

## **Decision IG.20/7**

### **Conservation of sites of particular ecological interest in the Mediterranean**

*The 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Contracting Parties,*

*Recalling* the Marrakech Declaration adopted at the 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Contracting Parties (Marrakech, 2009) that called on States to continue the establishment of marine protected areas and to pursue the protection of biodiversity with a view to the establishment by 2012 of a network of marine protected areas, including on the high seas, in accordance with the relevant international legal framework and the objectives of the World Summit on Sustainable Development,

*Recalling*, in particular, decision X/31 on Protected areas and decision X/29 on marine and coastal biodiversity adopted at the 10<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (Nagoya, Japan, 2010),

Considering also decision X/2, adopted at the 10<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, on the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and in particular Target 11 by which by 2020 at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water areas, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and nationally managed, ecologically representative and well connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes,

*Considering* the need to enhance efforts towards achieving the 2012 target of establishment of representative network of marine protected areas, in accordance with international law as reflected in UNCLOS, and, in this respect, recognizing the need to promote international cooperation and coordination for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction, even through consideration of issues of marine protected areas,

*Recalling* Article 8 of the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean, hereinafter referred to as the Protocol, on the establishment of the List of Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (SPAMI) List,

*Recognizing* the need to facilitate the consultation and coordination processes for the joint preparation of proposals for inclusion in the SPAMI List in accordance with Article 9 of the Protocol,

*Considering* that the Ninth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) adopted in 2008, in decision IX/20, scientific criteria for identifying Ecologically or Biologically Significant Areas (EBSAs) in need of protection in open-ocean waters and deep sea habitats as well as scientific guidance for selecting areas to establish a representative network of marine protected areas,

*Recognizing* that the open seas waters and deep-sea habitats in the Mediterranean include features that are essential for the conservation of the Mediterranean marine biodiversity and the sustainable use of the marine living resources,

*Having considered* the work carried out by the Secretariat and the SPA/RAC to identify EBSAs in the Mediterranean following the CBD scientific and ecological criteria and initially examined at the Extraordinary Meeting of the Focal Points for Specially Protected Areas held in Istanbul in 2010 and at the Tenth Meeting of the Focal Points for SPAs held in Marseille in 2011,

*Considering* the proposals made by France, Italy and Lebanon to include new areas in the SPAMI List and the conclusions of the Tenth Meeting of Focal Points for Specially Protected Areas (Marseille, 2011), regarding the evaluation of their conformity with the criteria provided for in Article 16 of the Protocol,

*Recalling* Decision 17/12 adopted at the 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Contracting Parties (Almeria, 2008) on the procedure for the revision of the areas included in the SPAMI List, stating that for each SPAMI, a Periodic Review should be carried out every six years by a mixed national/independent Technical Advisory Commission;

**Encourages** Contracting Parties to establish and/or strengthen a range of measures for long-term appropriate management of marine protected areas under national jurisdiction or in areas subject to international regimes competent for the adoption of such measures and to incorporate good governance principles,

**Decides** to include the following sites in the SPAMI List:

- The Blue Coast Marine Park (France),
- The Embiez Archipelago-Six Fours (France)
- The Porto Cesareo Marine Protected Area (Italy),
- The Capo Carbonara Marine Protected Area (Italy),
- The Marine Protected Area of Penisola del Sinis-Isola di Mal di Ventre (Italy),
- The Tyre Coast Nature Reserve (Lebanon), and
- The Palm Island Nature Reserve (Lebanon),

**Requests** the concerned Parties to take the necessary protection and conservation measures specified in their SPAMI proposals in accordance with Article 9, paragraph 3 and Annex I to the Protocol,

**Requests** SPA/RAC to inform the competent international organizations of the newly adopted SPAMIs including the measures taken in these SPAMIs, as provided for in Article 9, paragraph 5 of the Protocol,

**Requests** SPA/RAC to work with the relevant authorities in Algeria and Italy to carry out during the 2012-2013 biennium the periodic ordinary review for the following SPAMIs, according to the guidelines adopted by the Contracting Parties:

- The Banc des Kabyles Marine Reserve (Algeria)
- The Habibas Islands (Algeria)
- The Portofino Marine Protected Area (Italy),

**Decides** to add to the Annotated Format for the presentation reports for the areas proposed for inclusion in the SPAMI List a new section that could be used for the preliminary declaration of SPAMI proposals to be presented in accordance with Article 9 of the Protocol, paragraphs "b" or "c". The new section appears as Annex I to this decision,

**Encourages** the Parties and the competent intergovernmental organizations to adhere to the process launched by SPA/RAC on the identification of Ecologically or Biologically Significant Areas (EBSAs) in the Mediterranean,

**Requests** the Barcelona Convention Secretariat to contact the CBD Secretariat and present the work carried out regarding EBSAs identification in the Mediterranean, as appears in documents UNEP(DEPI)/MED WG.348/3rev.1 supported by WG.348/Inf.3 to Inf.6 presented to the SPA/RAC Focal Points , and without prejudice to the competence of the Contracting Parties over marine areas that are or could be under their sovereignty or jurisdiction in accordance with international law as reflected in UNCLOS, to adopt possible management and conservation measures.

## **Annex I**

### **Section to be added in the first page of the annotated format for the presentation reports for the areas proposed for inclusion in the SPAMI List**

#### **PRELIMINARY DECLARATION**

Regarding the Proposals for inclusion in the SPAMI List to be made in accordance with the paragraphs “b” and “c” of Article 9 of the Protocol, the Contracting Parties could consider making individually or jointly a preliminary declaration stating their intention to conduct consultation processes with the neighbouring Parties concerned with a view to prepare the Presentation Report.

For the preliminary declaration of intention, the Contracting Party/ies would not have to present a complete Presentation Report, only the following information shall be provided to SPA/RAC:

- Name of the area
- Geographic location (please provide a map showing the geographical location of the area. It is implied at this stage that the geographic location is not yet the precise determination of the boundaries of the proposed area)
- Approximate surface area
- Legal status (with a general indication of the kind of measures that would be appropriate for the area)

Such preliminary declaration would allow to get opinions and any possible reactions from other Parties on the SPAMI proposal project and would serve as an invitation to the neighbouring Parties concerned for getting involved in the necessary consultation. Through this declaration, the Contracting Party may as appropriate request SPA/RAC and Secretariat assistance to facilitate the consultation process including with relevant international or regional organizations.