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20th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the
Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment
and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols

Tirana, Albania, 17-20 December 2017

Agenda item 5: Ministerial Session

Draft Tirana Ministerial Declaration

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UNEP/MAP
Athens, 2017

DRAFT TIRANA MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

We, Ministers and Heads of Delegations 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 Tirana, Albania, on 19 December 2017,

Recalling the importance of the regional dimension for the implementation of global strategies and agendas,

Recalling also the unique nature and mandate of the MAP-Barcelona Convention system and its primary role in contributing to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean, and *appreciating* the good progress in the delivery of the mandate described in the Mediterranean Action Plan, the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, and other instruments and decisions,

Welcoming the outcome document of the high-level United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 “Our ocean, our future: call for action”, and the commitments to action announced by the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention as well as the regional commitments submitted by UNEP/MAP in the framework of the above Conference and of the 4th edition of the Our Ocean Conference “Our Ocean, an ocean for life”,

Recalling the Declaration adopted by the Ministers of Environment in the 3rd session of the UN Environment Assembly “Towards a Pollution-Free Planet”, and especially the commitments to scale up actions that prevent, mitigate and manage marine pollution,

Noting the key findings of the 2017 Mediterranean Quality Status Report, and *highlighting* that despite measures taken so far, marine pollution, including new and emerging pollutants, is one of the main pressures on the marine and coastal environment of the Mediterranean, that has significant adverse impacts on the natural ecosystems, and *also highlighting* the degradation of marine and coastal biodiversity caused by pressures acting in a cumulative manner, including ecosystem fragmentation, overexploitation of natural resources, introduction of invasive alien species, marine, soil and atmospheric pollution, and climate change,

Being aware that key socioeconomic activities depend on clean, biologically diverse and healthy seas, and *reaffirming* the vital importance of the conservation of marine and coastal biodiversity and of the sustainable management of natural resources for the provision of goods and services, for the population of the Mediterranean region,

Welcoming the cooperation established with other global and regional organizations, programmes and initiatives, and recognizing the contribution of non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and other key stakeholders as a means to maximize effectiveness and results on the ground,

Reaffirm our commitment to progress towards achieving and/or maintaining Good Environmental Status in the Mediterranean, in line with the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, and **decide** to start discussions on the next steps of the ecosystem approach implementation beyond 2021 with particular focus on updated or new measures, to contribute to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

Decide to take urgent measures to prevent and reduce marine pollution from land-based and marine sources as set out in relevant MAP strategic documents, such as the Strategic Action Programme to Address Pollution from Land-based Activities (SAP-MED), the Regional Strategy for Prevention of and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2016-2021), the Mediterranean Offshore Action Plan, Regional and National Action Plans, especially regarding municipal and industrial wastewater treatment, solid waste management, phasing out or reduction of toxic and obsolete chemicals and

hazardous waste, marine litter, plastics and microplastics and especially single-use plastics, including through the promotion of sustainable consumption and production patterns,

Commit to promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns; making best use of investment and innovation opportunities; supporting market-based solutions to reduce waste generation; improving mechanisms for environmentally sound waste management; and developing and promoting safe alternatives to plastics and toxic chemicals,

Resolve to fulfill our commitments to eliminate 2,000 tons of POPs/PCBs and 30 tons of mercury in pollution hot spots in the Mediterranean, under the MedProgramme,

Commit to strengthening the implementation of the Regional Plan on Marine Litter Management in the Mediterranean and achieving its targets, in synergy with similar work undertaken within other global frameworks such as the G7 and G20, and **welcome** commitments of the Contracting Parties under the Clean Seas and Beat Pollution campaigns lead by UNEP,

Resolve to enhance action to fully implement the priority and specific actions and achieve the biodiversity related targets, as set out in the Strategic Action Programme for the Conservation of Biological Diversity (SAP-BIO) and the endangered species and habitats Regional Action Plans,

Commit to accelerate efforts to ensure the implementation of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and especially Aichi Target 11 in the Mediterranean, through the implementation of the Roadmap for a Comprehensive Coherent Network of Well-Managed Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), and **commit** to ensure that by 2030 at least 30% of each Mediterranean marine habitat is covered by MPAs,

Encourage Contracting Parties and the Secretariat to work together in advancing the process of establishing MPAs including in areas beyond national jurisdiction, in line with relevant global developments and the provisions of the Barcelona Convention and the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean (SPA/BD Protocol),

Encourage Contracting Parties towards the need to invest big to transform our economies and societies, mobilizing finance and investment in low-carbon opportunities and cleaner production and consumption to counter pollution, bringing in the private sector to back clean growth and low-pollution opportunities,

Resolve to enhance our efforts to play a key role towards a pollution-free planet and to integrate pollution prevention into national and local planning for the long-term well-being of people and our planet,

Resolve to act in support of marine pollution prevention and phase-out, as well as biodiversity conservation in the framework of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, by maximizing coordination and synergies at all levels with the work under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, the Minamata Convention, the Basel Convention, the Stockholm Convention, the Rotterdam Convention, the London Convention and London Protocol, and other relevant global and regional Multilateral Environmental Agreements, as well as with the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean and other partners, and **invite** all Secretariats to strengthen their collaboration,

Welcome the work done on the development of the Common Regional Framework for Integrated Coastal Zone Management and of the Conceptual Framework for Marine Spatial Planning and **agree** to further develop these two key instruments with the view of ensuring and promoting sustainable use of coastal and marine resources and reaching Good Environmental Status in the Mediterranean through enhanced planning and management approaches,

Commit to implement effective national monitoring programmes based on the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme of the Mediterranean Sea and Coast (IMAP), as a tool to assess and

demonstrate the effectiveness of measures taken towards achieving and/or maintaining Good Environmental Status, and of pollution reduction and biodiversity conservation MAP-Barcelona Convention policy and strategic targets,

Reaffirm our commitment to strengthen national and regional capacities by further improving national reporting on the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and its Protocols, aiming at a comprehensive and integrated reporting that enables to process the information and strengthen knowledge for underpinning national and regional policy making,

Welcome the implementation of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025 as an integrated and sustainable approach for achieving the protection of the marine and coastal environment, and **commit** to encourage partners to further engage in this process,

Welcome with appreciation the instrumental role played by the MAP-Barcelona Convention system in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean, including through the Simplified Peer Review Mechanism, and **commit** to encouraging further coherence and synergy between global mechanisms for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and for its monitoring and those mechanisms put in motion in the Mediterranean,

Commit to continue and enhance our engagement and partnership with global, regional and subregional bodies and programmes, the scientific community and academic institutions, the private sector, the donor community, non-governmental organizations, community groups, and other relevant actors to support the achievement of our common goals on the implementation of SDG 14, and especially on pollution prevention and reduction and on biodiversity conservation.