



SECOND SESSION OF THE HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE

« FOR SCIENTIFIC, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRATION IN FAVOR OF THE BLUE ECONOMY »

Agadir- January 31, 2023

AGADIR DECLARATION

We, Ministers, Representatives of States, International and Regional Organizations, in the presence of a representative of the European Commission, meeting on January 31, 2023 in Agadir on the occasion of the second session of the High Level Conference of the Blue Belt Initiative, at the invitation of H.E. Mr. Mohamed Sadiki, Minister of Agriculture, Maritime Fisheries, Rural Development and Waters and Forests of the Kingdom of Morocco;

Appreciating the initiative taken by the Kingdom of Morocco within the framework of the Action Agenda of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, launched during CoP22 held in Marrakech and concretized by the Blue Belt platform;

Encouraging the establishment of mechanisms to promote innovation and design sustainable projects in the field of fisheries and aquaculture, the objective of which is to preserve and conserve marine ecosystems;

Emphasizing that oceans and related economic and social activities play a strategic role in the blue economy of African countries and their sustainable development;

Noting that marine ecosystems are threatened by the significant increase in the cumulative impact, in particular due to climate change but also illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, and pollution;

Reiterating the need to achieve the actions set out in the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 13 on combating climate change and in particular SDG 14 on aquatic life for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and seas;

Confirming their willingness to establish close cooperation between countries and international, regional and sub-regional organizations in accordance with the provisions of Articles 117 and 118 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and which emphasize the duty to cooperate between the Parties;

Recalling the alarming conclusions of the biennial UN Conference on Oceans (Lisbon 2022), calling on the international community to accelerate the achievement of SDG 14, for a productive ocean supporting a sustainable food supply and the Blue economy;



Reaffirming that the integration of climate and ecosystem considerations in Blue economies is a prerequisite for long-term food security, human development and the sustainable use of the oceans and its multiple resources;

Recalling the need to anchor maritime activities, in general, and fisheries in particular, within the framework of the blue economy as an integrated development approach, source of promising new economic opportunities, enhancing natural and social capital;

Recognizing the vital importance of increasing the African continent's contribution to global efforts to strengthen ocean science within the framework of the Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030), to support inclusive development ;

Recalling the urgent need to encourage scientific research, expertise, innovation, ocean observation systems, multi-stakeholder partnerships and synergies to implement an integrated and ecosystem-based approach across all sectors of the blue economy, based on science;

Recalling the commitments of the first African Climate Action Summit, held in Marrakesh in 2016, to accelerate the implementation of initiatives identified or launched at the continent level, by mobilizing intrinsic resources, multilateral and bilateral donors, as well as non-governmental organizations and operators;

Welcoming the efforts deployed by the Kingdom of Morocco alongside partner countries and organizations, for the emergence of a Blue Belt «Community Partnerships» as a multi-stakeholder ecosystem for the integration of scientific, economic and environmental dimensions around actions aimed at a relevant transformation of the fisheries and aquaculture sectors, to unleash their full potential towards a sustainable blue growth and ensure their resilience in a changing climate context;

Convinced that empowering ocean users is an essential element of action;

Reiterating the willingness of all partners to deploy the necessary efforts to support the actions implemented under the Blue Belt Initiative;

Welcoming the strategic framework of the Blue Belt initiative, incorporating the conclusions of the previous high-level dialogue and the orientations of the 2019 Agadir Declaration;

Sharing in this respect, a shared vision: A resilient ocean and a sustainable and science-based seafood production system;

Affirming that within the framework of the Blue Belt initiative, the structuring of strategic action should be based on the following three pillars:

1. Develop and maintain high quality coastal and ocean observations over the long term;
2. Integrate all fisheries stakeholders in the sustainability process to achieve climate and economic resilience;



-
3. Promote and support sustainable aquaculture practices and contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Call on all actors and stakeholders to

1. Support the implementation efforts of the Blue Belt initiative by encouraging proposals for actions and measures enabling the establishment of its platform around research/development ; technological, environmental and social innovation as well as blue economy and circular economy principles;
2. Promote innovative and transformative science, focused on operational outcomes, to accelerate the transformation of our approach related to the use and management of the ocean and support sustainable fisheries and aquaculture;
3. Develop multifaceted partnerships, to strengthen the Blue Belt «Community Partnerships» and develop its portfolio of actions, by promoting co-construction and ownership by actors involved in transformative activities.

Let us express our respectful gratitude to His Majesty King Mohammed VI for His Benevolent Concern, the warm welcome of this beautiful town of Agadir, the flagship of the blue economy, as well as the means used for the excellent holding of this event.