

Summary and conclusions of the Annual General Meeting of the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission

1st July 2016 – Venice (Veneto-Italy)

I. MAIN DECISIONS OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

At its meeting in Venice, the Annual General Meeting of the Intermediterranean Commission elected to its **presidency** Mr. **Apostolos Katsifaras**, Governor of the Region of Dytiki Ellada (Greece).

In this context, and after the prior adoption of a **corrective measure** for a balanced allocation of posts within the Political Bureau (for which the Italian regions have given a post to the French Regions, excessively penalized by territorial reform), the AGM **appointed the new Political Bureau for the period 2016-2018**.

The Intermediterranean Commission's AGM also approved:

- the **conclusions of the Political Bureau in Rabat** (November 2015);
- the Final Declaration Veneto 2016;
- the signing of a **Memorandum of Understanding between the Intermediterranean Commission and Medcités**;
- the **financial documents** of the Intermediterranean Commission;
- The **Report of the mandate 2014-2016**;
- The following regions re-joining the Intermediterranean Commission: **Campania** (Italy), **Attiki** (Greece) and **Sousse** (Tunisia) ratified respectively by the Florence CPMR AGM in November 2015 and by the Political Bureau of the CPMR, in February 2016.
- The membership of three new regions of Morocco: **Marrakech Safi**, **L'Oriental** and **Dakhla-Oued Ed Dahab**.

The memberships of the new Moroccan regions must be ratified by the CPMR Political Bureau to be held in the Azores in November 2016.

The AGM also supported and participated in the activities of Working Groups (WGs), approving the establishment of a new **Task Force on Fisheries and Aquaculture** within the "IMP and Transport" Working Group.

Furthermore, the meeting allowed the formal membership and signature by the President of the Dytiki Ellada Region of the **Bologna Charter**. This was in addition to the signing of numerous Regions from the Intermediterranean Commission and of the Commission itself in 2013).

II. SUMMARY OF WORK SESSION DISCUSSIONS

Roberto Ciambetti, President of the Regional Council of Veneto, welcomed the participants and gave a reminder of the European and Mediterranean context: economic crisis, political movements, migration issues, etc. He recalled the main priorities of the Mediterranean, emphasised the importance of this area in Europe and the need for a political and economic peace that must be established for the overall stability of our territories.

Eleni Marianou, Secretary General of the CPMR, thanked the Veneto Region for its welcome. She made reference to the terrible instability weighing on European citizens because of political, social and economic crises. Despite everything, she explained that projects and work to defend the regions must continue. She also discussed the role of the CPMR in meeting the needs of its member regions and insisted on a decentralisation of the Conference's activities for a proximity defined by the regions to serve their own specific needs. She recalled the main areas of CPMR policies: maritime issues in general, accessibility issues and of course territorial cohesion. Finally, she talked about the possible scenarios that could result from the Future Cohesion Policy within the CPMR and Intermediterranean Commission Regions and then looked more specifically at the impact of Brexit on the latter.

Mohamed Sadiki, Acting President of the Intermediterranean Commission, spoke to provide an [assessment of the work of the Intermediterranean Commission](#). He thanked the Dytiki Ellada region for its support during the interim period during which he was Chairman of the Intermediterranean Commission. He recalled the actions of the various working groups and the many projects, especially [Com & Cap MarinaMed](#). All these actions have given real momentum to the work of the Intermediterranean Commission. Lastly, he mentioned the many institutional partnerships established with various organisations and concluded with the need for a will and a common solidarity in order that work for the development of our territories can continue.

After being elected President of the Intermediterranean Commission for the next two years, **Apostolos Katsifaras**, President of the Dytiki Ellada Region, made a brief statement in relation to his [work proposal for the new mandate](#). He recalled the importance of the solidarity that is needed in these times of crisis and the need to face up to our responsibilities in this uncertain environment. In recent years, the EU has been through one crisis after another. Faced with the uncertainties arising from these, more cohesion and solidarity is called for, and not the divisions that we see today. Dialogue and unity are essential in order to cope with the common challenges we are facing in maintaining the quality of life of our citizens. We must fight against inequality. And keep in mind that this is a passing phase and that we need to strengthen understanding and the added value of European cooperation. **Apostolos Katsifaras** talked about the migratory crisis and the refugee issue. And called for more unity on this by Europe. He would like more dialogue, including within the Intermediterranean Commission.

