

Dubrovnik Declaration

Regional perspective on science-policy interface for a sustainable future

- 1) We, government representatives, experts, scientists and civil society representatives in Europe and the Mediterranean basin¹, and representatives of international institutions, having met in Dubrovnik, Croatia, on October 21-22, 2013, one year after the Rio+20 Conference, have resolved the following.
- 2) Within the common objective of sustainable development to which we all aspire, each region faces specific challenges. We believe that acceptance of sustainable development as a paradigm and progress towards more sustainable outcomes will best be enabled by a clear recognition of this diversity of challenges and priorities at the regional and sub-regional levels, and a better reflection of these differences in discussions at the global level.
- 3) The Mediterranean, as a cradle of civilizations and a crossroads of cultures, reminds us that development must be designed so as to equitably meet the needs of present generations while preserving the right of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 4) During the meeting, we have identified common challenges for the next decades within our region, which include the following areas: the management and monitoring of our shared Mediterranean Sea, including the pressures imposed on it by various land-based and sea-based activities; regional economic integration and its impacts; equity, employment and social issues; education, including education for sustainable development, tourism and culture; the climate, land, energy, water nexus; and more broadly, sustainable consumption and production.
- 5) We agree that we need, in order to reach the future we want, implementable programmes for sustainable development. We believe that going forward; these will be best addressed through integrated, interdisciplinary approaches. In our region, these include, for example, integrated coastal zone management and sustainable consumption and production policies.
- 6) We acknowledge the important contribution of good governance, rule of law and human rights to sustainable development and we recognize that peace and security are critical for development and a major component of it.

¹ See the list of participants.

- 7) We consider empowerment of women and girls and a protection of their rights important for sustainable development.
- 8) This need for integrated visions, strategies, planning and decision-making requires well-functioning and healthy science-policy dialogues in our countries. Such dialogues can facilitate cooperation in the collection, management, analysis, use and exchange of scientific information, facilitate the further development of internationally agreed indicators, and support the preparation of science-based advice and the development of policy options.
- 9) We also believe that the pool of scientific knowledge and policy experience in our region could be better utilized to benefit from each other's experiences and work more closely on topics of common interest, in particular those that require trans-national cooperation.
- 10) We commend the efforts of the UN system to improve the science-policy interface for sustainable development in response to the Rio+20 mandate, and in particular the efforts to produce regular Global Sustainable Development Reports that go beyond existing assessments and integrate environmental, social and economic aspects in a way that enables easier evidence-based policy-making. We believe that such reports can contribute to improving evidence-based decision making at all levels, including through the high-level political forum on sustainable development at the global level. We think that, in order for such assessments to be useful at the national and regional levels, future editions of the Global Sustainable Development Report should build on and highlight regional and sub-regional priorities for sustainable development, challenges and potential for collaboration on the science and policy fronts at those geographical levels.

We resolve to work closely together in the coming years to:

- 11) Improve our collaboration and exchanges of ideas on common challenges for the region, including those identified during the meeting, and reach out to other regional networks for that purpose in order to facilitate the implementation of common regional dialogue platform;
- 12) Improve exchanges of ideas and practices among national and regional scientists and policy makers, with a view to promoting interdisciplinary dialogue and cross-fertilization for sounder policy making at the national level;
- 13) Mobilize existing scientific networks in the region to: (i) provide inputs to future editions of the Global Sustainable Development Report produced by the United Nations Secretariat; (ii) ensure that the voice and unique perspective of the region is reflected in

global debates on sustainable development; and (iii) transpose the outcomes of global science-policy debates on sustainable development into regionally and nationally relevant frameworks for thinking and action, in order to inform national policy-making and contribute to the implementation of international commitments on sustainable development.

We call on national governments in the region to:

- 14) Facilitate science-policy dialogues and promote a stronger institutionalized science-policy interface at the national level, using national expertise (such as peer reviews, impact assessments, policy evaluations) and promoting interdisciplinary approaches and policy perspectives;
- 15) Provide enhanced support to regional scientific networks working on common priorities for the region, in order to fully utilize the regional pool of expertise.
- 16) Support and strengthen inter-ministerial policy coordination for sustainable development.
- 17) Engage in policy consultations for sustainable development with Major Groups such as economic actors and civil society organizations.
- 18) Regularly engage in consultations with other Government on sustainable development policies.

We further call on the relevant regional and international institutions including the United Nations, in particular through the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development, to:

- 19) Fully integrate regional and sub-regional perspectives in their analytical and policy work, technical assistance and capacity-building programmes, for example by examining more systematically the implications for regional and national policy-making of intergovernmental commitments on sustainable development taken at the global level;
- 20) Provide support to regional scientific networks whose work focuses on regional and sub-regional priorities for sustainable development, and to their interaction with policy-makers;
- 21) Provide support to interdisciplinary exchanges targeted at building integrated visions and sustainable development strategies at the national level, in order to facilitate intra-regional capacity building.

