



CPMR
CRPM



ΠΕΡΙΦΕΡΕΙΑ ΔΥΤΙΚΗΣ ΕΛΛΑΔΑΣ
γηράν ανιδέως!



CPMR
INTERMEDITERRANEAN
COMMISSION

Final Declaration

CPMR Intermediterranean Commission General Assembly

20/21 June 2019 - Marseille (Region Sud-FR)

This document constitutes the Final Declaration approved by the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission General Assembly, gathered on 20/21 June 2019 in Marseille (Region Sud-FR).

Drafted in the framework of its newly launched [Mediterranean Cooperation Alliance](#), it is intended as a CPMR Intermediterranean Commission contribution to the current debates on the future of the European Union, cohesion and multilevel cooperation at basin level. The Declaration includes reflections on emerging strategies and initiatives, transport & accessibility, Neighborhood, maritime affairs, migration, climate, environment, sustainable tourism, energy efficiency, amongst other themes.

Its references are based on the late and current Mediterranean state-of-the-art regarding the listed issues, as well as on the previous and current CPMR General Secretariat's and CPMR Intermediterranean Commission's works, and those of partner institutions, networks and programs.

CPMR Intermediterranean Commission

6, rue Saint-Martin - 35700 Rennes (FR)

Tel. +33 (0)2 99 35 40 60 // +34 93 554 50 47 - Email: elodie.nunes@cpmr.org

www.cpmr-intermed.org

Amid major political, climatic, social and economic upheavals worldwide, and most particularly in Europe, governance and cooperation models have been and still are intensely and regularly being questioned. At the heart of constantly evolving dynamics, and more than ten years after the creation of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), Mediterranean politics and cooperation frameworks are expecting a new reshuffling.

The recent European parliamentary elections as well as the undergoing governmental changes at national or regional levels are key events which the evolution of cooperation over the coming years and programming period will significantly depend upon.

In this sense, and building on the previous CPMR Intermediterranean Commission Declarations ¹ the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission, addressing European, Euro-Mediterranean and International institutions, as well as Mediterranean stakeholders, hereby:

V I S I O N

1. **Takes pride** in witnessing the evolution of the European project, noticing that Europe has become an evident reality for a great part of the younger generations that have grown up within it. **Worries** though, about the discrepancies growing between territories' interests both in Europe and beyond over the Mediterranean, often driven by egocentrism, emotions and greed. Fair dialogue, solidarity and cooperation should remain the master concepts allowing the preponderance of the human dimension before other interests, especially in the fuzzy Brexit aftermath, the challenges connected to migration, or the evolution of climate which pressures on the surrounding environment -hence on human well-being- are becoming everyday more exacerbated.
2. **Expresses** its admiration and optimism nonetheless, towards the improvement and strengthening of awareness raising regarding these critical issues oftentimes challenging the peaceful safeguarding of humanity, notably in the Mediterranean. The fact that movements coming from younger generations with the stand-up of young activists as Greta Thunberg defending key values such as environmental protection and climate action, or others pushing for a renewed education on consumption habits is truly encouraging for a better future.

On a more optimistic note, observing the further emergence and strengthening of cohesive initiatives to enhance cooperation between all shores of the Mediterranean, the Intermediterranean Commission also:

C O O P E R A T I O N

3. **Welcomes** and will follow up the dynamics unfolding from the Summit of the Two Shores - propelled by French President Emmanuel Macron and kicked off in Marseilles this same month of June 2019, serving as a basis for the renewal of cooperation frameworks between Western Mediterranean countries from both Europe and North Africa.
4. **Underlines** again, and in this particular case, that multi-level consultation, cooperation and frameworks including local and regional authorities (LRAs) are key elements for strengthening cohesion at basin level that should be effectively considered. Being at the forefront feeling and facing the first impacts of many challenges stemming from Euro- and Mediterranean geopolitics, endo- or exogenous *phenomena*, LRAs are indeed key players when time comes to make impactful decisions and implement them, whether it be in terms of sustainable socio-economic development, climate change, migration, and other topics all the most as important.
5. **Commits** to promote and implement actions fulfilling the Mediterranean Cooperation Alliance Joint Declaration listed principles, and recalls that the gradual co-ownership, variable geometry and integrated approaches concepts are indispensable to achieve a global strategy at basin level for "a better cohesive and sustainable development in the Mediterranean."

¹ [Barcelona](#) 2013, [Patras](#) 2014, [Venice](#) 2014, [Marseilles](#) 2014, [Nafplio](#) and [Rabat](#) 2015, [Venice](#) 2016, [Barcelona](#) 2017, [Naples](#) 2017, [Patras](#) 2018.

