



Final Declaration

CPMR Intermediterranean Commission

General Assembly

10/11 June 2025 – Centre Universitaire Méditerranéen

(Région Sud Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur)

10 key recommendations

“Towards a Renewed and Integrated Vision for the Mediterranean”

This document constitutes the 2025 Final Declaration of the CPMR Intermediterranean Commission proposed to its General Assembly in Région Sud – Provence-Alpes-Côtes d’Azur (France) on 10-11 June 2025. This Assembly is organized in the framework of the Day of the Mediterranean of the United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3).

In light of pressing environmental, socio-economic, and geopolitical challenges in the Mediterranean, there is, more than ever, the need to embrace concerted action to tackle shared challenges in a collaborative way.

With its new college of Commissioners counting on, for the first time, a Commissioner for the Mediterranean, the European Commission has been working on the elaboration of a *New Pact for the Mediterranean*. This Pact comes at the dawn of the 30th anniversary of the *Barcelona Process* and constitutes an opportunity to strengthen a shared Mediterranean vision.

In 10 key points, this Declaration highlights fundamental priorities for the future of the Mediterranean, to nourish the elaboration and implementation of the *Pact for the Mediterranean*, and in support of better articulated cooperations for a more sustainable, resilient and cohesive basin.

In light of pressing environmental, socio-economic, and geopolitical challenges in the Mediterranean, there is, more than ever, the need to embrace concerted action to tackle shared issues in a collaborative way. In finding

and implementing solutions, Regional governments are actors benefitting from a clear vision about territorial realities; they should not only be consulted to elaborate broader policies at Mediterranean level but also be at the front of the decision-making table at EU and Mediterranean scales.

In the current Euro-Mediterranean context, the European Commission has been working on the elaboration of a new Pact for the Mediterranean.¹ This Pact comes after the 2021 Renewed partnership with the Southern Neighborhood – A New Agenda for the Mediterranean Communication² and at the dawn of the 30th anniversary of the Barcelona Process. It constitutes an opportunity to strengthen a shared Mediterranean vision, while better articulating cooperations to sustainably develop industries, economies, and societies, with a common and balanced awareness of environmental and climate challenges across countries and territories.

Bearing these elements and opportunities in mind, the Regions of the Intermediterranean Commission (IMC) of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR), representing diverse territories from across the Mediterranean basin, reaffirm their shared willingness, responsibility and commitment to building a peaceful, sustainable, cohesive, and resilient Mediterranean.

Grounded in the territorial expertise of Regional governments, this Declaration outlines ten (10) strategic policy messages on key themes of importance for the basin, aiming at a renewed and integrated vision of the Mediterranean by including all shores and levels of governance in shaping its future.

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The CPMR Intermediterranean Commission, addressing European, Mediterranean, and international institutions, as well as national and sub-state entities and stakeholders in the Mediterranean, hereby:

- 1. Welcomes** the creation of a dedicated portfolio for the Mediterranean that recognizes the region as a priority in the EU's external and territorial policies. **Calls for** the establishment of a comprehensive EU Pact for the Mediterranean. This Pact should be innovative and bold in its governance to ensure multi-level governance and ownership of all territories it targets across the basin. The Pact should integrate fragmented strategies and enhance coherence across EU funding instruments in and for the Mediterranean, transversally to other EU portfolios too. While promoting the core European values of human rights and solidarity, the Pact should also increase attention to the specific characteristics and challenges of the Mediterranean region and of its islands. It should reinforce cooperation, enhance the role of Mediterranean regions in EU programming, and guarantee long-term financial and political commitments to Mediterranean-wide cooperation and integration. By doing so, the Pact will help ensure that the unique needs and opportunities of the Mediterranean are fully addressed within a coherent European framework.
- 2. Promotes** the creation of a Macro-Regional Strategy for the Mediterranean that fully integrates multi-level governance, building on existing cooperation initiatives such as EUSAIR, WestMED, and cooperation programmes acting in the basin (Interreg Euro-MED, NEXT MED, PRIMA...), with close collaborations between

¹ This work has been kicked off through a series of consultations with stakeholders of diverse background, including citizens, from the whole of the Mediterranean.

² (JOIN 2021) 2 Final <https://cpmr-intermed.org/download/renewed-partnership-with-the-southern-neighbourhood-a-new-agenda-for-the-mediterranean>

all key actors and counting on the full participation of Regions. This Strategy could constitute a key output of the Pact for the Mediterranean, contributing to the rationalization of funding instruments, the capitalization of initiatives and cooperation results of the basin and well as their mainstreaming into public policies. This would create and nourish a virtuous circle of policymaking based on territorial needs and realities.