Davide Strangis, Executive Secretary of the Intermediterranean Commission, then introduced the unanimously approved [Vice Presidents in the Political Bureau](#). He handed over to them for a quick presentation. **Maria Badia Cutchet** for the region of Catalonia (Spain) then spoke, recalling the past, present and future commitment of her region in the work of the Intermediterranean Commission. **Agnès Rampal**, for the Region of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (France), recalled its strong commitment to the protection of the Mediterranean identity, especially among EU institutions and called for concrete actions to benefit our citizens. For Campania (Italy) **Serena Angioli** reasserted full support for the policies set by the Intermediterranean Commission. She recalled the interest Campania has in the blue economy and heritage in general, whether natural or cultural, and in accessibility issues. **Mohamed Sadiki** for the region of Rabat-Salé-Kenitra, then spoke to ensure his support and to reassert the involvement of the Regions on the southern shore of the Mediterranean.

SESSION I - Challenges and solutions for integrated territorial development and cohesion in the Mediterranean

Apostolos Katsifaras introduced the session and gave the floor to the speakers.

Agnès Rampal referred to the influence of Venice in the history of trade in the Mediterranean. She talked about strengthening territorial cooperation in the Mediterranean, particularly through Interreg. And hopes for an increasingly effective approach in future programmes.

Kosmas Papachrysovergis, Executive Secretary for the Attiki Region, congratulated Apostolos Katsifaras on his election and welcomed this meeting being held at what is a very critical time for the Mediterranean. He of course spoke about the migration issue and explained that this phenomenon cannot be resolved by closing borders. He mentioned the various alternatives considered, the efforts that have been made for the safety of immigrants but noted that much remains to be done, especially for local and regional authorities who find themselves at the front line with regards to managing the crisis. He also gave details

about some initiatives by the Attiki Region and said that, in his view, the Regions must now play a role that goes beyond their institutional capacity.

Andrea Mairate, for the European Commission DG-Regio, gave a presentation of the various programmes undertaken under the auspices of the DG Regio. With good geographical coverage of the Mediterranean area. He then outlined the strategies related to the Mediterranean - See the [presentation by Andrea Mairate](#)

Luca Marangoni, for the European Commission-DG Mare, recalled the analysis of the values of Mediterranean strategies based on the work of the 5+5 and the possible new initiatives to be launched in the future, like West Med. After the consultation, some flaws and concerns were identified by the countries but he also noted a strong interest and some opportunities for strengthening cooperation. He reported having identified desires for a more flexible structure that is adapted for progress. Some initiatives (Bluemed) aim to reduce these gaps. But much remains to be done. He talked about the publication of a report on the consultations and a conference, to be held in January 2017, to disseminate the results of these in order to move forward with the initiative. Partners will of course be invited. Meanwhile, the States will have to decide on their willingness to consider this initiative at their next meeting after the summer. Luca Marangoni also referred to the importance of establishing synergies between cooperation programmes.

Tarja Richard, coordinator of the Interreg Med program, recalled the programme's major themes. She also mentioned the capitalisation work undertaken and the prospects for governance in the Mediterranean as part of axis 4 - See the [presentation by Tarja Richard](#)

Barbara di Piazza, coordinator of the Interreg Adrion programme, evaluated the progress of the programme and considered the prospects for governance in the Adriatic-Ionian macro-region - See the [presentation by Barbara di Piazza](#)

Luca Palazzo, expert with the managing authority of the ENI CBC MED programme, recalled the launch of the programme, its strategy and its opportunities - See the [presentation by Luca Palazzo](#)

