

Venice Declaration on Mediterranean Sea Cooperation

Launching a Strategic Marine and Maritime Research and Innovation Agenda for Blue Growth

Venice, October 16, 2015

The Representatives of the Governments of the following EU Member States: Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Malta, Portugal, Romania, and Slovenia, meeting in Venice on October 16, 2015 on the occasion of the high level event “*The BLUEMED Initiative for Blue Growth and Jobs in the Mediterranean*” at the Aquae Venice 2015 Pavillion,

Realizing the potential of a Blue Growth strategy for the Mediterranean Sea, including its Good Environmental Status (GES), based on research and innovation as an instrument to promote sustainable socio-economic development and stability in the Mediterranean area, as well as its relevant role for the European citizens and economies and for Europe as whole,

Intending to foster a shared vision of a Mediterranean Sea as a healthy, safe and productive, common resource, so as to promote security, safety and prosperity of present and future generations in Europe and beyond,

Understanding the vulnerable treasure represented by the Mediterranean Sea and therefore the need for preserving its richness, diversity, uniqueness, which are threatened by the global change, natural hazards, socio-economic conflicts and by direct anthropogenic impacts,

Recognizing the importance of promoting an integrated research and innovation strategic agenda supported by an adequate network of top level marine and maritime research and innovation infrastructures to foster a comprehensive approach for managing, using and preserving the Mediterranean marine and maritime resources and ecosystems in a sustainable way,

Acknowledging that the BLUEMED Initiative will address major societal challenges of the Mediterranean Sea, with the objective of creating new “blue” market opportunities, new jobs and renewed industrial growth, including in the sustainable transport, energy, offshore activity, blue tourism, ship and boat building, observing systems, marine biotechnology, aquaculture and fisheries’ domains, thus promoting social cohesion, improving the environmental status and the well-being, safety and security of all European and Mediterranean Partner Countries’ citizens, while preserving their unmatched cultural heritage,

Willing to leverage on past and on-going regional, national and EU programmes and activities by reducing fragmentation and disposing of unnecessary duplications, thus achieving efficient and effective synergies among different funding streams,

Acknowledging the development of a BLUEMED Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA), which stresses the importance of joint and aligned research and innovation strategies, programmes and activities on the Mediterranean Sea,

Agreed to coordinate and integrate efforts to implement the BLUEMED SRIA by actively promoting synergies and complementarities among all the involved stakeholders at local, regional and national level, as well as among Member States at European level, in order to provide added value to regional, national and EU investments by removing barriers, avoiding duplication and reducing fragmentation,

Decided to advance the strategic marine and maritime research and innovation Agenda for Blue Growth in the Euro-Mediterranean Region, aiming in particular at:

- Promoting cooperation in research and innovation between all Mediterranean countries;
- Engaging with both public and private stakeholders, including small and medium enterprises, in research and innovation actions of cooperation;
- Supporting knowledge-based policy making;
- Prioritising the implementation of cross-cutting actions with high societal impact;
- Ensuring the effective and efficient use of resources and infrastructures by Member States cooperation and joint actions;
- Developing innovative sea-related competences, particularly at technical, doctoral and first stage researchers level.

Done in Venice on October 16, 2015.