- a. **Reminds** of the draft action plan for such Strategy, hereafter “EUSMED”, that was jointly elaborated with the contributions and support of key Euro-Mediterranean stakeholders active in the basin.³ This draft action plan reiterates the main principles of EUSMED, i.e. built on multi-level governance, which would allow countries and territories to join on a voluntary and variable geometry basis.
- b. **Calls** on National governments of Mediterranean EU Members States to raise the issue of the creation of Mediterranean macro-regional strategy before the EU Council, in consensus with the regions concerned, as a discussion topic that could lead to a formal decision on the matter. This would activate a clear mandate for the European Commission to start working on it.
- c. In parallel, **petitions** the European Commission to launch, in collaboration with the Union for the Mediterranean and at the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Barcelona Process, a consultation on the potential creation of a macro-regional strategy for the Mediterranean, including all key actors of Mediterranean multi-level governance and Regions, to gather feedback on these principles, ensure ownership of contributors in its elaboration and further implementation.
- d. **Recommends**, in order to move forward gradually as specified in the 2014 ARLEM report⁴, to work towards the establishment of a specific sea-basin initiative for the Eastern Mediterranean in the medium term, in complementarity with existing initiatives and strategies in other sub-regions (WestMED, EUSAIR). Such an initiative should serve as a lever to strengthen coordination between States, Regions, sectoral policies, and levels of governance, and to promote alignment with common priorities for Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean.
- e. **Reiterates** the need to address the unique challenges faced by islands, by promoting the creation of a Pact and an Agenda for European islands, which could also be supported by a macro-regional strategy for the Mediterranean. In this regard, **welcomes** the recent announcement by the European Commission of the launch of a specific consultation on a European Strategy for Islands, in line with the call made last year by the CPMR Islands Commission.
- f. **Recalls** the pressing need to address climate resilience and adaptation in and for the Mediterranean in a transversal and coordinated way. A macro-regional strategy would support raising a collective voice and promote a shared vision for urgent climate action and justice in the region, fostering coordinated and collective efforts to address disproportionate impacts of climate change on the most vulnerable communities and proposing a tailored approach answering to insular specificities. Besides, tackling

³ For more information, see the draft action plan and its annexes <https://cpmr-intermed.org/download/the-macro-regional-strategy-for-the-mediterranean-towards-a-draft-action-plan>.

⁴ “Toward a Cohesion Policy for the Mediterranean”, ARLEM Rapporteur Joana Ortega, 2014.

climate issues would help address other related economic and social issues, securing the water-energy-food-ecosystems nexus, hence addressing some of the root causes of climate-related migration.

- 3. Encourages** the EU and Member States to take stock of the *Mediterranean Charter for Climate Adaptation's* recommendations⁵, notably regarding the scaling up of climate adaptation and coastal resilience funding and action in coastal and island regions exposed to sea-level rise, erosion, and extreme weather. Integrated coastal zone management (ICZM), climate-proof infrastructure, and nature-based solutions must be supported through technical assistance, cross-border cooperation, and alignment with broader climate initiatives.⁶
- 4. Welcomes** the European Parliament's resolution on the EU Water Resilience Strategy⁷ and **urges** the EU to adopt a dedicated approach to the Mediterranean within the European Strategy for Water Resilience⁸. **Hopes** for the unlocking of dedicated funds to tackle water challenges specifically for the Mediterranean, given the extreme vulnerability of the basin to water scarcity, pollution, and climate change. The Strategy should support integrated water resource management, nature-based solutions, and transboundary collaboration.⁹ Mediterranean Regions and islands must receive the tools and investment needed to protect water ecosystems and ensure equitable access to clean water.¹⁰
- 5. Supports** the acceleration of a clean, just, and fair energy transition in the Mediterranean based on low carbon/green hydrogen cooperation, capitalizing on renewable energy sources, cross-border partnerships, and innovation ecosystems:
 - a. Calls** for tailored investments in *regional* hydrogen valleys and ecosystems¹¹, port infrastructure, and storage technologies, with a focus on regional added value, to empower Mediterranean ports as energy and hydrogen hubs¹², and to overcome current barriers hindering the scalability of hydrogen and cleantech projects in the Mediterranean in spite of the basin's potential.

⁵ <https://cpmr-intermed.org/download/mediterranean-charter-for-climate-adaptation> (2024)

⁶ such as the Covenant of Mayors for the Mediterranean.

⁷ European Parliament resolution of 7 May 2025 on the European Water Resilience Strategy (2024/2104(INI)), Rapporteur Thomas Bajada (Malta).

⁸ COM(2025) 280 final of the 4th of June 2025.

⁹ Including solidarity between surplus and deficit basins, the latter located in the Mediterranean basin. This would help secure a resource that is as scarce as it is necessary to ensure potable water. This was also mentioned in the recent IMC Joint Political position on Advancing water and soil resilience and carbon farming (2024) https://cpmr-intermed.org/download/imc-joint-policy-position_advancing-water-and-soil-resilience-and-carbon-farming/?wpdmcl=17605&refresh=6842f0102add51749217296&ind=1727093765020.

