

Delivering a Mediterranean climate agenda for COP31 and beyond: Anchoring global commitments in multilevel regional implementation



APRIL 2026

As representatives of the ***Mediterranean Alliance of Think Tanks on Climate Change (MATTCCh)*** from across the Mediterranean region, together with philanthropic organizations and local actors, universities, and other partners gathered in Palermo at the 14th edition of the Earth Day Mediterranean Festival,

We recall that the Mediterranean region is:

- **a climate change hotspot and one of the most vulnerable regions of the world to global warming**, already experiencing acute risks across water scarcity, flooding, and wildfires, severely impacting ecosystems and communities.
- **a region marked by deep North-South asymmetries**, with direct implications for equity and just transition;
- **a strategic space for cooperation and alignment between Europe**, the “MENA” region and the African continent around an agenda of shared human security and win-win opportunities for increased competitiveness;
- **a strategic region in the global energy transition**, with high potential for clean energy and green industrial transformation, investment opportunities, as well as significant transition risks;
- **a space where climate change and related policy intersects with security and conflict, migration and development**, as well as the application of international law or lack thereof, and the enjoyment and infringement of the right to life, right to a clean environment, and other human rights.

In this context, the Mediterranean region stands out as a test case and laboratory for cooperation on the global climate agenda. It is an essential proof point for successful delivery of global climate goals, where progress on mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage, and finance must be ensured through territorially grounded pathways.

In the lead-up to 2030, revitalizing the credibility of the global climate agenda depends on our collective ability to translate global ambitions into real climate action on the ground in specific regions of the world, with a special bond with Africa, advancing economic opportunity, social cohesion and resilience to geopolitical instability.

We call on the government of Turkiye in its COP31 Presidency and other Mediterranean countries, the European Commission and the Union for Mediterranean to partner together to close the implementation gap in the Mediterranean region, grounding global climate goals in specific regional efforts, in partnership with and parallel to efforts by Australia in the Pacific region.

We propose three priorities for a Mediterranean climate agenda for COP31 and beyond:

1

Accelerate the deployment of regional renewable energy capacities by 2030, including via a flagship Mediterranean partnership for COP31 as advocated by the TeraMed Initiative, consistent with global ambitions set at COP28.

The Mediterranean region has the potential to more than triple its installed capacities to become a terawatt-scale global hub for renewable energy, while boosting electrification and net-zero industry on both shores. Seeking ambition consistent with the geography's potential, the TeraMed Initiative aims for a regionally anchored platform, linking renewable energy expansion with grid enhancement, industrial development, just transition and energy security across both shores. Such an initiative would also align directly with the implementation focus of the COP31 presidency, as a regional deliverable of this focus, linking the Action Agenda with the delivery of the COP28 Global Stock-Take target of tripling global renewable energy capacities by 2030.

2

Accelerate delivery of adaptation action in the region by 2030, consistent with the targets set at COP28 under the Global Goal for Adaptation, including via a flagship Mediterranean adaptation and resilience pathway initiative for COP31-COP32, to deliver benefits in terms of resilience, security, and prosperity for the region.

Adaptation efforts in the Mediterranean region remain fragmented and underfunded, insufficient to ensure the delivery of the thematic and dimensional targets for 2027-2030 established under the Global Goal for Adaptation, which include targets for crucial challenges for the Mediterranean region, such as water and food. A flagship COP31 regional initiative could aim to close the implementation gap for adaptation in the region, consistent with the COP31 Presidency's implementation focus, and enhance coordinated regional action on issues which could include water stress, urban resilience to extreme heat, access to food and nutrition, biodiversity and ecosystem degradation, recognizing adaptation as an essential pillar for regional resilience, security, and prosperity.

3

Close the gap in finance needed for delivering international and national ambitions - particularly on adaptation - including but not limited through the establishment of regional platforms for finance and investment at COP31, budgetary priorities and reform of the international financial architecture.

A persistent gap remains between regional climate-related finance needs and the state of climate finance commitments and wider investment flows. In the Mediterranean region, the gap is compounded by high debt ratios and limits to fiscal space, inaccurate risk perceptions, challenges with capital costs and uneven access to patient capital, and limited availability of concessional financial instruments. COP31 can establish platforms tackling key issues for scaling finance and investment in the Mediterranean region, including project origination and aggregation. Additionally, we emphasize the need to close the gap via reforming the international financial architecture, including on sovereign debt cooperation and tax cooperation under the United Nations, as well as by making at-scale commitments in key budgetary processes such as the European Union's Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2028-2034, which is set to play a key role in funding regional climate cooperation.

The substantive content of this declaration aims to reflect the discussions held among members of MATTCCh convening in Palermo in April 2026 in an in-person closed-door workshop in partnership with Stanley Center for Peace and Security, as well as preparatory discussions over the previous months; it does not purport to necessarily represent the views of each member of the MATTCCh.