6. **Acknowledges** and welcomes the progress achieved by Mediterranean multilevel stakeholders to make lively and keep implementing macro-regional and sea-basin strategies and initiatives on an always improved operationality.² The Intermediterranean Commission will keep working in/with these frameworks, bringing its support and collaboration to represent regional experiences and expectations to improve cohesion and multilevel governance at basin level, thereby also responding and fulfilling the principles stated in the Mediterranean Cooperation Alliance Joint Declaration.
7. **Recognizes** the Barcelona Convention, development of the United Nations Environmental Program Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP-MAP), as an essential tool to be considered and included for the CPMR on mobility, social cohesion, protection of the environment, protection and promotion of Mediterranean culture and its interactions.
8. **Commits** to fully promote the principles of Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE), and to support their formalization into a joint Declaration basing itself on a prospection report jointly elaborated with Intermediterranean Commission member Regions and reflecting the practices and needs of Mediterranean Regions in terms of Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE).
9. **Calls on** European Institutions for the institutionalization of a Social and Solidarity Economy joint definition, allowing for the harmonization of SSE principles and practices over Europe and the Mediterranean. The Intermediterranean Commission believes that this would facilitate cooperation with SEE promoters, reinforce framework conditions to increase investments, and overall promote an economic system that has historically and culturally been -beyond its numerous shapes and instances- viable in the Mediterranean area.

There is no doubt as to observe that more cohesive actions at Mediterranean level aiming at designing a bonding Sea rather than a dividing one need tireless coordination and resources, whether they be human, material, or financial for true impacts. Yet, beyond these common-sense observations, there are still quite a lot of efforts to be made as to find a working equilibrium allowing for a sustainable repartition of these resources, notably for what regards funding opportunities and the role of Regions in the process. The current redesigning of funds repartition to invest in the European project for the coming programming period and for a more cohesive Mediterranean presents some improvements but still lacks an ambitious stand. Bearing these elements in mind, the Intermediterranean Commission:

10. **Recalls**, on the basis of the CPMR's [Analysis on investment guidance for 2021-2027 Cohesion Policy \(Annex D\)](#), that the territorial dimension should be better considered in the investment priorities related to the Cohesion policy Funds 2021-2027 policy objectives. The funds should, to the best possible extent, be designed in collaboration with regional authorities, in consistency with the existing macro-regional strategies and initiatives present in the Mediterranean. The aim being to ensure a true adequation between regional needs and the sculpting of investment priorities, on the basis of an efficient bottom-up knowledge-based policy objectives definition, taking into account situations such as fighting against depopulation and improving life quality in problematic areas.
11. **Acknowledges**, in complementarity with the wishes and doubts already expressed,³ the European Council and Parliament's efforts in support of better perspectives for the future regulation on the European territorial cooperation goal (Interreg) supported by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)- very much present in the Mediterranean to foster cooperation- and external financing instruments.⁴ The current negotiations reflect most of the concerns

² The AI-NURECC Initiative being one of the examples applying in the framework of the EU Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian area (EUSAIR), or the Hackathons thought to develop bases for projects elaboration responding to the objectives and working axes of the WestMed Initiative.

³ CPMR Intermediterranean Commission 2018 Patras Final Declaration, points 11 through 18.

⁴ Among which, to adapt the architecture of the Interreg Regulation as close as possible to that of 2014-2020 (Council); for existing programs of all three strands to be continued to a maximum extent (Council), a raise for the 2021-2027 ETC budget to

and proposals raised by Mediterranean Regions in the Policy position on the [Future of Territorial Cooperation in the Mediterranean area](#) such as the reintegration of CBC maritime cooperation.