During the **debate**, there were contributions from the Regions of **Emilia-Romagna, Shkodër, Ionia Nissia (Ionian Islands), L'Oriental, Rabat-Salé-Kenitra** as well as **Sardegna** and **Baleares**. The latter emphasised in particular the energy, challenges and potential of the islands and the need to work to find solutions to their specific problems and recalled the proposals included in the Venice Declaration. The Region **Molise** referred to the importance of the IMC and the CPMR to continue working to defend local and regional autonomies through studies and lobbying activities

Finally, **Davide Strangis** referred to the Arlem reports on Climate, Energy and Territorial Cooperation led by Rabat and Sardinia, as well as events in the Med Climate Cop to be organised by the Region of Tangier. The Intermediterranean Commission will be represented and will play an active role.

SESSION II - How to combine and promote maritime investments in the Mediterranean with sustainable development and the Maritime Spatial Planning and Integrated Coastal Zone Management tools

After a few words from the President, **Maria Badia Cutchet** and **George Alexakis** introduced the session. They emphasised in particular the importance of maritime spatial planning dynamics, the conflict of use of the sea, the integrated management of coastal areas and the work of the CPMR regarding the analysis of smart specialisation strategies to strengthen regional investment – See the [presentation](#) by George Alexakis.

They then handed over to the speakers.

Luca Marangoni, for the European Commission-DG Mare, spoke again to cite the work of DG Mare and its prospects in the Mediterranean within the scope of future initiatives. He explained that DG Mare works to promote a network of institutions for education and training in maritime areas.

Alessandra Sensi, Programme Director at the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) explained the purpose and work of the UfM in general (SOM-*Senior Official Meeting*, Ministerial meetings, projects

and certification process) as well as the activities of the Blue Economy. She highlighted the opportunities for cooperation with the Intermediterranean Commission and its regions. The participation of the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission has been accepted as an observer of the Working Group on the blue economy of the UfM during its first meeting in Turku. In addition the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission and the UfM have been sharing a Memorandum of Understanding since 2013 - See the [presentation by Alessandra Sensi](#)

Franco Schembri, Director at the Malta Marittima Cluster examined the dynamics of the Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP) and the clusters. Afterwards he explained the first fruits of the creation of Malta Marittima and shed light on the future Maltese EU presidency and possible cooperation with the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission.

During the discussion, the Region **Emilia Romagna** spoke to highlight the opportunities offered by the Bologna Charter for the sustainable development of coastal areas, the support of the Intermediterranean Commission in the process as well as the new opportunities for cooperation with the UfM. Other regions took the floor to explain their respective views on the blue economy and maritime investments: **L'Oriental, Corse, Peloponnese**. The President concluded the session.

INTERNAL INTERMEDITERRANEAN COMMITTEE QUESTIONS

Davide Strangis presented the [2016 Activity Report](#) of the Intermediterranean Commission, and the general calendar, financial documents and the status of consolidation or extension of the network. He then gave the floor to representatives from the various working groups for a short presentation of their activities which he added to in order to provide a comprehensive view of the 4 Working Groups. See the [presentations](#) by **Manuel Pleguezuelo** from Murcia and **Davide Strangis**.

Davide Strangis and **Giuseppe Sciacca**, Senior Policy Officer at CPMR, then gave an update on the different programmes and cooperation projects, both on-going or in the future related to the core activities of the Intermediterranean Commission (See the list of [projects](#) presented and the presentations available on the Intermediterranean Commission website). They also talked about the creation of a new fisheries and aquaculture TF within the scope of the "IMP and Transport" Working Group. The Terms of Reference (ToR) will soon be sent to members and the Task Force will be launched before the end of the year. **Davide Strangis** also referred to the future activities of Capacity Building within the scope of Platforma and the events planned in Sousse during September.

The Working Groups should update their action plans in conjunction with the updated global plan of the Intermediterranean Commission for 2017-2018. The co-presidents must be confirmed with the Secretariat in the next few months.

The President **Apostolos Katsifaras** closed the meeting by thanking Veneto and the participants for the quality of the discussions and giving a reminder of the main conclusions, as well as all the approved documents.