

MED9 Environment Ministerial Meeting, Portorož, Slovenia, June 2nd, 2025

JOINT STATEMENT

on the impacts of the climate crisis (in particular extreme weather events) and the need to adapt to the impacts, with a focus on human lives and the environmental disasters in the Mediterranean region

We, the Ministers of Environment and representatives of Croatia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia, and Spain, reaffirm our commitment to addressing key challenges in the Mediterranean region related to climate change. To this end WE:

ACKNOWLEDGE that the Mediterranean region is a climate change hotspot, warming 20% faster than the global average and thus particularly at risk as a result of climate change impacts due to extreme weather events, such as droughts, sea level rise floods, desertification and biodiversity loss. Recent events in many countries have shown that climate change is already having a huge impact, underlining the urgent need for appropriate responses in the face of ever-increasing crises.

RECOGNISE the increased vulnerability of Mediterranean Member States and emphasize the imperative to strengthen efforts and coordinate positions in anticipation of the planned European Commission's "Climate Adaptation Plan." Key considerations include how to promote resilience by design approach, integration of adaptation in all policy fields, in line with EU objectives on cohesion and climate adaptation, supported by the potential development of common indicators for adaptation, the exploration of innovative financial instruments, urgent action to improve resilience to climate change even on risks that are not yet critical, to support multidisciplinary research and sustainable innovation and the possible adoption of new measures and initiatives to enhance resilience across the region.

RECOGNISE the interdependence of biodiversity, desertification and climate crises, and affirm that addressing them requires integrated and coordinated action, acknowledging essential role of nature restoration and sustainable land management in strengthening climate resilience and reducing the risks and impacts of natural disaster.

EMPHASISE the proven value of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism as a cornerstone of disaster management, in the EU. In light of the escalating irregularity, frequency, and intensity of climatic events, the need for enhanced preparedness, early warning systems and robust response mechanisms is increasingly evident. Additionally, exchanging best practices on inclusivity, effective and timely communication with citizens at the local level remains crucial, particularly in the context of increasingly frequent disasters.



REAFFIRM the need to implement mitigation policies within the European Union, since mitigation reduces the severity of climate impacts and the need to adapt. Efforts on cross border risk management and cooperation will strengthen our joint actions and are imperative to mitigate climate change and its impacts, reverse biodiversity and soil loss, and ensure the security of food production across the region.

HIGHLIGHT the value of exchanges on inclusive and adapted solutions to ensure a just transition that leaves no one behind, taking into account local, regional and socioeconomic context. Areas of focus should include support schemes for affordable and accessible public transport and electric transport solutions, more sustainable agriculture, assistance to vulnerable groups, including those in rural and remote areas, and measures addressing energy poverty, especially among low-income families, in buildings with inadequate energy performance for which the proper design of the Heating and Cooling Strategy foreseen in the Action Plan for Affordable Energy is crucial.

RECOGNISE the importance of strengthening collaboration on new technologies and sustainable innovation for climate adaptation in the agriculture and food sectors. It is essential to ensure that the next programming period includes adequate risk management and prevention mechanisms to support farmers in adapting to climate change, to address market irregularities and protect ecosystems, and natural resources while unlocking the potential of this sector for the ecological transition. This should be complemented by fostering synergies with clean energy innovation and low-emission technologies for agriculture.

EMPHASISE the critical importance of transboundary water cooperation and integrated water management in the coming years, since it is an essential resource for ecosystems, agriculture, industry and utilities and will be vital to ensure long-term water security, strengthen water resilience and promote regional stability. This should be reflected also in the deployment of early warning systems and in the nexus water-energy. The anticipated Water Resilience Strategy should prioritize, among other aspects, adequate and sustainable financing and strengthening of research, innovation and technological capacity to monitor water availability, mobilize alternative water sources, water reuse, and sustainable desalination. Water resilience must be closely linked to a wise and efficient water use, contributing to improved food security, soil productivity and the prevention of droughts and desertification in line with the objective of building water-smart economy. This also demands preserving water resources and reduce water pollution from all sources by promoting resource efficiency, circular economy and nature-based solutions while ensuring equitable access to water for all.

SUPPORT an ambitious environmental agenda for a green transition adopted at COP23 of Barcelona convention and reaffirm our commitment to protect the marine environment of the Mediterranean, in an inclusive, fair and equitable way and to further



intensify activities in the area of climate action as well as nature, pollution and waste. The announced New Pact for the Mediterranean provides an opportunity to advance a shared vision for climate resilience and sustainable resource management.

UNDERSCORE the critical and escalating impacts of climate change in the Mediterranean region, necessitating urgent and coordinated action. It is imperative to undertake dedicated studies to substantiate the need for a comprehensive and immediate action plan, accompanied by targeted support. Leveraging existing EU funding mechanisms should be prioritized to achieve this goal. We welcome the recognition of the need to step up work on climate and water resilience and preparedness in the Commission's Communication on the next multiannual financial framework. In this regard we recognize the importance of the LIFE programme to finance climate action, in particular the possibility to target LIFE integrated projects in climate adaptation.

