



Recommendations of the Working Group on Equal access to Resources (Alicante – Spain, 14-15 May 2010)

The participants

Called upon the Union for the Mediterranean to commit the region to a climate change strategy, to be decided by a Ministerial Conference in 2011 for immediate implementation on the basis of the CIRCE project findings and other relevant regional programmes and activities. All environmental policies, above all energy, water and biodiversity must be coherent with this strategy. A civil society Mediterranean Climate Change Action Network should be established to encourage and monitor this process.

Affirmed the crucial need for ensuring the universal right of access by 2020 of all Euro-Mediterranean people to resources, especially sustainable water and energy supplies. In this respect they:

Condemned the current Israeli discriminatory policies that deprive the Palestinians their rights of equal access to water and energy and call upon the EU, the Quartet and UN to create appropriate mechanisms to enforce the implementation of relevant international resolutions and agreements that would prevent Israel from confiscating land, energy, water, other resources and violating human rights as well as ending its illegal occupation. This would contribute to establish political stability and peace which are the basis for creating a real partnership in the EuroMed region.

Called upon the governments of the region to mainstream water and energy concerns into regional and national policies and plans in all sectors and to adopt and implement as soon as possible the Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean.

Emphasised the need for gender equitable policies addressing water security in connection with food security and poverty alleviation, particularly considering the needs of rural poor, especially women. In this context, gender disaggregated data should be produced to better define the situation and needs of women and to plan for effective gender responsive policies and budgets.

A women's Mediterranean environmental network should be established.

Urged the need to preserve vital ecosystems and biodiversity, which are the providers of our food, medicine and other essential services as well as the importance of gathering and monitoring information on water quality to secure the sustainable use of resources.

Called upon relevant authorities to promote awareness-raising activities and education as means to ensure the equal access to resources. Education for sustainable development should become an integral part of school curricula at all levels.

Recommended that additional efforts should be made by all countries in the region to reduce pressures and impacts caused by tourism on natural resources, undermining equal access to them.

Urged that the design and implementation of regional and national energy policies, including the European Neighbourhood Policy action plans, should include the full participation of CSOs at all stages, and not be left entirely to governments and industry as is generally the case.

Called for market distortions hindering the introduction of renewable energies to be progressively phased out by adjusting fiscal policies relating to taxation and subsidies. However, access by the poor should be protected.

Urged full support for the Mediterranean Solar Plan which should include a balance of small and large-scale energy generation projects, as well as a strong emphasis on energy efficiency, expressed as a regional target. To facilitate financing, small projects could be bundled, where appropriate. Education and capacity building in related disciplines and technology should be promoted for women and men alike.

Called for a target of 20% of primary energy supplies to be derived from renewable energies by 2020 to serve as a benchmark for south Mediterranean countries, enabled by necessary international technological and financial support. The potential role of national retail banks in facilitating household, community and commercial installations should be explored. UfM universities and other institutes should be encouraged to cooperate in support of the MSP.

Demanded that the potential implications of the proposed Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area (EMFTA), as described in the Sustainability Impact Assessment Study (SIA/EMFTA) be fully taken into account by decision makers.

Demanded that the role of civil society in formulating and implementing regional climate change and environmental policy in general be formalised and guaranteed at the highest political level. The principles of economic transparency must be respected.