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to the

COMMISSION IMPLEMENTING DECISION

on the EU-Morocco Green Partnership

Memorandum of understanding on a Green Partnership between the European Union and the Kingdom of Morocco

The European Union (hereinafter ‘the EU’) and the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco (hereinafter ‘Morocco’), hereinafter ‘the Partners’:

Whereas in the Joint Political Declaration¹ adopted at the 14th meeting of the EU-Morocco Association Council of 27 June 2019 in Brussels, the Partners agreed that ‘Cooperation on protection of the environment and the fight against climate change’ would constitute a key cross-cutting field of the ‘Euro-Moroccan partnership for shared prosperity’, intended as a framework for equals to ensure balanced, comprehensive cooperation in the service of their mutual interests;

Having regard to the European Green Deal² adopted in December 2019, which lays down the reforms necessary in the various sectors of the economy to achieve climate neutrality, and the resilience, conservation and consolidation of Europe’s natural heritage. It also provides for close engagement with the most ambitious partner countries to act together in response to environmental and climate challenges;

Whereas the Kingdom of Morocco, which is strongly committed to these areas, has developed an ambitious national strategic framework³ and achieved considerable progress in the fight against climate change, ensuring energy transition, the protection of the environment and the promotion of the green and blue economy. It has made use of its leverage to support and bolster international, trilateral and South-South cooperation to address the issues and challenges raised in these areas;

Aware that the success of these undertakings is also substantially linked to close, mutually supportive and fruitful collaboration and cooperation between the partner countries that have chosen the ‘green option’.

Acknowledging the urgency and need to take action together against global warming and to mitigate its impact, taking account of vulnerability to climate change and the ever more complex environmental challenges faced by the Partners;

Reiterating their commitment to implement the Paris Agreement, in keeping with the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals;

Convinced, in the post-COVID recovery context, of the potential of the green transition in terms of economic growth, trade, investment, job creation, stability and equitable, sustainable and inclusive human development;

Affirming the need for concerted action to address the multiple challenges raised by the next phase of the economic recovery through an inclusive and gradual transition towards more sustainable societies and consumption patterns in the long term;

Confirming the importance of the implementation of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) 2030 Strategy for sustainable fisheries management and aquaculture in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, which aims *inter alia* to improve the socioeconomic conditions relating to fisheries while promoting sustainable practices;

¹ Joint declaration by the European Union and Morocco for the fourteenth meeting of the Association Council: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/06/27/joint-declaration-by-the-european-union-and-the-kingdom-of-morocco-for-the-fourteenth-meeting-of-the-association-council/>

² COM(2019) 640 final – Commission Communication on the European Green Deal. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52019DC0640&from=EN>

³ Stratégie Nationale de Développement Durable (National Sustainable Development Strategy, 2017), National Determined Contribution (NDC), in line with the objectives of the Paris Agreement (2021) and the Nouveau Modèle de Développement (New Development Model, 2021)

Acknowledging the importance of ensuring investment and trade, free of distortion, in green goods and services, as well as energy, all of which are vital to safeguard the transition towards climate-neutral economies.

Emphasising the importance of their existing cooperation in the areas of combating climate change, energy, green growth and the sustainable management of natural resources⁴, which have formed a central part of the EU-Morocco Partnership for a number of years;

Wishing to continue and deepen their dialogue and cooperation in these areas, striking a balance between their interests, in accordance with the founding principles of their relations and their respective policies,

Are in agreement on the following,

1. Objectives of the Partnership

The aim of this Memorandum is to establish a Green Partnership between the Partners in the areas of combating climate change, the energy transition, protection of the environment and the promotion of the green and blue economy.

