



UNITED
NATIONS

EP

UNEP/MED WG.477/Inf.3



UNITED NATIONS
ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
MEDITERRANEAN ACTION PLAN

14 October 2019
Original: English

Regional Stakeholders Consultation Meeting
to Contribute to the Preparation of the
Ministerial Declaration of COP 21

Athens, 24-25 October 2019

Inputs Received on the Naples Ministerial Declaration: Outcome of the Online Consultation of MCSD Members

Note by the Secretariat

This document contains background information and analysis on the outcome of a participatory process activated for the preparation of the Naples Ministerial Declaration to ensure an inclusive approach and the effective contribution by the Members of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD). An online consultation on the potential content and focus of the Naples Ministerial Declaration was launched right after the 18th Meeting of the MCSD (Budva, Montenegro, 11-13 June 2019) to collect inputs on three key questions, namely:

1. Priorities for the future of the UNEP/MAP – Barcelona Convention system;
2. Strategic message/s to be included/addressed in the COP 21 Ministerial Declaration; and,
3. Elements of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) to be further strengthened and mainstreamed into the UNEP/MAP Medium Term Strategy (MTS) 2022-2027.

The outcome of this inclusive consultation process will be presented at the Regional Stakeholder Meeting by the President of the MCSD.

For environmental and cost-saving reasons, this document is printed in a limited number. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies to meetings and not to request additional copies.

Inputs Received on the Naples Ministerial Declaration: Online Consultation of MCSD Members

1. At the 18th Meeting of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development (MCSD) (Budva, Montenegro, 11-13 June 2019), the Secretariat introduced the topic of the preparation of the Ministerial Session and Declaration of the 21st Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (COP 21) towards strategic guidance for the preparation of the Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) 2022-2027, indicating that the COP 21 Ministerial Session and Declaration should take into account global processes, such as the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) post-2020 Biodiversity Framework, the Paris Agreement on climate change, and relevant resolutions of the fourth UN Environmental Assembly (UNEA-4). More specifically, the preparation of the Ministerial Declaration of COP 21 was expected to focus on the following priority areas and key issues: Marine Litter; Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and Biodiversity; Climate Change; Blue Economy, with a possible focus on Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM), Marine Spatial Planning (MSP), and sustainable tourism. The draft Ministerial Declaration being prepared through an inclusive, transparent and participatory process in which the involvement of MCSD Members and MAP Partners shall be sought, participants to the 18th Meeting of the MCSD were expected to facilitate the identification of issues of relevance to the Naples Ministerial Declaration.

2. The Commission welcomed the inclusive process for the preparation of the Naples Ministerial Declaration and provided initial inputs, stressing the need to focus on mechanisms, actions and tools to achieve sustainable development such as the development of adequate institutional set-up, technologies and transferable knowledge, and cultural aspects including education and awareness raising.

3. MCSD Members and Observers agreed to provide written inputs in due time for preparing the COP 21 Ministerial Session and Declaration.

4. Following the above, the Secretariat launched an online consultation, requesting MCSD Members and Observers to reply to the following key questions:

- What are the priorities for the future of the MAP – Barcelona Convention system?
- What is/are the strategic message/s that you advise to be included/addressed in the COP 21 Ministerial Declaration?
- What elements of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) should be further strengthened and mainstreamed into the UNEP/MAP Medium Term Strategy 2022-2027?

5. As of 12 July 2019, the Secretariat collected inputs from 14 MCSD Members and one Observer (UN ESCWA). Those inputs are included in Annex I of the present document.

6. Results of the online consultation are summarized in three sections that should structure the Naples Ministerial Declaration, namely:

- The introductory section, as preamble to the Ministerial Declaration;
- The central section, with four priority areas and related “calls for actions and commitments”;
- The conclusive section, with an overall “strategic guidance”.

Introductory Section – Importance of the Mediterranean at global level and role of UN Environment/MAP:

7. Two observations could be addressed in the introductory session of the Ministerial Declaration, namely:

- A “*New Deal for Nature and People*” should be launched to create opportunities and render compatible Economic growth and Conservation of natural capital; and,
- Concrete ambitious targets, aligned with other international efforts, are necessary.

