



**COUNCIL OF
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NOTE

from: General Secretariat
to: Council

Subject: Outcome of the Mediterranean Climate Change Initiative
(Athens, 22 October 2010)
– Information from the Greek delegation

Delegations will find annexed a note from the Greek delegation on the above topic, to be dealt with under "other business" at the Council (Environment) meeting on 20 December 2010.

Outcome of the Mediterranean Climate Change Initiative**(Athens, 22 October 2010)****– Information from the Greek delegation –**

The Mediterranean Climate Change Initiative (MCCI) was proposed by the Greek Government as a regional governmental collaboration in order to address the serious threat climate change poses to the region's stability and prosperity, and to highlight the opportunity that a low carbon development model provides to tackle jointly financial, energy and climate challenges.

The Initiative stems from a belief that regional cooperation on issues related to climate change can play a significant and complementary role to global climate change negotiations. A commitment on the part of Mediterranean governments is particularly relevant as a case study, given that the region spans both Annex I and non-Annex I countries, but also because the socio-economic and political effects of climate change are already evident in this area of the world.

The Mediterranean has been identified by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change as being especially vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Many of these impacts (increased risk of drought, longer fire season, reduction in crop productivity etc.) are common across the region. Nevertheless, the region provides significant opportunities for common low carbon development strategies and has an unrivalled potential to become a major hub of renewable energy generation for domestic and neighboring markets. Realizing this potential implies increasing the technical strengths to exploit available resources and the creation of innovative large-scale finance mechanisms. It also implies intense collaboration between countries, particularly in the field of grid interconnections.

As well as large scale renewable energy projects, the development of both climate adaptation and other mitigation solutions could bring significant new opportunities for a 'green economic boost' to the Mediterranean. The potential for the creation of new local businesses and high skilled jobs arising from demand side measures in cities, buildings, transport, industry and tourism could be further explored.

The emergence of a strong, action orientated Mediterranean initiative could support global efforts to tackle climate change through the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change process. It will also ensure that issues relating to the funding of adaptation measures and low carbon development opportunities for the region are explored at the international level and fed into the longer term post Kyoto-framework.

In view of the above challenges, the Greek government has initiated this MCCI in close cooperation with Mediterranean countries which are strongly committed to climate and energy security. The objective is that all interested parties in the region can eventually be active and become equal partners in the initiative.

To formalise participation in this Initiative, the Prime Minister of Greece invited leaders from the Mediterranean to join him in signing a Joint Declaration¹ at the MCCI launch event on 22 October 2010 in Athens, Greece.

Eighteen (18) Political Delegations, including eight (8) EU Member States (Bulgaria, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Romania, Slovenia) together with Albania, Croatia, Egypt, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Israel, Mauritania, Montenegro, Palestinian National Authority, Serbia and Turkey, headed by four Prime Ministers and 13 Ministers, signed a Joint Political Declaration, thus formally establishing the MCCI.

The Launch of the MCCI also attracted international academics, business leaders, and financial institutions to consider the practical benefits of the MCCI political agreement.

More info on the event can be found in the website :

<http://www.medclimatechangeinitiative.org/>

According to the above joint political declaration the Mediterranean Climate Change Initiative “will aim at contributing to the emergence of low carbon, resource efficient and climate resilient economies in the Mediterranean and its objective will be to undertake strategic policy development work on climate change adaptation and low carbon development relevant to the entire

¹ The MCCI Joint Declaration can be found in :
<http://www.medclimatechangeinitiative.org/sites/default/files/Joint-Declaration.pdf>

Mediterranean region. The Initiative will seek to contribute to addressing the specific challenges faced by the Mediterranean region. The Mediterranean Climate Change Initiative will aim at developing convergent Mediterranean positions on climate change demonstrating leadership and strong commitment to action in the international arena.”

Moreover, the participating countries to the MCCI envisage the initiative as both an autonomous Mediterranean political initiative aiming at strengthening international and regional agreements through common policy positions and concrete actions, as well as a projects-based initiative to be eligible for the UfM branding. The Mediterranean Climate Change Initiative aims to strengthen collaboration on convergent challenges and opportunities across the Mediterranean and place a greater focus on the implementation of UfM projects in the Mediterranean region.

The MCCI intends to collaborate with other initiatives in the Mediterranean where value can be added through joint working.

In order to ensure the continuity of this initiative, it was decided that Malta will organize a follow up meeting to prepare working groups related to the initiative, and Turkey is going to organize the second annual MCCI in the fall of 2011.