12. **Deplores** the decision to reintroduce the 150km limit in the criteria to define eligibility for maritime cross-border cooperation. The reintroduction of this criterion would only weaken the cooperation dynamics of Mediterranean islands and several coastal regions, also in relation to Mediterranean Partners Countries (MPCs). The consequences of this reintroduction of the limit of 150 km would be particularly harmful for island territories whose specificity is recognized by the provisions of Article 174 TFEU.
 13. **Will keep contributing** to and monitor the works of the CPMR General Secretariat on the European Maritime affairs and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) negotiations, notably to see how the negotiations and future agreement would influence the implementation of the Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP) and the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) in the Mediterranean.
 14. **Recognizes** the special sensitiveness of the agricultural and livestock sector facing the challenges of global warming and will ask regions to focus their efforts on adapting to climate change.
- E
M
F
F
15. **Is rather optimistic** regarding the inclusion of CPMR amendments into the European Parliament revision of the EMFF regulation. The Intermediterranean Commission however stresses that some points remain to be improved in the upcoming negotiations such as the adoption of specific action plans for regions as part of Member States' operational programs, or the increase of the percentage of shared management regarding the EMFF financial envelope to at least the same level – if not beyond – as in the current programming period.⁵
 16. **Will keep contributing** and monitoring the works of the CPMR General Secretariat on Transport and Accessibility, notably for what regards the TEN-T Regulation (and the Connecting Europe Facility-CEF thereof), for which it has recently contributed through a [consultation](#) process reflecting on its guidelines for the coming period.⁶
- T
E
N
-
T
-
C
E
F
17. **Appreciates** the European Parliament's efforts to include CPMR's amendments into its revision of the CEF Regulation, as they would have represented increased opportunities for Mediterranean regions such as the inclusion of maritime sections in the definition of cross-border links allowing for ports to be included in the sections.
 18. **Deplores** however, and beyond the addition of new sections to the Mediterranean corridor, that only a partial agreement has been reached by the European triologue. This agreement leaves apart important dimensions as the increasing of the co-financing rate for territorial accessibility projects regarding both territorial accessibility and maritime transport, or the development of tools to support and encourage modal shift to more sustainable modes including maritime transport.
- S
U
S
"
19. **Will watch** over the protection of the atmospheric environment. The Mediterranean Sea constitutes a single basin in terms of air quality. It is surrounded by diverse mountain systems in Southern Europe, Northern Africa and the Middle East. Pollutant emissions flow quickly between the different regions forming a common mix. Furthermore, the Intermediterranean Commission will endeavour to ensure that the Mediterranean is recognized as a particularly sensitive sea in terms of air quality, and has the treatment of the ECA (Emission Control Area) zone according to protocols for the development of the MARPOL convention on maritime transport.

€11.16 billion (in 2018 prices); a lift of ERDF co-financing rate for Interreg programs from the proposed 70% up to 80%; the reintegration of cooperation on maritime borders into the cross-border cooperation component; the assurance that existing programs under the interregional cooperation strand can continue; the proposal for budget allocations of 67.16% to cross-border cooperation, 17.68% to transnational cooperation, 3.2% to outermost regions' cooperation, 3.27% to interregional cooperation, and a planned share of about 8.69% for the initiative on interregional innovation investments amounts (etc.). [Legislative train schedule](#), consulted June 2019.

⁵ CPMR General Secretariat ["Impact of the CPMR's proposals for amendments on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund 2021-2027"](#)

⁶ CPMR General Secretariat ["Impact of the CPMR proposals for amendments on Connecting Europe Facility 2021-2027"](#)

20. **Welcomes** the complementary focus adopted by the CPMR General Secretariat on Sustainable transport, which has been, alongside ports sustainability, an all the most important topic for urban areas/ports or territories presenting fragile ecosystems such as islands, heritage sites, or protected areas. The Intermediterranean Commission will contribute to these works, fueling them on the basis of its members experiences and cooperation projects results (smart-ports, use of liquefied natural gas, etc.).
21. **Will keep following** the Mediterranean Regional Transport Action Plan (RTAP) implementation, following the Plan's objectives expressed back in 2013 and the previous Intermediterranean Commission recommendations to create potential synergies with the Trans-Mediterranean Network for Transport (TMN-T) and Trans-European Network for Transport (TEN-T).⁷

Linking the Mediterranean region more efficiently seems indeed to be a sine qua non condition to support and allow more impactful results for any kind of cooperation enterprise. In this sense, the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) allows for the development of more links with Europe's neighbor countries and partners and has been presenting encouraging elements for that matter in view of the post-2020 period. For example, an ambitious global budget envelope proposed in the European Commission's Multi-annual Financial Framework (MFF) among which the Neighborhood, Development & International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), and which the Intermediterranean Commission already complimented.⁸ Nonetheless, the Intermediterranean Commission:

22. **Still wonders** about the space saved for regions as such in the NDICI's Regulation and its future implementation since the proposed regulation leaves uncertainty regarding the real potential involvement of regional authorities in future programs and actions. In this sense, Mediterranean Regions support the amendments proposed by the European Parliament that insists on the importance of inclusive dialogue between European institutions, Member States, Partners countries concerned, including national, regional and local authorities, and the civil society among others. This would allow a better democratic ownership.
23. **Asks** the European Institutions to ensure that cross-border cooperation under the new NDICI and INTERREG for 2021-2027 be provided with at least the same financial envelope as in the current 2014-2020 period. Up to 5% of the financial envelope for the Neighborhood area shall be indicatively allocated to support those programs.
24. **Will keep monitoring** the European Neighborhood Instrument Cross-Border Cooperation Program in the Mediterranean (ENI CBC Med)'s priority axes, objectives, and project works, hoping for the further development of a concrete maritime component in the future. The Intermediterranean Commission commits to keep collaborating with projects beneficiaries on themes of interest for the network should opportunities arise. As well, it hopes that, in the future, the thematic of "fight against poverty" will still be a key dimension of the ENI CBC MED Programme, and, that the Mediterranean NEETS and most vulnerable groups (women, children) will still benefit from the EU financial support throughout tangible actions: creation of jobs, support to the launch of MSME's, training, etc.

25. **Will keep monitoring as well** the Adriatic-Ionian Transnational cooperation program (ADRION)'s priority axes, objectives, and project works. The Intermediterranean Commission commits to keep collaborating with projects beneficiaries on themes of interest for the network should opportunities arise.
26. **Still hopes** for more flexibility to be allowed within the ENI CBC Med and ADRION programs - observing good practices from other ETC Programs⁹- to give the opportunity to organizations

⁷ CPMR Intermediterranean Commission 2018 Patras Final Declaration - Point 95.

⁸ CPMR Intermediterranean Commission 2018 Patras Final Declaration - Points 25 and 26.

⁹ Such as Interreg Mediterranean. The ERDF allocated to a single project for partners located in Europe but out of the Program's area must be remain lower than 20 % of the total ERDF contribution to the project. This flexibility rule gives the opportunity for the Intermediterranean Commission to take part in projects as a partner and ERDF funds direct recipient, allowing a direct

presenting relevant experiences and potential positive impacts such as the Intermediterranean Commission to be able to fully work within the programs' projects as funding recipients for the design and implementation of concrete and impacting actions.

27. **Renews** its support to the strengthening of synergies between INTERREG and ENI CBC programs in the current programming period as to improve complementarities, consistency, and the exchange of information between them for a more efficient way of tackling common challenges.
28. **Asks** the EU Institutions to ensure that future ETC programs, particularly Interreg Med, leave the door open for the direct participation of third countries. This would allow the strengthening of cooperation dynamics with MPCs territorial stakeholders, building on project results transference and capitalization.
29. **Congratulates** the Interreg Mediterranean Transnational Cooperation Program (Interreg MED) for the reflections and efforts performed to enhance the links between territorial realities and national and European policy making. The Intermediterranean Commission has been witnessing these developments notably through the works of horizontal projects and their production of policy recommendations issued from the translation of technical outputs from research, pilots and capitalization projects.¹⁰
30. **Will keep investing** itself, supporting and using the produced Interreg Med deliverables to nourish its reflections and works with its own network and beyond, with strategic key stakeholders. It will see to especially bear in mind the mainstreaming dimension of the program when doing so, to enhance uptake of knowledge for a more integrated and multilevel policy-making.¹¹
31. **Welcomes** the latest developments of the Interreg MED's governance project PANORAMED, its organization into key work packages and tasks among which "innovation," "liaising" and "mainstreaming," and the publication of its terms of reference for strategic projects to start implementing its dual bottom-up and top-down approach for an improved and shared Mediterranean governance.
32. **Underlines** that a stronger link is needed between macro-regional and sea-basin strategies and initiatives with INTERREG. However, this requires strong multilevel governance of the strategies, as well as an adequate alignment of ETC funding for programs covering entirely or partially the territory of one or more strategies. In this sense, a sufficient flexibility should be ensured in Art. 15.3 of the ETC Regulation to be able to maximize resources and at the same time respond to emerging territorial needs.
33. **Welcomes as well** the Committee of the Regions's (CoR) report on Capacity building of local and regional public administration in Eastern Partnership countries and encourages the LRAs thereof to also consider the dynamics for integrated territorial development expressed in the Intermediterranean Commission's Training Manuel for the Delivery of Public Services with an Integrated Territorial approach for their future territorial development projects and policies.
34. **Will maintain** the good dynamics developed with others cooperation frameworks, networks and territorial actors to work on blue economy related matters.¹² The Intermediterranean Commission is glad to witness these relationships as true manifestations of multi-level governed actions and hopes for their increased integration over the coming years.

"open door" for the projects and programs results and recommendations to be mainstreamed at multilevel governance - and in particular regional and EU- levels.