¹⁰ The Dialogue4Innovation Interreg Euro-MED project (part of the [Innovative Sustainable Economy Mission](#)) aims to support public authorities (including regions) to deploy a fair and just transition towards environmental sustainability in the Mediterranean basin via transformative innovation. As part of core activities, CPMR-IMC will soon launch an innovative workshop methodology, the Transformative Innovation Policy Lab (TIPL) to explore sustainable water management in Mediterranean Coastal Regions with a selection of willing regions to take place in 2026.

¹¹ [CRETE VALLEY](#) (Horizon Europe) aims to make Crete a Renewable Energy Valley by 2028, showcasing sustainable hydrogen production and storage, among others. Led by ICCS, with 41 partners, it supports REPowerEU goals. CPMR ensures broad dissemination and policy outreach.

¹² Mediterranean ports will have a key role for the import of H₂ and ammonia from non-EU countries (e.g., Egypt) and, if empowered, will increasingly integrate H₂ and H₂ facilities in their operations.

b. Ensures a socially fair clean energy transition in peripheral and maritime Regions, with a specific approach to insular territories, sometimes at a disadvantage of connectivity, infrastructure, or skills availability.¹³ This should be done by tailoring legislative incentives to their specificities, building on the Mediterranean's potential for hydrogen and renewables, and ensuring benefits for both North- and Southern Mediterranean shores alike.

6. Calls for the strengthening of sustainable tourism for it to act as a catalyst for an inclusive and culturally rooted sector. This requires the diversification of tourism models, their integration into regional planning, and their alignment with the EU green and digital agendas.

a. Fosters the creation of a transnational Mediterranean concept based on shared cultural, social and gastronomic values – including eno-gastronomy, to be promoted from a holistic tourism perspective. This concept should be rooted in the Mediterranean diet and the local, zero-kilometer products that sustain it, as well as in the values of coexistence, respect and peace that historically define the Mediterranean as a space of encounter. This common narrative should translate into authentic tourism experiences that reinforce the Mediterranean identity as a driver of cultural cohesion and sustainable development.

b. Reiterates the need to support small businesses and local communities to reduce seasonality, protect natural and cultural assets, and improve climate resilience¹⁴ in tourism-dependent areas. This implies promoting youth training and education, capacity-building, fostering new skills and entrepreneurial business models based on local culture and circular economy principles.¹⁵

c. Recommends the implementation of shared systems to measure tourism impact at the Mediterranean scale, based on comparable sustainability indicators that support evidence-based policymaking, improve decision-making, and foster transparency and accountability.

d. Underlines the role that regenerative tourism can play to come full circle in mitigating and addressing the negative externalities of tourism on its surrounding environment.¹⁶ Undertaking increasing regenerative tourism practices would help turn the sector into an actor of environmental recovery. In this sense, **promote** public-private policies that invest in integrated strategies for regenerative tourism

¹³ In this regard, CPMR (and the IMC) took an interest in this subject via the [POWGEN](#) project and through its experimental training to Third-Country Nationals in solar panel installation and building efficiency renovations. The project seeks to ensure that skills transition efforts target not only highly skilled professions but also lower-skilled and manual occupations that are essential to the energy transition by maximizing opportunities for job creation and re-skilling. This is done by benefiting low-skilled workers and other socioeconomically vulnerable groups, including migrant populations.

¹⁴ The [NaTour4CChange](#) Interreg Euro-MED project aims to support regions and destinations with their tourism climate action planning through the adoption of mitigation and adaptation policies, the implementation of multi-level structures and the testing of Nature-based Solutions (NbS). To achieve this, a customizable [toolkit](#) has been developed based on Interreg Euro-MED's Community4Tourism Blueprint to help identify the steps for good climate action planning.

¹⁵ The Interreg Euro-MED's Community4Tourism project (part of the [Sustainable Tourism Mission](#)) supports smarter, greener Mediterranean governance aligned with the European Green Deal. To address the climate priority, capacity-building sessions shared the Blueprint and Toolkit from Community4Tourism and NaTour4CChange for climate action in tourism. More info here: <https://cpmr-intermed.org/uncategorized/advancing-climate-action-in-tourism-with-community4tourism-and-natour4cchange-projects/18396>.

¹⁶ The Regenera4MED Interreg Euro-MED project proposes a new regenerative tourism model that goes beyond sustainability by reversing negative impacts and creating positive shared value, integrating environmental, cultural, and community dimensions through a multi-stakeholder governance approach across Mediterranean pilot regions.

and carbon footprint reduction, through the incorporation of tourism models that minimize impact across all phases of the travel experience, particularly in mobility, while also funding active environmental and social regeneration projects in destinations. The aim is to move towards a real balance for the tourism footprint in the Mediterranean, turning the sector into an active agent of environmental recovery.

e. Encourages the development of new tourism business models, more resilient, accessible and sustainable, that promote innovation, responsible digitalization, local entrepreneurship, and product diversification, hence contributing to long-term competitiveness and sustainability in the sector.

f. Promotes territorial cohesion through tourism policies that strengthen the links between coastal, insular and inland areas, between highly touristic zones and less developed ones, facilitating access to economic opportunities, a more balanced distribution of tourism flows, and territorial integration.

