers important risks for our coastal and marine ecosystems - and, therefore, for the human well-being and security - affecting biodiversity and fresh water, food security, coastal infrastructures and cities, historic and cultural heritage, *and* that to address these challenges we must enforce the governance of our sea and coastal region;

7. *We are conscious* that these processes require an ambitious strategy of adaptation to climate change, as per the specificities of our sea and coasts, with a focus on water

management, to be built upon the mechanisms developed in Barcelona Convention decisions, projects and initiatives, such as the 2017 Regional Climate Change Adaptation Framework for the Mediterranean Marine and Coastal Areas and the Coastal Area Management Programme (CAMP);

8. *We reaffirm* our commitment toward governance and policy responses based on scientific evidence, to strengthen the application of Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and its role, and *we commit*, therefore, our support to:
  - (a) Collect scientific findings in an easily accessible form on behalf of decision-makers at any level and develop transdisciplinary research and inter-sectoral policies to tackle climate change through a cross-cutting approach, particularly in the water-food-energy nexus;
  - (b) Evaluate the environmental, economic and social impacts of sea level rise and coastal hazards, associated with climate change in coastal areas, with a view to ensure that land use planning and infrastructure take full account of relevant climate change scenarios and uncertainties;
  - (c) Boost capacity building and involvement of a range of actors - particularly the scientific community, private sector and civil society - in designing and implementing adaptation strategies, and mobilizing funding resources, *inter alia*, through subsidies' reforms and efficient green tax collection;

*Recognizing* the increasing competition for the use of marine and coastal space and resources in the Mediterranean, the need for increased effort to control and minimize the impacts associated with the expansion of the maritime sectors, and that, for example, in 2015, the Mediterranean and Black Sea region had the lowest percentage of sustainable fish stocks worldwide (37.8%), with 78% of their fish stocks fished at biologically unsustainable levels;

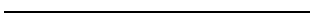
*Considering* that the resources of the Mediterranean should trigger economic prosperity and contribute to the stability of the region with green jobs and innovation opportunities for the maritime economy sectors (aquaculture, fisheries, tourism, shipping, ports) and in emerging ones (blue biotechnologies, marine renewable sources, services digitalization), in full respect of the environmental protection, in a circular approach and good governance pattern;

9. *We reaffirm* that effective Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) and Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) in the Mediterranean, in conjunction with sustainable consumption and production approaches, are crucial to promote sustainable and synergic uses of marine and coastal areas and resources, together with research and innovation;
10. *We decide* to act to swiftly implement the ICZM Protocol increasing its ratification levels, to foster the green transition, and the linked initiatives promoted by the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system, including the ICZM Common Regional Framework and Action Plan and the MSP Conceptual Framework, and *we commit to*:
  - (a) Ensuring sustainable and synergic uses of marine and coastal areas and resources, as well as circular economy and innovative tourism products and services, sharing experiences and information at all levels between institutions and projects including marine renewable energies;
  - (b) Ensuring the efficient implementation of the ICZM provisions, also by mainstreaming the coastal management practices and projects, through research and trainings on multi-level governance and stakeholder management and dialogue;

- (c) Developing a framework of specific indicators for assessing the impact of marine and coastal tourism on destinations and for promoting ecotourism;

*Recalling* the need to use and share environmental knowledge, through development, dissemination and communication targeted to the different contexts, *and* the urgency to engage all relevant stakeholders, and in particular the younger generations to directly participate in decisions affecting our common future;

11. *We recognize* that “thinking green”, in terms of the environmental impact of our everyday life, requires to act accordingly as responsible citizens and institutions, and implies a call for action for all actors, locally and globally, on which the quality of life of our children depends.
12. *We commit* to urgently execute the strategic decisions adopted in Naples at COP 21.
13. *We urge* the implementation of cross-cutting flagship and pilot initiatives promoted by Contracting Parties and partners as strategical generational and transformational trends for the protection of the environment of the Mediterranean, contributing to its sustainable development, e.g.:
  - (a) the creation of new international MPAs also on a bilateral/multilateral basis;
  - (b) the strengthening of the cooperation of UNEP/MAP in common areas with other UN programs or initiatives, such as the UNESCO/MAB Programme, the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (FAO/GFCM), the UN Regional Commissions for Africa, Europe and Western Asia (UN-ECA, UN-ECE, UN-ESCWA) and GEF;
  - (c) the implementation of a strategy for environmental communication and dissemination for the promotion of sustainable development, and of high quality and innovative education and training plans targeted according to the different contexts for reaching a diversified audience and the young;
  - (d) The enhancement of a regional science-policy interface to base policies on scientific expertise, to have a strategic decision-making process with a sound scientific basis;
14. *We agree* on the four priority areas for actions and commitments identified at COP 21 to be part of the 2022-2027 Medium Term Strategy of the UNEP/MAP-Barcelona Convention system, and to foster its governance and enforcement mechanisms;
15. *We ultimately engage* ourselves and our countries to renew the decades-long obligation toward a responsible path for the protection and the sustainable development of the *Mare Nostrum*, a common heritage we are today only trustees and we are called to preserve, enhance, clean up and pass on to future Mediterranean generations.