¹⁰ The Intermediterranean Commission is currently involved as a partner in two horizontal projects: [InnoBlueGrowth](#) (innovation in the blue economy) and [PANACeA](#) (biodiversity protection).

¹¹ Among which – though not restrictively – the Union for the Mediterranean, the BlueMed Initiative with its Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda, the WestMed maritime initiative, the EUSAIR.

¹² Notably with the Union for the Mediterranean, the WestMed Initiative, the EUSAIR, the BlueMed Initiative, the Center for Mediterranean Integration (CMI) on migration and energy issues, the United Nations Environmental Program Mediterranean Action Plan (UNEP-MAP), Arco Latino, MedCities, and others territorial actors.

*In view of the abovementioned points, it becomes easier to imagine how an improved **multilevel governance, ambitious integrated cooperation goals, and a potential wide mix of available funds dedicated to regional development** in the region would suffice to bring the Mediterranean area to a more favorable environment for its populations, as back on a shinier spotlight to the eyes of the world. Indeed, these three elements have for a long time participated – and still do – to either help develop or strengthen various socio-economic sectors in the basin notably linked to the blue economy, calling now for more sustainability and durability. The Intermediterranean Commission hereby:*

**B
L
U
E
E
C
O
N
O
M
Y**

35. **Looks forward** to contribute to the CoR Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly (ARLEM)'s report on the Blue economy particularly addressing the potentialities for its effective and sustainable development with Mediterranean Partners Countries. The Intermediterranean Commission hopes that the conclusions to this report will allow further cooperation initiatives to be developed supporting the blue economy over all Mediterranean countries and that it will serve as a mapping and knowledge basis for the potential adaptation of territorial cooperation programs' objectives looking at the upcoming 2021-2027 programming period and strengthening links with all shores of the basin.

36. **Reminds** that to promote the blue economy, blue education and skills are key elements that should be transversally addressed particularly through cooperation programs in the Mediterranean, in complementarity with existing EU, national, regional and local educational programs and dedicated funds.¹³

**Y
O
U
T
H**

37. **Supports and promotes** the Blue Growth Community's Summer School (Interreg Med) to be held beginning of July 2019 in Kotor (Montenegro), aiming to improve the employability and skills transversality of students, public servants and representatives of the private sector by imparting them state-of-the-art knowledge on identified blue economy sectors.

38. **Is eager** to take part in the new phases of horizontal projects (Interreg Med), increase synergies with other Interreg Med thematic communities such as Green Growth or Renewable Energy to cite a few, and to enhance the transferring, capitalization and mainstreaming of projects results into local, regional, national, European and Euro-Mediterranean policies, when applicable.

39. **Will see** to support actions for the Green New Deal to fulfil ecological transition serving to improve social cohesion, will democratize the use of energy and will involve savings in the use of natural resources, instead of using the public authorities to promote new speculative systems.

It goes without saying that all blue economy sectors represent great opportunities to also improve social conditions, equality as well as integration of populations into the labor market, whether they be unemployed young people, graduates or migrants. On the last point, the Intermediterranean Commission specifically:

**M
I
G
R
A
T
I
O
N**

40. **Congratulates** the United Nations' General Assembly for coming up with a Global Compact for Migration last December 2018, which aim is to promote safe, orderly and regular migration and to unite departure, transit and receiving countries around a shared vision, encouraging more favorable conditions for migrants and the ending of all discriminations from the part of states. Such multilevel instruments could have the potential to improve migration and integration governance.

41. **Is nonetheless preoccupied** by the difficulties engendered for cooperating on migration matters among several EU and Euro-Mediterranean countries. The Intermediterranean Commission wishes for an increased willingness to negotiate and find compromises within a joint and more stable common framework for the well-being of all, including that of migrants, bearing in mind the human dimension above all. EU and Euro Mediterranean countries should, above all, comply with the regulatory (United Nations) and legislative framework on Human Rights.

¹³ i.e. Erasmus+ or EMFF tenders such as Blue Careers or Blue Skills. Good practices exist with the CPMR's Vasco da Gama Initiative and the Vasco da Gama project stemming from it that was funded by DG MOVE, or spin-off actions such as the Vasco da Gama Summer School "Navigation: Security and Environment" promoted by the University of Bari Aldo Moro and to which the Intermediterranean Commission participated.

