



## General Assembly of the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission

# FINAL DECLARATION – BARCELONA 2013

*“Towards a new governance for a more sustainable, cohesive and competitive Mediterranean”*

27 June 2013 – Barcelona (Catalonia)

### I. INTRODUCTION

The current global, European and Mediterranean socio-economic situation demonstrates the negative impact of the crisis on the Mediterranean regions, imposing austerity policies and spending cuts in state, regional and local budgets and contributing to a notable slowdown in the reduction of the development gap between the shores of the Mediterranean, their territorial cohesion and the competitiveness of the Mediterranean basin in comparison to the global system. All population segments have been affected, in particular young people and the lowest income groups. Meanwhile, the conflicts currently taking place in some Mediterranean territories – such as in Syria and the consequences of that conflict in neighbouring countries such as Lebanon, Israel and Turkey – as well as the long-term conflicts in Palestine and the complex transition to democratic, less centralised, more devolved Governments in some southern countries following the Arab Spring pose questions regarding the future of Euro-Mediterranean relations.

Alongside this, the European Union is currently in the crucial final phase of the approval of its new Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), which aims to ensure the efficient implementation of its ambitious policies and strategies, such as Cohesion Policy, Neighbourhood Policy, Migration and Asylum Policy, Enlargement Policy and Europe 2020 Growth Strategy. Moreover, the EU is starting to prepare for the renewal of its main institutions with elections of the European Parliament and the appointment of a new European Commission in 2014. In this context, and with a view to **creating an area for peace, reconciliation, solidarity, stability and prosperity in the Mediterranean**, the key challenges for the regions of the Mediterranean basin and the European Union, both in the present and the near future, would appear to be linked to **two main questions**:

- how to manage the recovery from the economic and financial crisis affecting the territories in the context of globalisation, taking advantage of the great potential they offer,<sup>1</sup> promoting innovation and with a focus on sustainable economic, environmental, social, inclusive, cohesive, and intelligent development.
- how to design more effective and democratic mechanisms within the framework of the European-Mediterranean partnership and the renewed relations in the context of Neighbourhood<sup>2</sup> and Enlargement of the European Union.

The members of the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission (IMC) will meet in Barcelona on 27 June 2013 in this context in order to propose the following **reflections, recommendations and proposals** to be taken into account in debates concerning European, Mediterranean and global agendas:

<sup>1</sup> Primary materials; territorial, marine and human resources, etc.

<sup>2</sup> EU Communications: [European Neighbourhood Policy: working towards a stronger partnership](#) JOIN (2013) 4 final - [Una asociación para la democracia y la prosperidad compartida con los países del Mediterráneo Meridional](#); [Delivering on a new NB Policy](#) JOIN (2012) 4 final; COM (2011) 200 final - [una nueva respuesta a una vecindad cambiante](#) COM (2011) 303 Final - [Joint staff working document: Implementation of the EU NP in 2012 Regional Report: a partnership for democracy and Shared Prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean SWD](#) (2013) 86 final and [statistical annex](#) - ENP Progress Reports 2013. [ENI Regulation COM](#) (2011) 839 final..

## **II. REGARDING THE MULTIANNUAL FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK 2014-2020 AND ITS IMPACT ON THE REGIONS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN**

The [conclusions of the European Commission of 7 and 8 February 2013](#) on the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020 contain a significant budget reduction when compared to the ambitions initially set out in the European Commission proposal. This reduction<sup>3</sup> is significant, in particular in the case of Cohesion Policy,<sup>4</sup> Territorial Cooperation<sup>5</sup> and the new Neighbourhood Instrument (and its cross-border cooperation component),<sup>6</sup> although the reduction has also been significant in the case of the Common Agricultural Policy and the section related to the trans-European transport network.