Brussels, 21 November 2019  
Ares(2019) 7201482

**NOTE FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL WORKING  
PARTY ON INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

**SUBJECT: Barcelona Convention Ministerial Declaration of 21<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the  
Contracting Parties to be adopted on behalf of the EU on 4 December 2019**

**CONTACT POINTS: Commission DG ENVIRONMENT Unit C.2**

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**REMARKS:**

As indicated in the Note of 25 July 2019 (Council reference WK 9363/2019 INIT of 3 September 2019), Environment Ministers of the Contracting Parties<sup>1</sup> of the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean will adopt a Ministerial Declaration, at the occasion of the 21<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, to be held 2 – 5 December 2019, in Naples, Italy.

The draft Ministerial Declaration is attached to this Note. The objectives of the Ministerial Declaration are to reaffirm parties' commitment to implement the Barcelona Convention, following the logic of its Mid-Term Strategy. The Ministerial Declaration includes Ministers' vision on the protection of marine environment and coastal region of the Mediterranean and, in particular, on four priority areas for action: marine litter, marine protected areas (MPAs), climate change, and sustainable blue economy. These areas are in turn in line with Union policies on the protection of the marine environment in the Mediterranean.

The Commission considers important reaffirming commitments to the protection of marine environment and coastal region of the Mediterranean with the appropriate

<sup>1</sup> Contracting parties to Barcelona Convention are Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Turkey, and the European Union.

language stemming from the legal instruments and policies adopted by the Contracting Parties. UNEA Resolution 2/10 on Oceans and Seas invited, inter alia, Regional Seas Conventions to work towards the implementation of, and reporting on, the different ocean-related Sustainable Development Goals and associated targets, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets. In that sense, it is crucial that the Ministerial Declaration reflects the complementarity of the Barcelona Convention policies with the Agenda 2030.

The Commission has preliminarily identified the following items that may remain for consideration *sur place*:

- Preamble
- Blue Economy, which may need to be referenced as ‘sustainable blue economy’
- Marine Pollution, including Marine Litter
- Marine Protected Areas, including EBSAs Climate Change
- Regional Ocean Governance in referencing strengthened cooperation among regional/global organisations
- Integrated Coastal Zone Management

It is likely that changes may still be made to the Declaration either prior to, or on the day of adoption of the Declaration. This is due to possible negotiations and finalisation on the spot, especially with the other 13 Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, which are not EU Member States.

The Commission, as a result of its internal discussions, would moreover like to clarify certain elements of the declaration, notably on:

- Marine pollution, where it seeks clarification on the wording “contrasting marine litter”; that the resulting text builds on the UN SDG target 14.1;
- Marine Protected Areas, where it seeks to better reflect the existing commitments.
- International Ocean Governance, where in relation to cooperation with other programmes, reference to relevant global organisations is needed.

The Commission will seek to ensure that target dates put forward are aligned and/or complementary to those under SDG 14 of Agenda 2030.

The EU negotiator is to make sure that any future adjustments to the Naples Ministerial Declaration ahead of or during the 21<sup>st</sup> COP of the Barcelona Convention is to be in line with existing Union policies and legislation and with the following approach: the Declaration should contribute to the achievement of and support the objectives of the Barcelona Convention, namely to prevent, abate, combat and to the fullest possible extent eliminate pollution of the Mediterranean Sea Area and to protect and enhance the marine environment in that Area so as to contribute towards its sustainable development.

This Ministerial Declaration is considered to be a non-binding instrument that contains political commitments. Therefore, the wording of the instrument should leave no ambiguity as to its non-binding nature. It is proposed that the Ministerial Declaration is simply *adopted*, as is the normal procedure in Meeting of Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention and as foreseen by Agenda Item 5.5. of the COP 21.

Yours sincerely,

[e-signed]

Michel Sponar  
Acting Head of Unit

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