42. **Welcomes** the CPMR Report on the External dimension of Migration and **supports** the latest CPMR's Issue Paper on "[The External dimension of European migration policy: Working together, the regional strategy](#)" drafted with the contribution of various Mediterranean Regions. The Intermediterranean Commission accordingly calls on EU programs and financial instruments in the post-2020 programming period to be more open as to include EU regions within the external dimension of EU migration policy when deemed appropriate for them. This, in order to reinforce their potential engagement and to facilitate cooperation and dialogue with non-EU regions.
43. **Recalls** that migration not only is caused by economic or geopolitical issues, but also by the climate crisis. The number of environmental migrants has been increasing over the past years, implying that managing migration should be improved on the one hand while increasing all efforts to adapt to and mitigate the effects of the climate crisis on the other.

And indeed, the Mediterranean finds itself in a very specific position as regards climate. While the world has warmed up with an average of 1°C since the end of the pre-industrial era, the Mediterranean is affected by a warming of 1.4°C, making it the fastest warming region in the world and the most vulnerable in the present day. In October 2018, a consortium of scientists of 15 Mediterranean countries published an article in the review "Nature Climate Change" to raise awareness about the specific risks related to global warming in the Mediterranean. While the report of the Mediterranean Experts on Climate and Environmental Change (MedECC) is expected for the end of 2019, the 15 scientists insisted on the following issues as being the most alarming with regards to the climate crisis in the Mediterranean: the difficult access to water, the degradation of the ecosystems, the decreasing food production -and its related geopolitical risks- and health threats through the emergence of new diseases. With these elements in mind, the Intermediterranean Commission:

44. **Is grateful** for the existence of the [European Solidarity Fund](#) (EUSF) "to respond to major natural disasters and express European solidarity to disaster-stricken regions within Europe," which constitutes a helpful instrument Mediterranean Regions, even if its budget could be increased and its eligibility conditions more flexible in the post-2020 period so as to encompass more specific cases.¹⁴ Potentialities for EU Institutions to adopt a broader thematic special instrument capable of responding both to natural disasters and emergency needs with EU, IPA and third countries, including response to humanitarian crises could also be explored.
45. **Asks** the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) to also specialize in the care of climate refugees, being able to give attention to people forced to move due to these reasons.
46. **Asks** the European institutions to foresee a potential part of the EUSF to be dedicated to supporting Regions in terms of infrastructures to host migrants in more decent conditions. The Intermediterranean Commission acknowledges that emigration might not always be caused by natural events, but can still happen, to the same extent as natural disasters, on an extraordinary basis as a consequence of extraordinary conditions (unstable geopolitical situation being the most recent examples).
47. **Encourages** countries to qualify the diminishing of anthropogenically exerted pressures on climate as an urgent priority. The Intermediterranean Commission welcomes the latest initiatives and funds allocated to the mitigation of impacts and the climate crisis made available by the European Union, observing real positive changes. The Intermediterranean Commission nevertheless recalls that the steps for action so far undertaken by most countries seem to be too small and too slow before the evolutionary speed of climate, and that more efforts should be made.¹⁵

If decisions regarding the climate crisis can be hard to make or to implement at state level, Regions and Municipalities have nonetheless showed extensive experience in the adaptation to and mitigation of climate change. Reiterating that Regions should therefore have a specific space in the negotiations for climate actions

¹⁴ The total amount of damages must exceed 1.5% of the regional GDP (1% for outermost regions) for Regions to benefit from the fund, carry over of unspent funds time limited to N+1, among others.

¹⁵ See the "[CPMR action in the climate field: state of play and next steps](#)" technical paper (Feb. 2019).

and budgeting at European level seems to be fair.¹⁶ Given the particular vulnerability and uneven impact of climate change in the Mediterranean Regions, the Intermediterranean Commission:

M
I
T
I
G
A
T
I
O
N
-
A
D
A
P
T
A
T
I
O
N

48. **Wishes** that the European Union progressively introduce a climate change mitigation and adaptation variable into funds allocation criteria.
49. **Showcases** again the good practices stemming from the Bologna Charter and its Joint Action Plan (JAP) for the adaptation of coastal areas to climate change that have been translated into cooperation projects and labelled by the Union for the Mediterranean, in coherence with the UfM's Declarations on the Blue Economy and works on the Environment.¹⁷ The Intermediterranean Commission calls on other local, regional, national, European and Mediterranean authorities to follow and implement to the best possible extent these recommendations, contributing thereby to boosting actions responding to the integrated coastal zones management principle as well.
50. **Recognizes** the special vulnerability of the islands to climate change, due to its limited space and the difficulty of sharing resources, as well as being surrounded by the sea. Also, the Intermediterranean Commission considers it is an opportunity to invest in islands as test laboratories to establish success showcases with replicability in the continent.
51. **Will pursue** its works on Water management, as a follow-up of the Water Framework Directive, the Global Water Partnership-Mediterranean (GWP-Med) and other UfM-related activities, and of the H2Orizon Fair (September 2018) which aim was to promote cooperation between companies, public administrations and experts, and to present elements, reflections and technologies that will determine the future of the sector.¹⁸
52. **Will promote** research to have a better knowledge and better capacity to mitigate and adapt to climate change, and will promote the exchange of knowledge between the scientific world and policy makers.