Central Section – Call for Action and Commitments about the four priority areas to be addressed by the Contracting Parties:

8. **Marine Litter:** It was recommended to update the Marine Litter Regional Action Plan with binding targets for eliminating all plastic leakage into the Mediterranean Sea and related sources by 2030. This should lead to clear national commitments fostered by the regional cooperation framework, including on waste collection and recycling, as well as to the adoption of national plans to achieve 100% plastic waste collection. Educational programmes and capacity building in the field of marine litter management were also suggested to achieve “*zero marine pollution*”.

9. **MPA and Biodiversity:** It was recommended to prepare a new ambitious plan for biodiversity and ecosystems conservation (i.e. SAP BIO 2021-2035), in line with global processes such as the CBD, the SDGs No 14 and 15, the Paris Agreement and other global multilateral environmental agreements. It was also suggested to endorse the 30% protection proposed CBD target through MPAs (or Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures) and to scale up investment and funding towards MPAs effective management. In addition, the Contracting Parties were encouraged to strengthen the efforts made for the conservation of marine and coastal biodiversity against physical/chemical and biological disturbances. From a technical point of view, it was recommended to improve pressure-state-impact analysis methodologies, to integrate them to the IMAP scheme of data gathering and assessments, and to ensure the introduction of ecosystem-based MSP in the implementation of the ICZM Protocol.

10. **Climate Change:** It was mentioned that regional and national measures related to climate change adaptation should: consider adverse impacts of climate change on water and food security, as well as on agricultural productivity; integrate the services provided by marine and coastal ecosystems; and, promote nature-based solutions. The importance of integrating biodiversity considerations in national policies on climate change was highlighted, including ecosystem-based mitigation and adaptation measures. It was also suggested to focus on integrated water demand management under extreme climate events and responsiveness of vulnerable communities.

11. **Blue Economy:** It was recommended to develop a platform for sharing optimal practical models for the application of ICZM/MSP and managing principles, in synergy with the application of the ecosystem approach; to support “smart growth”, based on digital and “blue/green” economy principles and resilience to natural, socioeconomic, and other shocks; to extend the work on the ecosystem-based approach with the integration of Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) (Circular Economy); and, to foster a green transition by encouraging investment in clean technologies, contributing to economic development and job creation, and facilitating regional, South-South and North-South cooperation.

Section on Guidance – The strategic and political directions for the UNEP/MAP – Barcelona Convention system

12. It was recommended to recognize 2020 as a critical turning point for the conservation and sustainable management of the Mediterranean Sea and coasts; to focus on implementing the Protocols of the Barcelona Convention and encouraging non-signatory Contracting Parties to join Protocols and implement them, with an effective progress monitoring system and by addressing the present gap of legal implementation, bearing in mind that the principle of “*Leaving no one behind*” is valid for all the Mediterranean countries as such; and, to develop an unique monitoring system, from country level to local level, for enabling different actors to be aware of the gaps/shortcomings and to put forward actions towards achievement of the SDGs.

13. It was also recommended to facilitate inclusiveness of the MAP Partners based on competences, enhancing transparency and communication (public access to data and documents); to develop a strategy for environmental information and communication at the Mediterranean level, taking into account the different contexts for reaching a large, diversified audience; to be more demand driven in addressing the needs of the countries, and promoting compliance by supporting an increased public involvement in the compliance procedures and mechanisms; and, to promote targeted, high quality and innovative education and training advancing the MAP – Barcelona Convention system, and to build a “*governance by negotiation and dialogue*” as an innovative and structured process generating international common interest at all levels and stages of development and implementation.

14. It was suggested to enhance the Science-Policy Interface for strengthening the use of scientific and traditional knowledge, and for basing the environmental policies on scientific expertise (evidence-based policies) towards a strategic and well-informed decision-making process.

15. Specific inputs focused on the improvement of the MAP – Barcelona Convention system performance through synergies in specific common areas (biodiversity, marine litter and waste, climate change, circular economy...) with relevant global and regional processes, with a particular attention to the cooperation with the three UN Regional Commissions that cover the Mediterranean basin (UN-ECA, UN-ECE, UN-ESCWA).

16. Finally, it was recommended to create an Emission Control Area in the Mediterranean, called ECAMED, under Annex VI of the 1997 IMO MARPOL Protocol to be launched at the next Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) in 2020.