Of a strategic nature, the Green Partnership, entailing real opportunities for political, economic, technical and technological cooperation, shall:

- put combating climate change, promoting and advancing the energy transition, protecting the environment and transitioning to a green, fair economy among the priorities in bilateral relations between the EU and Morocco;
- enable the Partners to progress towards their shared objectives of becoming low-carbon economies tending towards carbon neutrality, while ensuring the security of their energy supplies and leaving no one behind;
- facilitate the transition to decarbonised industry through investment in green technology, the generation of renewable energy, sustainable mobility and clean production in industry;
- enable the Partners to step up their cooperation and use it to leverage mutually beneficial sustainable development, that fosters the emergence of economic and social opportunities, while ensuring a level playing field;
- step up consultation and upstream policy exchanges, and foster the factoring in of the interests, priorities and concerns of each of the Partners, during the drafting of policies on climate change, energy transition, environmental protection and the green and blue economy at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels;
- bolster and expand trilateral and South-South cooperation in the areas of climate change, green energy, the blue economy and the environment, to encourage other international partners to join the Partners on the road to sustainability and attain the Paris Agreement objectives, in line with the 2030 Agenda. Such action is also aimed at encouraging international partners to draw up and adopt strategies for the development of the green and blue economy, and green energy, and to facilitate the work and foster the expansion of the International Platform on Sustainable Finance;
- raise public awareness, *inter alia* among those groups most vulnerable to climate and environmental issues, in particular by encouraging contributions from various players (Members of Parliament, civil society, young people, etc.) towards the success of the Partnership;

⁴ Including marine resources.

- increase the involvement of the private sector in green matters, including in channelling investment for the green transition of the Moroccan economy, and much closer cooperation with financial institutions and the EU cooperation bodies.

Through this framework for enhanced cooperation, the Partners will be able to examine all issues of mutual interest, share their knowledge and best practices, determine and implement substantive, mutually beneficial cooperation initiatives, where necessary by channelling investment and access to the various EU financial instruments, for the development of capacity and any appropriate action.

Moreover, this Partnership might encourage privileged cooperation with the specialist EU agencies, and Morocco's participation in relevant European Union programmes and initiatives.

The key fields of the Partnership are listed, for information purposes, in the Annex to this Memorandum.

2. Governance

The Green Partnership, underpinned by the extensive achievements of their relations, shall come within the existing framework of Morocco-EU relations⁵, within which the Partners will be able to talk on an equal footing and examine any issues of mutual interest.

It shall ensure that monitoring mechanisms are set up (ministerial meetings, monitoring groups, a business forum, etc.).

This Memorandum shall not be legally binding and shall not give rise to obligations under international law. It shall not limit cooperation with other partners.

This Memorandum shall not have financial implications for the Partners.

Signed aton.....in duplicate in French.

For the EU:

For the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco

⁵ *Inter alia*, the Association Agreement, the European Neighbourhood Policy, the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement, etc.

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Key fields of the Green Partnership (for information purposes)

Energy transition and decarbonising the Moroccan economy

- Integration of the Moroccan and EU electricity markets, enhancement of electricity interconnections, reform and convergence of regulatory frameworks.
- Modernisation and enhancement of the stability and flexibility of networks by means appropriate to the electricity systems of the Partners.
- Modernisation of distance management of electricity networks and their information systems to adapt more effectively to the addition of renewable energies and securing of the system against cybercrime.
- Development of projects on renewable energies and applications relating to them.
- Development of power-to-X technologies, *inter alia* the production and export of green molecules, including hydrogen, and the necessary infrastructure.
- Investment in sea spaces for the generation of renewable wind and tidal energy.
- Strengthening the legal framework and the systems and installations relating to renewable energy and energy efficiency.
- Energy efficiency, above all promotion of the principle of the primacy of energy efficiency in various socioeconomic sectors (buildings, industry, transport, tourism, fisheries, etc.).
- Accompanying industrial undertakings in the promotion of energy efficiency.
- Development prospects for decarbonised gases (biogas, waste recovery and biomass), strategies for gradual coal phase out, the role of natural gas and gas interconnections for security of supply for Morocco and Europe.
- Decarbonisation of the industrial sector, establishment of decarbonised industrial estates, and monitoring and certification of industrial emissions.
- Approximation of rules and standards for systems and installations relating to decarbonised industry (sustainable mobility, clean production and the circular economy).
- Sharing experience on accompanying measures for industry.
- Support for ensuring the consistency of the methods for calculating the carbon balance of industrial products.
- Bolstering the energy monitoring and forecasting system.
- Use of and change of land allocation for emission mitigation.
- Sustainable mobility (electric, hydrogen, infrastructure, batteries, etc.).
- Establishment of a monitoring and follow-up system for renewable energy projects (including green hydrogen).
- Increasing capacity relating to new technologies (sustainable mobility, hydrogen, geothermal energy, biomass, marine energy, desalination and energy storage, etc.);
- Sharing best practices in terms of monitoring anticipated energy savings.
- Sharing experience on ESCOs.
- Bolstering the legal framework and application tools for energy efficiency and decentralised renewable energy.