In particular, the countries and regions of the Mediterranean encompassed by Cohesion Policy will receive a notably smaller sum in terms of Structural Funds,<sup>7</sup> with the countries that have most recently acceded being those most affected by the cuts.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, according to its [open letter regarding the EU budget](#), the CPMR has detected that the review clause proposed by the Council affecting the Structural Funds in 2016 could have a negative impact on six Mediterranean countries and their regions.<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, the delay in decision making<sup>10</sup> regarding the MFF is affecting the preparation and implementation of a new programming period.

In this regard, the Intermediterranean Commission:

1. Voices its disappointment with the proposal which it regards as lacking in ambition, in particular with regard to Cohesion Policy and European Territorial Cooperation, and expresses its doubts as to the proposal's true potential to assist the territories to be more competitive, recover from the crisis and generate employment and a better quality of life for the citizens of its regions. In this respect, the IMC supports the proposal of the European Parliament formulated on 13 March in its [resolution concerning the MFF](#) highlighting the **need for a compulsory and comprehensive revision of the European budget over the medium term, as well as the importance of its flexibility and increased investment** in: research and development, infrastructure and youth, meeting climate change and energy objectives, improving education levels and promoting social inclusion, fulfilling its international commitments.
2. With regard to a future review of Structural Fund allocations, **it supports a fairer review system** that would provide tangible benefits for the regions most affected by the crisis, such as those of the Mediterranean.
3. Although an overall increase has been recorded in comparison to the period 2007-2013,<sup>11</sup> the IMC expresses its dissatisfaction with the Neighbourhood budget when compared with the EC's proposal, and **advocates that a geographical balance should be maintained with respect to funds destined for the new European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) (southern countries)** as well as highlighting the strategic importance of relations with the basin's neighbouring countries.
4. Reaffirms the **importance to its regions of initiatives such as the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI)**. And requests that: the resources destined for countries and regions with the most recent critical rates of unemployment be increased; that efforts are made to ensure a rapid and effective implementation, taking into account the competences and expertise of regional Governments in the spheres of youth policy and the promotion of employment.
5. Reiterates the need for awareness-raising among European institutions in order to ensure that **tripartite dialogues can be brought to a successful conclusion and that an agreement on the MFF can be reached rapidly**. Alongside this, it is necessary to ensure the timely approval by the European Parliament of the regulations encompassed by Cohesion Policy, as well as the European Code of Conduct on Partnership and other related delegated acts.<sup>12</sup>
6. It requests that the **CPMR Intermediterranean Commission is actively involved in the process of preparing the new ENPI CBCMED programmes**, contributing all of its expertise as well as that of its regions. Moreover, it requests that the aforementioned programmes specifically allow for the **participation of "umbrella" organisations of regional and local Governments such as the CPMR in appointments, including that of the position of lead partner**.

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<sup>3</sup> 70 billion Euros with respect to the initial EC proposal.

<sup>4</sup> 19 billion Euros lower than the initial EC proposal.

<sup>5</sup> A 25 percent reduction with respect to the initial EC proposal.

<sup>6</sup> An 18 percent reduction with respect to the initial EC proposal.

<sup>7</sup> An average reduction of 20.6 percent compared to the period 2007-2013 (Greece, France, Spain, Slovenia, Malta, Cyprus and Portugal). The only country to receive an increase (of 10 percent) was Italy.

<sup>8</sup> Bulgaria, Poland, Romania and Slovakia.

<sup>9</sup> Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Spain and Cyprus. [http://www.cprm.org/pub/agenda/2267\\_cpmr-review\\_clause-structural\\_funds.pdf](http://www.cprm.org/pub/agenda/2267_cpmr-review_clause-structural_funds.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> There have been delays and deadlock in tripartite dialogues in which the European Parliament disagreed with various aspects of the European Council's conclusions of February.

<sup>11</sup> 32%

<sup>12</sup> Programming document and implementing rules.

7. Underlines the importance of the EU Migration and Asylum Policy, its contribution to the governance and social cohesion of Member States of this Commission, and the need to take into account this Policy in the objectives of the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission.