Moreover, it is worth remembering that the climate crisis is not the only phenomenon exerting pressures on water resources. Added to the pressures exerted by economic drivers in the Mediterranean, contamination, eutrophication and marine litter are all human-caused phenomena that would need to be effectively tackled to preserve the environment, biodiversity and human well-being. In this regard, the Intermediterranean Commission:

P
L
A
S
T
I
C
W
A
S
T
E

53. **Reiterates** its support to the CPMR Declaration on marine litter and plastic waste. The Intermediterranean Commission will keep contributing to these works, also nourishing them through capitalizing the projects results coming from the Biodiversity Protection Community (Interreg Med) and related activities.¹⁹
54. **Commits to promote** the Declaration for Ecosystem-based approaches for biodiversity protection and management powered by the Biodiversity Protection Horizontal Project PANACeA (Interreg Med) and already endorsed by the Intermediterranean Commission Political Bureau. The Declaration is designed to encourage environmental actors and institutions to adopt a holistic, integrated, ecosystem-based and cross-cutting approach for the conservation and management of the coastal and marine environment, and to support collaborative mechanisms, tools and actions to that end.
55. **Will focus** efforts on protection of the Blue Carbon, as an essential value in the Mediterranean. Posidonia helps maintaining the ecosystem integrity of our coasts and ensures the attractiveness of our beaches.

¹⁶ CPMR Intermediterranean Commission 2018 Patras Final Declaration - Points 33 to 39.

¹⁷ Notably, the CO-EVOLVE project (Interreg Med), the Co-Evolve4BG project (ENI CBC Med), and the MedCoast4BG project (UfM labelled).

¹⁸ As announced in the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission 2018 Patras Final Declaration - Points 102 and 104.

¹⁹ ACT4LITTER, AMAre, MedSeaLitter, PlasticBusters MPAs, MPA-ADAPT, among others.

56. **Is proud** of the launch of the Biodiversity Protection Data knowledge platform (PANACeA, Interreg Med) and will see to its promotion over relevant initiatives and throughout its network and key stakeholders. The platform is designed as one entry point to scientific evidence supporting best practice on protected area management and environmental policymaking in the Mediterranean region. Its objective is to give visibility to effective methodologies, key project results, and actions towards biodiversity protection by uniting scientific evidence, practice and policy. It therefore serves as a reference for guiding policy enforcement and future measures affecting natural resource management in protected areas.²⁰
57. **Will promote** the policy messages elaborated by the PHAROS4MPAs project (Interreg MED), having contributed to them as part of the advisory board of the reports produced. The recommendations will aim at achieving enhanced management effectiveness in view of contributing to maintaining marine biodiversity and ecosystems by strengthening Mediterranean MPAs management and networking.
58. **Reaffirms** its support to the works of the Union for the Mediterranean regarding Energy, Climate, Water, Environment and the Blue Economy, and specifically the further development of the Blue Economy Stakeholders platform.

59. **Reiterates** its belief as for the strategic relevance of big data as one of the most important priorities to improve knowledge on climate change, sustainable territorial development as well as on other key policies such as health, aging, education, society and above all innovation.²¹
60. **Underlines** though the necessity to optimize the use of already existing data platforms instead of creating new ones when the desired typology of information already exists. The storage of data is increasingly becoming an issue with regards to power consumption, which multiplication and duplication renders even more less sustainable.