7. Emphasizes the need to strengthen biodiversity and marine ecosystems protection through the creation of ecologically representative and effectively managed Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), enhanced marine data collection, ecosystem restoration, and comprehensive action to address all forms of pollution, including plastics, nutrients.¹⁷ **Calls on** the EU to reflect Mediterranean priorities in the EU Biodiversity Strategy and Ocean Pact, in particular given the specific nature and biodiversity of the basin.

8. Urges for a comprehensive revision of the Common Fisheries Policy with the aim of developing an ambitious post-2027 policy framework and related funding instruments. This revision should incorporate orientations specifically tailored to the Mediterranean context, ensuring the environmental, social and economic sustainability of the fishing sector; supporting the viability of fishing communities; promoting food sovereignty; and reflecting the unique characteristics of Mediterranean coastal fisheries.

a. Underlines that co-management systems, scientific research, community-led local development (CLLD) and funding for sustainable and coastal/local fisheries should be supported to a further extent over the upcoming programming period.

b. Recommends that stronger synergies be developed between fisheries management, biodiversity protection, and sustainable blueeconomy innovation¹⁸ to safeguard the livelihoods of coastal communities and the health of marine ecosystems.

9. Urges that the future European Industrial Maritime Strategy reflects the potential and specific needs of Mediterranean Regions and islands, offering tailored solutions that harness their unique economic,

¹⁷ The [BlueMissionMed Project](#) – of which the CPMR-IMC is an active member – is a strategic project in service of the EU Mission Restore Our Oceans and Water by 2030 under Horizon Europe funding. The project is dedicated to the empowerment of the Mediterranean Lighthouse, understood as a soft governance space in the Mediterranean basin for the upscale and deployment of innovative solutions for water depollution (tech, societal, governance and financial). Notable achievements include the [catalogue of innovative solutions](#) and the [BMM Support Programme](#) to support solution seekers.

¹⁸ Interreg Euro-MED's [BLUE ECOSYSTEM project](#) aims to promote innovation practices within the blue economy through the identification of regional challenges in Alentejo, Balearic Islands, Région Sud-Occitanie, Emilia-Romagna, Zadar County, Albania, Greece and Cyprus, and the promotion of transformative solutions to tackle them. It does so via the creation of innovation laboratories/accelerators in each of the participating regions (called 'TRAIN Labs').

environmental, and geopolitical significance. **Calls for** the establishment of a dedicated framework to channel both EU and national investment into maritime industrial development, including measures to stimulate demand for clean ships and smart port infrastructure, support R&D for maritime technologies, and foster favorable conditions for multi-stakeholder alliances.

a. Advises to place a special emphasis on the development of “Maritime Industrial Valleys” across Mediterranean coastal territories—regional and territorial clusters—that can accelerate innovation and manufacturing, similar to the Net-Zero Acceleration Valleys model.

b. Underlines the importance of the upcoming EU Port Strategy and call for strong support to Mediterranean port infrastructure development, especially where ports may serve dual civil and military purposes. **Warns** that such dual-use objectives must not undermine the core civil role of ports nor place disproportionate financial burdens on regional authorities. Clear EU guidance and tailored funding mechanisms for Regions are needed to ensure coherence between security, commercial, and territorial cohesion goals.

c. Calls for stronger transport and digital connectivity in the framework of the Clean Industrial Deal to bridge regional disparities and foster cohesion in the Mediterranean. Access to investments for Regions should be facilitated, notably in multimodal and sustainable transport networks, maritime and rail corridors, clean port infrastructure, island accessibility and transborder connectivity bridging Mediterranean territories. Enhanced digital connectivity should support economic diversification, educational access, and cross-cultural exchange, reinforcing integration across the Mediterranean basin.

d. Stresses the need to adapt the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) to the ambitions of the future TEN-T Policy for the 2028-2024 programming period, particularly in the Mediterranean context where cross-border connectivity remains underdeveloped. Funding must be scaled up and tailored to the region’s maritime and peripheral challenges.

10. Welcomes the increasing institutional efforts to dialogue with the youth of the Mediterranean to integrate their voices into the reflections for the design of the Mediterranean of the future. **Commits** to support these efforts via the activities with the Mediterranean Youth Council, to reflect jointly with the Regions on the upcoming programming period to ensure that EU priorities answer Regions and their youth’s expectations.