### **III. GOVERNANCE PERSPECTIVES: A MACRO-REGIONAL AND CONVERGENCE FOCUS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN**

The Mediterranean area represents a complex socio-economic, political and institutional setting on different levels combining diverse European, national, regional, local and global cultures, strategies, funds and policies. In particular, it encompasses certain member countries of the EU, pre-accession and candidate countries, as well as countries included in the southern Neighbourhood Policy, Euro-Mediterranean and multilateral institutions and different groups of sub-national, economic and civil society players. On the other hand, it is clear that the common challenges faced by the Mediterranean basin have not been dealt with effectively, despite a relatively high deployment of resources and actors. The development gap between the territories clearly demonstrates that both the political dialogue and the financial and cooperative instruments employed to date should be used in a more efficient, effective and coordinated way based on the principles of partnership and multi-level governance. On a more general note, the territorial governance of the Mediterranean needs to be updated and improved in order to provide effective responses to common challenges.

In this regard, the Intermediterranean Commission, in line with its [Mediterranean Integrated Strategy and action plan 2013-2014](#):

1. Upholds the need to learn from the European experiences of the Baltic and Danube to **examine the possibility of applying a macro-regional focus to the area of the Mediterranean**, as well as **revising its cooperation mechanisms with a view to the possible application of the partnership and management mechanisms of European Cohesion Policy to the Neighbourhood Policy** by the year 2030. In this respect, the Intermediterranean Commission once again reiterates the need for a [real convergence policy on the southern borders of the EU](#).
2. Supports the interpretation of the **macro-regional strategy concept** set out in the [Policy Paper approved by the CPMR Political Bureau](#), which underlines the need for a **balance between the “bottom-up” and “top down” components of this innovative type of strategy in the definition of the priorities to be included in the emblematic action plans and projects** to be developed. Thus, it reiterates the **importance of the logic of multilevel governance, coordination between public and private actors and the leading role of the Regions, the role played by the European Commission in providing support and monitoring and the need to secure the support of the States** (in the case of the Mediterranean, those on both shores).
3. Faced with the need to find the highest common denominator for cooperation in the Mediterranean basin and to take advantage of the specific characteristics of the territory, as well as existing relations, **the IMC proposes the promotion of three macro-regional strategies in particular – and according to the “variable geometry” model – that might, over the long term, lead to the definition of an integrated supra-regional strategy for the whole basin**: one corresponding to the **“Adriatic-Ionian” area**,<sup>13</sup> another for the **“Western Mediterranean”** and a third for the area of the **“Eastern Mediterranean”**. Each of these macro-regions could achieve – over the short, medium and long term – more cohesion and dynamism than one sole region encompassing the whole basin, increasing the area's functioning and efficiency. To this end, the Intermediterranean Commission also underlines the need to have the support in the definition of these possible strategies from the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), the Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly (ARLEM) and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean, as well as local and regional Government associations, the Euroregions and the European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation (EGTCs) operating in the basin.
4. The IMC commits to **developing these reflections at the heart of its agencies and within the framework of the responsibility bestowed on the IMC by the ARLEM in designing the report issued by the ECOTER Commission concerning a possible “Cohesion Strategy for the Mediterranean”** and to contributing to the **promotion – in collaboration with the UfM, with whom it has signed a Memorandum of Intent – of the coordination of key players in the Mediterranean** on the definition and specification of macro-regional strategies and emblematic initiatives. In this respect, the IMC aims to capitalise on the expertise, projects and initiatives involving the exchange of best practice carried out by its regions to date.
5. Despite the “three NOs” rule (no new institutions, no new funding, no new legislation), the IMC **requests more systematic support from the EU for the start-up of the macro-regional strategies emerging in the Mediterranean area** by means of transnational cooperation programmes such as the new MED programme, as well as via the future Mediterranean basin programme on cross-border cooperation within

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<sup>13</sup> Their definition is already being carried out via communication 30.11.2012, COM (2012) 713 final and the promotion of the Adriatic-Ionian initiative of the Committee of the Regions (CoR), the Adriatic-Ionian Euroregion and other key players.

the framework of the European Neighbourhood Instrument, and technical assistance from the Structural Funds.

