



PRESS RELEASE

Brussels, 21 March 2013

Ref: CRPMCOM130011

MEDITERRANEAN REGIONS UNITED FOR BLUE GROWTH

A [conference](#) on the role of coastal and maritime areas as conditions for blue growth in the Mediterranean was held at the European Parliament at the invitation of Spyros Danellis (GR-S&D). It highlighted the political messages put forward by the CPMR Inter-Mediterranean Commission (IMC) based on the results of the MAREMED project developed under the umbrella of the IMC. [MAREMED](#) is coordinated by Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Region (FR) and brings together [twelve maritime regions](#) and the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR).

Maremed which nearing completion, was funded under the MED Programme 2007-2013 and focused on aspects of maritime policy with a strong transnational dimension, notably integrated coastal zone management, pollution, adaptation to climate change in coastal areas, fisheries and the management of coastal and marine data.

"In the current economic juncture, making a success out of blue growth is more important in the Mediterranean than in any other part of the EU. The MAREMED project demonstrates that maritime regions are already at the front line of the efforts to upgrade maritime and coastal management and to create the conditions for sustainable investment in our seas and shores," said **Spyros Danellis**, MEP and *rapporteur* on blue growth.

Mireille Peirano, Vice-President of the Regional Council of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur in charge of maritime affairs, fisheries and coastal issues, agriculture and forestry, and leader of the project, agreed with the MEP, stating: *"Our Mediterranean regions are dictated by the current economic crisis, but a thriving blue growth which goes hand in hand with a balanced and integrated management of coastal regions, is the prerequisite for a return to competitiveness."* Mireille Peirano also asked *"for the maritime Regions to be more involved in the work of the EU and for greater consideration to be given to the Mediterranean in EU texts and funding. As regards EU legislation on maritime issues, the States transfer the job of applying them to the Regions, but without transferring the budgets. This is the case for the Water Framework Directive (WFD)."*

In addition, **François Alfonsi** (FR-Greens), Member of the "Seas and Coastal Areas" Intergroup, pointed out that *"EU policies are not sufficiently tailored to the ecosystems to which they apply."* The MEP believes *"it is necessary to have a Mediterranean vision of maritime policy with a view to sustainable growth. We also need to introduce a project-based dynamic that could flourish in the context of a macro-regional strategy in the Mediterranean, as recommended in my report adopted in 2012."*

With regard to fisheries, **Guido Milana** (IT S&D) highlighted that *"pesca-tourism is a complementary activity for fishing which will provide additional income for fishermen."* The Vice President of the EP Fisheries Committee also referred to a *"cultural change where fishermen might become guardians of the sea."*

"Blue growth requires framework conditions in terms of Integrated Coastal Zone Management, the production of marine data, pollution control and tackling climate change, as well as a territorial approach to fisheries. These conditions cannot be fulfilled without the Regions," indicated **Eleni Marianou**, Secretary General of the CPMR.



Speaking on behalf of the European Commission, **Monique Pariat**, Director for the Mediterranean and Black Sea at DG MARE, referred back to the state of the current crisis and the potential of the *“Integrated Maritime Policy which should be further developed in this political and economic situation.”* Monique Pariat stressed the importance of the MAREMED project, *“which will serve as a source of inspiration to us for the future and will help the Commission and Member States to identify the issues and challenges for implementing the next programming period for 2014-2020.”*

The European Commission was also represented by **Fausta Corda** (DG REGIO) **Beate Gminder** (DG MARE), **Jeroen Casaer** (DG ENVI) and **Rosario Bento Pais** (DG CLIMA).

Today's conference also saw the solemn signing of the [Bologna Charter](#) approved in September 2012, which is the result of productive work between different maritime administrations that are partners in European cooperation projects.

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