

Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention): Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management

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PURPOSE: to conclude, on behalf of the European Union, of the Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

CONTENT: the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean, also known as the "Barcelona Convention", was initially signed on 16 February 1976 in Barcelona and amended on 10 June 1995. It came into force on 9 July 2004. The European Union is Contracting Party to the Convention, as are all EU Mediterranean coastal Member States. In accordance with the amended Convention, Parties are specifically obliged to promote integrated coastal zone management, taking into account the protection of areas of ecological and landscape interest and the rational use of natural resources.

In the EU, the main instrument promoting Integrated Coastal Zone Management is the European Parliament and Council [Recommendation 2002/413/EC](#) concerning the implementation of Integrated Coastal Zone Management in Europe. Chapter V of the Recommendation stresses the importance of cooperation in regional seas to achieve better coordination and responses to cross-border coastal issues.

The European Union promotes integrated management on a larger scale by means of horizontal instruments, including in the field of environmental protection, and by developing a sound science base for it, through its research programs. These activities therefore also contribute to integrated coastal zone management. Integrated Coastal Zone Management is one component of the EU Integrated Maritime Policy.

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A Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the Mediterranean (the ICZM Protocol) drawn up in the context of the Barcelona Convention was approved on behalf of the European Community, subject to subsequent conclusion at a later date by the Council Decision 2009/89/EC.

The Mediterranean coastal zones continue to experience high pressures on the environment and degradation of coastal resources. The ICZM Protocol provides a framework to stimulate a more concerted and integrated approach, involving public and private stakeholders including civil society and economic operators. Such an inclusive approach, based on best available scientific observation and knowledge, is required to address these problems more effectively and achieve a more sustainable development of the Mediterranean coastal zones

The ICZM Protocol covers a broad range of provisions which will need to be implemented by different levels of administration taking the subsidiarity and proportionality principles into account. While it is appropriate for the European Union to act in support of integrated coastal zone management, bearing in

mind, inter alia, the cross-border nature of most environmental problems, the Member States and their relevant competent authorities will be responsible for the design and implementation on the coastal territory of certain detailed measures laid down in the ICZM Protocol, such as the establishment of zones where construction is not allowed.

In view of the above, it is appropriate for the European Union to conclude the Protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the Mediterranean.