6. Calls on **Mediterranean Member States – and in particular the upcoming Greek and Italian presidencies of the Council of the European Union – to support and promote both the implementation of the Adriatic-Ionian strategy**, driving the design of its action plan in 2014, **and, in particular, a new strategy for the Western Mediterranean.**

Moreover, the Intermediterranean Commission expresses its support for the [Political Declaration of the 3rd Forum of Local and Regional Authorities of the Mediterranean](#) in its call for a **more democratic governance of the basin** and welcomes the creation of the **Political Council of the Mediterranean Commission within the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)**, to which the IMC pledges its active participation.

#### **IV. THE MARITIME DIMENSION OF THE STRATEGIES FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN**

The Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) and various sectoral maritime policies of the EU have experienced great progress in recent years, and the “Blue Growth” Strategy is at the heart of these dynamics and policies. The strategy focuses on five priority themes: marine renewable energy; coastal tourism, aquaculture, marine mineral mining and blue biotechnology. Within this framework and in the Mediterranean context, the Intermediterranean Commission:

1. Highlights the importance and great potential of ensuring a **leading role for the maritime dimension<sup>14</sup> in the framework of future macro-regional strategies for the whole basin as a driving force for sustainable growth and cohesion between the shores of the Mediterranean.**  
**Supports the IMP, marine economy and the “blue growth” focus** pursued by the EC, as well as an adequate budget in the framework of the European Fund for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (FEAMP), both for the Fisheries Policy component and the specific element of the IMP. Similarly, the IMC requests **the effective integration of the maritime dimension in European Sectoral policies (Horizon 2020, etc.) and Neighbourhood and Cohesion Policies**, in particular with regard to potential investments.
2. Highlights the usefulness of studying, in coherence with the future macro-regional focus, the **possibility of implementing a fisheries strategy in the Adriatic within the framework of the PSC, capable of safeguarding the specific characteristics of the area’s fisheries sector.**
3. **Supports the political messages of the European [MAREMED](#) project for [strengthening of the framework conditions to contribute to “blue growth” in the coastal regions of the Mediterranean,<sup>15</sup> requesting that they are taken into account by the relevant authorities.](#)** Moreover, the Intermediterranean Commission pledges to identify **new projects and initiatives to be developed in line with these recommendations.**
4. **Adopts and supports the trans-regional initiative “[Bologna Charter 2012](#)”** with a view to defining a common strategy in the coastal regions, the bases for cooperation between the Mediterranean regions in terms of policies related to **Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM)** and the MSP, the adaptation of coastal areas to climate change, and the reduction of the risk of coastal flooding, erosion and marine ingress. In this sense, it **requests that the macro-project proposed by the charter as one of the emblematic initiatives of the future macro-regional strategies be taken into consideration.**
5. Supports a **strengthened industrial focus** within the framework of the maritime focuses of the European Union in the Mediterranean.<sup>16</sup>
6. Pledges to create a **cross-cutting IMC agenda for the adaptation to and fight against climate change** with its working groups “Water, Renewable Energies and Energy Efficiency”.
7. Aims to **promote, and draw the attention of European institutions to, the key role that can be played by maritime and coastal tourism** in the framework of the future macro-regional strategies in the Mediterranean, as well as within the framework of the financial instruments for the period 2014-2020 through the promotion of specific projects.

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<sup>14</sup> Marine research, climate change in coastal areas, maritime spatial planning and Integrated coastal zone management (ICZM), marine data, the protection of marine ecosystems, the fight against contamination, the five themes of blue growth, fishing, and so on.

<sup>15</sup> Approved at the headquarters of the IMC’s Political Bureau on 15/03/2013 in Florence

<sup>16</sup> Both those related to Blue Growth and others that are relevant such as shipyards in connection with strategies such as Leadership, with the aim of accompanying the diversification of industrial activities in order to promote employment.

