

EUROPEAN REGIONS CHARTER FOR THE PROMOTION OF A COMMON
FRAMEWORK FOR STRATEGIC ACTIONS AIMED AT THE PROTECTION AND
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MEDITERRANEAN COASTAL AREAS

"BOLOGNA CHARTER 2012"

This Resolution comes from the "Bologna Charter" (European Regions Charter for coastal protection and for the promotion of a network of a European Interregional Observatory for the defence of Mediterranean coasts) signed the 22nd of February 2007 by the Emilia-Romagna Region, Liguria Region, Region Languedoc-Roussillon / Department of Herault, Region of Catalunya and subsequently by Lazio Region, Toscana Region, Region of East Macedonia and Thrace, Region of Crete (today named Decentralised Administration of Crete). The organisation Arc Latin also adhered to the Charter. A contribution to the drafting of this document was also given by the findings of the European project COASTANCE (OP MED) joint Final Declaration issued in March 2012 in Komotini (GR), subscribed by the political representatives of the partners (Emilia-Romagna Region, Lazio Region, Region of East Macedonia & Thrace, Decentralised Administration of Crete, Department of Hérault, Region of Andalusia, County of Dubrovnik, Ministry of Public Work of Cyprus).

1. Introduction

- 1.1 **The coastal areas of the European Union are among the mostly threatened by climate change effects.** Human settlements, infrastructures and areas of high environmental value situated along low coastal lands, are increasingly exposed to marine ingression risks and erosion phenomena. **The situation is especially critical in the coastal areas of the Mediterranean basin that are more and more inhabited.** The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change highlights it as one of the "hot spots" of vulnerability. It is indeed subject to multiple natural and human-induced strains, such as the rise of sea level, erosion, subsidence and decline of natural defences.
- 1.2 Exposure, sensitivity and adaptation capacity are the three main features of territorial vulnerability. Adaptation capacity is the component on which coastal Public Administrations can have higher influence when

facing the challenge of climate change. They focus their actions on a sustainable spatial planning, a correct management of sediments and natural resources, an integrated approach in coastal management and interventions programming. **Coastal zones are strategic fields for the harmonic and sustainable development of territories and people of the entire Mediterranean area.** The fundamental resources in this field, like the territory and the sediments needed for their defence and reconstruction, must be considered as strategic, as well as energy, water and agricultural soil.

- 1.3 According to the trend of the recent developments in the framework of international and European policies, namely the Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the Mediterranean (January 2008, Madrid), the White Paper on climate change adaptation - COM(2009) 147, the Directive 2007/60/EC on flood risks assessment and management, the Directive 2008/56/EC on the Marine Strategy, the Integrated Maritime Policy - COM(2007) 575, the integrated Maritime Policy in the Mediterranean (COM (2009) 466 final and the Roadmap for Maritime Spatial Planning - COM(2008)791, **the Mediterranean coastal Public Administrations play a vital role in their concrete implementation.** This because they are able to enforce a common framework for strategic actions - which also aims to development (Blue Growth) and adaptation (Climate Change), with a unitary vision of the Mediterranean basin - supported by the Member States and the European institutions.
- 1.4 Taking into account the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on specific provisions concerning the European Regional Development Fund for the period 2014-2020, COM(2011) 614 final, that indicates among the investment priorities those concerning "climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management", **it is more and more advisable for Mediterranean coastal Administrations to stress in every place and time the importance of coastal zones in this framework.** Moreover, if we consider the specificity of the sea basin, it is paramount to promote the launch of common and shared initiatives dealing with coastal zones risk prevention, management and adaptation in the Mediterranean.
- 1.5 **Our Administrations have long been cooperating as partners in several European projects in the Mediterranean area** for the implementation of ICZM

principles, the sustainable development of Mediterranean coastal areas, the design of coastal risks assessment tools, the preparation of coastal and sediments management plans also for the adaptation to climate change, and they have been giving an important contribution for policy-making in several sectors affecting coastal areas.

- 1.6 The expertise acquired thanks to the interregional cooperation in European projects and the scope of coastal problems and risks in the Mediterranean, suggest that no effective initiative or action can be carried out individually or simply during the short lifespan of one or more single cooperation projects. **In order to produce concrete effects and be effective at the level of the sea basin, a comprehensive initiative should be launched and carried out.** This initiative should gather all the coastal Administrations, involve a large number of public and private stake-holders, and be implemented for an appropriate period of time that should match with the next programming period of the European Structural Funds 2014-2020.

All that being stated, the Signatory Parties of the Charter, considering the coastal zones of the Mediterranean Sea as a common environmental and cultural heritage to be preserved for the benefit of present and future generations, both for its welfare production capacity and for the safety of coastal settlements and populations, agree as follows:

2. Necessity to promote a MACRO-PROJECT initiative for the Mediterranean coastal zones protection, management and adaptation to climate change

- 2.1 Looking forward to the upcoming macro-regional strategies pre-announced by several acts of the European Union, it is paramount to foster and to substantiate the cooperation tools to make the actions taken by the coastal Administrations more efficient in dealing with coastal integrated management and protection, maritime space management, adaptation to climate change, along the way of a sustainable development.