Adaptation and resilience to climate change

- Adaptation to climate change and enhancement of natural disaster risk and extreme weather management by way of (*inter alia*):
 - strengthening the resilience of coastal and mountain areas;
 - boosting capacity in the management and prevention of disaster risks, in particular prevention of, preparation for and the response to natural disasters⁶;

⁶ In line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the European Green Deal.

- strengthening the epidemiological surveillance system and the prevention of health risks linked to the impact of climate change and boosting the resilience of basic infrastructure;
- sustainable management of agricultural and forestry land;
- sustainable management of water resources, in particular in the agricultural sector, including the promotion of water reuse;
- bolstering capacity in the monitoring and evaluation of vulnerability/adaptation.

Environmental protection

- Prevention and reduction of pollution, especially industrial pollution⁷ (and proper treatment of urban waste water).
- Monitoring and improvement of air quality.
- Protection of biodiversity and the protection and enhancement of environmental media, including the development of protected areas and the implementation of the necessary management measures for the protection of habitats and species.
- Promotion of solutions based on nature and combating land degradation and desertification.
- Bolstering governance in the field of the environment and sustainable development and the enforcement of environmental legislation, *inter alia* through the development of monitoring, supervision and control capacity.

Green and blue economy

- Support for the transition towards a circular economy.
- Sustainable management of household and industrial waste and waste recovery, including for hazardous waste, by concentrating on a reduction in plastic waste and the clean-up of the most polluted sites.
- Governance and responsible, sustainable management of the oceans, integrated management of coastal areas, sustainable management of resources and marine areas, and the enforcement of environmental legislation, along with any other policies aimed at the protection of the oceans based on sound cooperation, such as the GFCM 2030 Strategy for sustainable fisheries management and aquaculture in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea and the Restore our Oceans and Waters Mission.
- Production and sustainable management of raw materials for the green and energy transitions.
- Rules on systems and installations relating to the green and blue economy (energy efficiency, renewable energy, sustainable mobility, clean production and circular economy).
- Development of a green economy and decent jobs, in particular for young people, *inter alia* through the promotion and development of clean technologies.
- Promotion of green entrepreneurship and start-ups in the field, in particular to young people, with special attention on female entrepreneurship.
- Sustainable urban and rural development.

Cross-cutting issues: Research, funding and trilateral cooperation

- Enhancement and modernisation of the regulatory framework of and investment and funding for renewable energy projects, including on the basis of exchanges through the International Platform on Sustainable Finance.
- Support for the greening of economic policies, including agricultural, trade and investment policies.
- Analysis of the barriers to investment and mechanisms to facilitate the funding of green projects.

⁷ For example from the production of fertiliser and mineral fertilising products.

- Promotion of sustainable financing and the channelling of public and private funding, *inter alia* green bonds and guarantees, green taxation and public-private partnerships, in particular for implementation of the NDC.
- Bolstering dialogue between parties in sustainable finance and coordination for development of private funding to the benefit of sustainability.
- Promotion of research and innovation in the various areas of the Partnership through the framework for existing cooperation⁸, *inter alia* through the Horizon Europe programme⁹, the participation of Morocco in the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean (PRIMA) and the BlueMed initiative;
- Promotion of investment in human capital (training, education) relating to the Partnership's areas.
- Promotion of the inclusion of gender equality related issues in order to meet the challenges and take advantage of the corresponding possibilities provided for by the green transition;
- Morocco-Africa-EU trilateral partnership: exchange of experience, development of capacity, promotion of investments in and support for multilateral and regional initiatives championed by the Partners.

⁸ For instance within the Union for the Mediterranean Regional Platform in Research and Innovation and in the framework of the Administrative Arrangement on marine research and innovation cooperation, and the All-Atlantic Ocean Research and Innovation Alliance.

⁹ Morocco benefits from Horizon Europe as a third country and has taken steps to become a Horizon Europe Associate Country.