## **V. OTHER KEY PRIORITIES FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN: ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY, WATER, TRANSPORT, SMES, YOUTH POLICY**

Moreover, the IMC, in accordance with the priorities set out in its action plan, as well as in the plans created by its working groups:

1. Aims to establish **energy efficiency, the promotion of renewable energy and the key role of the regions as priorities for the Mediterranean**, as well as define and support:
  - a. An energy efficiency (EE) route map and the promotion of renewable energy in the Mediterranean.
  - b. A policy document and strategic projects to improve the responses of transnational cooperation to the challenges faced in EE in buildings, derived from the capitalisation of the European projects [ELIH-MED](#) and [MARIE](#).
2. Sets out to **analyse and present the specific characteristics of the Mediterranean in order to contribute to the improved implementation of the Water Framework Directive**.
3. Expresses the need to improve conditions, mobilise and coordinate financial resources and governance and participation of regional governments in the framework of the EU's new programme in the sphere of TEN-T in order to **ensure sustainable, multi-modal connections between the peripheral regions and the islands/central region, and between the islands and peripheral regions themselves. Highlights the importance of the Mediterranean corridor and the development of marine transport to social and economic growth and underlines the need to support the progress of interoperability and cross-border connections beforehand to ensure the accessibility of peripheries with the centre of Europe. Moreover, effort is requested to boost the maritime dimension of the corridor, integrating actions for sustainable maritime transport and for the development of Motorways of the Sea**. In this sense, it is pleased that the EU has agreed on the priority of their funding and implementation for 2030. On the other hand, it requests that the future trans-European network encompasses the possibility of funding prior studies on the project to develop the central Pyrenees crossing.
4. Wishes to **support the launch of a Guarantee Fund for Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises in the Mediterranean** as an instrument for growth and employment.
5. Highlights that young people must be included in a sustainable long-term strategy in order to provide a definitive solution to young people's difficulties in accessing the world of work. **It is necessary for the EU to pay more attention to young people with multi-level employment policies**. The Mediterranean Regions are those worst affected by youth unemployment. Therefore, the IMC proposes that greater coordination should take place, involving initiatives targeted at NEETs, early school leavers and talent and capable of creating funds to increase the employment opportunities available to these groups. **Among the practical actions that it puts forward, the Intermediterranean Commission proposes the creation of a Mediterranean network of youth associations** targeted at ensuring knowledge sharing and exchanges between young people and youth policy makers, as well as strengthening the EURES network.

## **VI. GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDAS: THE KEY ROLE OF REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS, DECENTRALISED COOPERATION AND SUPPORT FOR DECENTRALISATION**

With regard to Global Development Agendas, which will undoubtedly affect the Mediterranean in the years to come, the Intermediterranean Commission:

1. Maintains the importance of ensuring the **participation of regional and local Governments in the creation of development Agendas post-2015, of the Sustainable Development Goals and the efficiency of development cooperation** in order to define objectives that are adapted to the real situation of the territories and meet environmental and socio-economic targets.
2. Requests the support of the EU, the Member States and the UNDP to ensure that **local and regional authorities are represented in the Steering Committee of the global partnership for effective development cooperation**.
3. Expresses its desire to **maximise the potential for decentralised cooperation of regional and local Governments in the Mediterranean as a key element for bringing the shores of the Mediterranean closer together**; by means of, amongst other things, initiatives, twinning programmes, and **the new programme for civil society organisations and local actors in development**, as well as its willingness to **participate in projects to train civil servants and local representatives of administrations in the Mediterranean** in the provision of quality public services to citizens, in particular in the case of those projects to be carried out within the framework of ARLEM and the UfM.

In conclusion, the Regions of the Intermediterranean Commission reaffirm their commitment to continue working together on the perspective of a new, democratic, multi-level governance that will help to consolidate a more sustainable, cohesive and competitive Mediterranean area.