- 2.2 **Our Administrations consider that this goal can be reached by a MACRO-PROJECT, thought for a coherent, macro-thematic and multi-sectoral Mediterranean strategy, open to the Southern and Eastern coastal Administrations of the Mediterranean,** performing concrete objectives even structural ones in the medium term (2014-2020), able to

attain diversified funding resources even private ones, and with a high capacity of mainstreaming.

2.3 The main initiatives to be encompassed in the MACRO-PROJECT at the Mediterranean scale, to be activated even by phases and single initiatives or projects, are the following ones:

- a. **to build a network of the existing coastal Observatories** - EURIOMCODE proposal initiative (European Interregional Observatory for Mediterranean Coastal Defence) - aimed to identify common standards in coastal survey activities harmonised with the INSPIRE Directive, analyse coastal morphological dynamics in the Mediterranean, share monitoring services, find a common structure consistent with the principles of cost-effectiveness and efficiency and more suitable for the participant Administrations, **and promote the establishment of specific structures, if needed, at local and regional level** for coastal monitoring, the management of coastal zone risks and erosion phenomena, defence interventions and sediment stocks management in coastal areas;
- b. **to survey erosion status and flood hazard along the Mediterranean coasts** - EUROSION-MED proposal initiative promoted by a number of coastal Public Administrations with the support of the European Commission - in order to update and upgrade the experience acquired in relation to all European coasts (EUROSION 2002-2004), in a more detailed way so that it could be suitable for territorial planning at a regional level and compliant with the Flood Directive (2007/60);
- c. **to promote the sustainable use of the strategic resources like the coastal territory to face the "littoralization" process, respond to the needs of a sustainable coastal urbanisation and integrated planning along with ICZM Protocol for the Mediterranean;**
- d. **to individuate, characterise and promote the sustainable use of the strategic resources like the coastal and submarine stocks of sediments to face the coastal erosion and Climate Change, also favouring new commercial relationship between all Mediterranean countries;**

- e. to foster integrated territorial planning, where necessary, along with the principles of Integrated Coastal Zone Management and Maritime Spatial Planning, stated in the Recommendation 2002/413/CE and COM(2008)791 and subsequent related European provisions, in order to ensure the sustainable development of coastal zones, landscape protection, coastal adaptation and risk prevention also in relation to a harmonic development of the initiatives promoted by the present Charter;
- f. to design and execute structural works along Mediterranean coasts consistently with the above-mentioned integrated planning processes, for the concrete implementation of an adaptation policy to the natural and anthropogenic risks of the coastal zones and promote the rehabilitation of the coastal territories for sustainable growth.
- g. to foster project-clustering initiatives like "FACECOAST - Face the challenge of climate change in the Mediterranean coastal zones", launched within the Capitalisation process started by the European MED Program, in order to strengthen cooperation among Regions, Coastal Administrations, Universities and other stakeholders, maximizing results and favouring potential synergies.

3. Supporting the launching and implementation of initiatives

In order to implement actions and initiatives mentioned in point 2, we, the representatives of the Authorities that are the signatories of this Charter, hereby state:

- 3.1 Our willingness to support the actions already undertaken and those to be launched within the MACRO-PROJECT initiative outlined at point 2 in the framework of the 2014-2020 European Structural Funds programming period, and to promote awareness-raising actions focussed on this initiative and addressed to the European Union institutions and in particular those concerned with integrated coastal zone management, risks prevention and climate change adaptation issues, maritime and regional policies.
- 3.2 The commitment to include in its own Programming Documents the specific themes of Integrated Coastal Zone Management, Climate Change adaptation, coastal risks prevention and management, research and innovation, with

a particular attention to initiatives and actions mentioned in point 2. This with the aim to earmark to that themes part of the European 2014-2020 funds assigned to respective Administrations.

- 3.3 The commitment to foster and support positions by the EU Institutions on the importance to include "climate change adaptation" (Article 5 point 5 of the Regulation proposal COM(2011) 614 final) among those ERDF investment priorities 2014-2020 on which to concentrate the higher percentages of total ERDF resources (as for the Policy Position expressed by the CRPM on the "2014-2020 Cohesion Package", February 2012), to allow Regions to allocate more adequate resources on that thematic objective in order to face more effectively the challenge of climate change in the next future.
- 3.4 The willingness to promote agreements or conventions aimed at extending the space of cooperation at the Mediterranean level with other Administrations or international bodies, organisms and initiatives that are concerned with similar issues related to coastal protection, integrated management, climate change adaptation and sustainable development of coastal areas.

4. Final provisions

- 4.1 This Charter has been drafted in English and translated into Italian; the translation in other languages, strongly recommended for its diffusion, must be based on the official English version.
- 4.2 The Charter" shall be filed at the Emilia-Romagna regional offices (Authority entrusted with the Charter) and a copy shall be sent to all the representatives of the signatories, including the Authorities concerned and the other partners expected to be involved in this initiative.
- 4.3 The Authorities that wish to join the initiative shall have to send their application, duly signed by its legal representative, to the Authority entrusted with this Charter, in which they declare the adhesion to and the sharing of the Charter contents, with the indication of the eventual act of approval by their Administration.
- 4.4 The Authority entrusted shall commit itself to keeping the signatory Authorities informed about the partnership activities and it shall officially inform its partners