61. **Is glad** to participate to the HERIT-DATA project (Interreg Med) activities, which as a matter of fact works on finding innovative solutions to better manage tourism flows impact on cultural and natural heritage sites through technologies and big data. This project focuses especially on historic cities and sites of particular cultural interest, including UNESCO World Heritage sites, and in its first stage of development, that one of collecting, integrating and analyzing information, it has given and as a result, a benchmarking study on the management carried out by several tourist destinations in relation to mass tourism, its planning and lines of action to avoid / minimize its possible negative impacts. The Intermediterranean Commission looks forward to its first results.
62. **Congratulates** the fellow Sustainable Tourism Interreg Med Community and tourism actors for the organization of the Med Sustainable Tourism Convention this month of June 2019 in Barcelona, addressing the various dimensions of tourism in the Med,²² as well as the effort made to translate the main outcomes and results of the Community's projects into policy recommendations, gathered into four policy factsheets.²³ These results are possible thanks

²⁰ The MED Biodiversity Protection Knowledge Platform contains recommendations and data gathered by the Mediterranean biodiversity protection community participating in the Biodiversity Protection Community – all thematic projects approved under Interreg Med 2014-2020, together with external validated open source information and data. Additional integration of relevant sources ensures the combination of harmonized inputs from different actors to be catalogued based on the type, theme, and spatial features among others, to facilitate their searchability, consultation and dissemination.

²¹ As mentioned in the EuroHPC (High Performance Computing) Declaration signed in Rome on 23rd March 2017 and introduced in the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission 2018 Patras Final Declaration - Point 36.

²² i.e. labels, data for tourism models management, the diversification of tourism offer, accessibility, sustainability, environmental impacts of tourism and the involvement of the private sector to help mitigate tourism negative externalities, coastal and maritime tourism, also sharing experiences and knowledge from local and regional levels.

²³ [Factsheet #1](#) "Promoting alternative tourism models to reduce pressures in the Mediterranean region;" [Factsheet #2](#) "Tourism as a strategic driver for inclusive, responsible and sustainable growth in the Mediterranean region;" [Factsheet #3](#) "Ensuring an effective monitoring of tourism sustainability in the Mediterranean region;" [Factsheet #4](#) "Governance as a tool for sustainable and responsible tourism in the Mediterranean region."

to the Mediterranean natural and cultural richness and to the planned evolution in terms of experimental tourism products of the destinations that make it up. The Intermediterranean Commission will keep following the works of the Community through the thematic projects it is involved in such as CO-EVOLVE, MITOMED+ and HERIT-DATA, which activities and initiatives are very much in line with the Intermediterranean Commission's Agenda on Sustainable Tourism.

63. **Will support** the tourism sector in order to adapt infrastructures and the business model to the challenges posed by climate change, the management of water resources, and to prevent its effects on the coast and the changes of landscapes.

In view of these precisions, it is also worth reminding that the Mediterranean area remains the most touristic region in the world, thanks to its cultural richness and the diversity of its ecosystems. As tourism seems to be evolving on a skyrocketing trend in the Mediterranean, it is still to be rendered more sustainable. Increasing synergies with other sectors such as the energetic one might offer interesting solutions to mitigate the negative impacts of tourism while still developing it, and reinforcing the use of clean and renewable energies at the same time. Hereby, the Intermediterranean Commission:

64. **Will follow up** the development and the implementation of the SHERPA project's Joint Action Plan (JAP) (Interreg Med) for energy renovation in Mediterranean buildings, aiming at creating a common framework/process and hub to streamline regional policies and match with the needs/demands of other stakeholders (public and private) in the field of energy renovation, proposing specific actions for their implementation. The Intermediterranean Commission sees a potential to the further spreading of SHERPA's results -notably beyond public housing- to private housing indeed. There could be interesting links to be drawn to the tourism sector as well, considering the energy consumption of touristic private-owned buildings in the Mediterranean area.
65. **Hopes** for a smooth transfer of SHERPA's results onto other scales at Mediterranean level, notably to reach the southern and eastern rims of the basin. Potential tools and frameworks to be used to that end could be through other cooperation programs covering these areas (e.g. ENI CBC Med, Interreg Balkan and Black Sea, among others).
66. **Bears** increasing interest on circular economy and wishes to deepen its works and increase synergies on the matter with actors of the circular economy ecosystem, and with its fellow CPMR Islands Commission. For example, potential working actions could be on the design and manufacturing systems of new products and existing products based on the principles of Green Chemistry.
67. **Acknowledges** the Joint Declaration towards a structure energy dialogue for EU islands promoted by the CPMR Islands Commission. The Intermediterranean Commission will ensure its follow-up as well as the monitoring of National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs), glad to see that the regional dimension has been considered indispensable to their effective and concerted implementation.
68. **Is thankful**, overall, for the new dynamics launched within the CPMR with the aim to facilitate more integration between all geographical commissions and core policy works. Looks forward to contributing to these works, share and receive best practices with its fellow geographical Commissions.

*Declaration approved unanimously
by the Intermediterranean Commission General Assembly
in Marseille, on 20 June 2019*