

**Framework Convention  
for the Protection of the Marine  
Environment of the Caspian Sea**

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**CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES  
Sixth Meeting  
... 2018, Baku, Azerbaijan**

**Caspian Sea Day forum 2017, Astrakhan, Russian Federation, 10-11 August 2017**  
(Note by interim Secretariat)

**Introduction:**

At the meeting in Iran (Bandar Anzali, 16-20 April 2017) the Russian Federation requested the interim Secretariat to invite all Parties to participate and contribute to the organization of the Caspian Day celebrations on 10-11 August 2017 in Astrakhan. The celebrations took place within the framework of the "Year of the Environment" in the Russian Federation and was supported by the "LUKOIL".

The round-table session "Role of the Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea in the achievement of the environmental sustainable development of the Caspian Sea region and in cooperation on the UN sustainable development goals" was held within the framework of the "Caspian Sea Day – 2017" forum.

**Suggested Action:**

The meeting is invited to consider and endorse the Outcome Document of the Round Table on Collaboration with the Private Sector adopted by the Participants and pledge their support for its implementation. The Outcome Document is contained in annex I.

## 2017 Caspian Sea Day

10-11 August 2017, Astrakhan, Russian Federation

The "Caspian Sea Day" forum has been held in Astrakhan on August 10-11, 2017, as the event celebrated annually by all Caspian littoral states as the date of the entry into force of the Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea in 2006.

The event was organized by the Government of the Astrakhan oblast, MNRE of Russia with the support of the PAO "LUKOIL" and participation of the Tehran Convention (interim) Secretariat in line with the Plan of the main activities for the Year of Ecology in 2017 in the Russian Federation.

The round-table session "Role of the Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea in the achievement of the environmental sustainable development of the Caspian Sea region and in cooperation on the UN sustainable development goals" was held within the frameworks of the "Caspian Sea Day – 2017" forum.

Over 70 people participated in the forum: representatives from the Caspian littoral states – Azerbaijan Republic, Islamic republic of Iran, Republic of Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, UNEP, Tehran Convention (interim) Secretariat, representatives of the MFA of Russia, MNRE of Russia, Rosprirodnadzor, Roshydromet, Federal Agency for Fisheries, near Caspian subjects of the Russian Federation, PAO "LUKOIL", scientific research institutes and educational institutions of Astrakhan, Dagestan and Kalmykia.

### **The following recommendations were adopted on the basis of the deliberations:**

1. The most important task of the environmental cooperation in the region is the development of coherent, economically viable integrated approaches to managing the Caspian Sea marine and coastal environment status in order to achieve the necessary conditions for sustainable development.

The Tehran Convention and its protocols could be used as an effective mechanism to achieve the goals of ecologically sustainable development of the Caspian Sea region with due account of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

At implementing the Tehran Convention and its protocols, it is necessary to take into account the world experience in organizing activities under the regional conventions and programs relevant to the tasks of improving the management system of the marine and coastal environment of the Caspian Sea region.

2. The improvement of the Caspian Sea marine and coastal ecosystems management should be based on application of measures which are necessary to develop and implement national strategies and plans.

The national strategies and plans should include information on managing the coastal areas, including on the biodiversity conservation, the specially protected natural areas management, sustainable and rational use of biological resources, as well as on implementation of measures related to decrease of negative impacts of natural and anthropogenic factors.

3. There is a need in data of the marine and coastal environment monitoring to adequately manage the coastal environment and regulate anthropogenic impacts on the Caspian Sea ecosystems.

It is necessary to facilitate the early launch of the implementation of the Caspian Sea Environmental Monitoring Program (EMP) of the Tehran Convention, the results of which should be used as a basis for assessing the status, identifying environmental risks and developing measures to protect the

Caspian Sea marine and coastal environment. It is advisable to establish a group (or a subgroup within the existing working group) of experts in the in the area of the aquatic bioresources to strengthen the EMP biological component.

It is necessary to support the development of national systems for integrated environmental monitoring of various levels, including industrial environmental monitoring carried out in the course of geological study, exploration and production of hydrocarbons.

In order to establish a system for exchanging the monitoring data and performing the Caspian Sea environment status assessments in compliance with the Tehran Convention requirements, the international legal support, such as the currently being developed Protocol on Monitoring, Assessment and Exchange of Information under the Tehran Convention, is needed. Also, it is necessary to reach agreement with the Commission on Conservation and Rational Use of Aquatic Bioresources on the exchange of data on the state of aquatic bioresources.

It is also necessary to optimize the activities of the Caspian Environmental Information Center (CEIC), which was established to ensure accessibility of data and information in the context of implementation of the Tehran Convention and its protocols for decision-makers and other stakeholders under the co-ordination by the Tehran Convention Secretariat, including the collection, storage and dissemination of information on the state of the Caspian Sea environment.

4. It is necessary to continue international environmental project realization in the Caspian Sea region, carried out in support of the Tehran Convention implementation on studying, resoration, and conservation of the unique historical ecosystem of the Sea, including aquatic bioresources and their habitats, with sturgeons, and the Caspian Seal, as well as in the area of the management of environmental risks associated with the Caspian Sea oil and gas resources exploitation, and generalization of scientific studies in the field of climate change, mostly associated with the Caspian Sea level fluctuations.

It is necessary to continue discussions, which were initiated by experts in Astrakhan, on the climate change issues to contribute to the preparation of an international project in the framework of the "Green Climate" Fund with the aim of creating a joint scientific network for researching and assessing interaction between climate change and the Sea level fluctuation and their potential consequences.

It is expected that the project will be proposed for consideration and approval by the Conference of the Parties to the Tehran Convention. The results of the activities under the project will contribute to the implementation of the Tehran Convention article 16 related to the scientific research of the Sea level fluctuations problem.

It was agreed that the interim Secretariat to the Tehran Convention would provide the countries with the necessary guidance and information on the preparation of a project proposal.

5. It is necessary for the Caspian littoral states, in accordance with their general obligations under the Tehran Convention, Commission on Conservation and Rational Use of Aquatic Bioresources to undertake, independently or jointly, all appropriate measures to prevent, reduce and control the Caspian Sea pollution, and to protect, conserve and restore its marine environment. Utilization of the Caspian Sea resources should not harm its marine environment.

Within the framework of the conventional commitment to use the best possible environmentally efficient technologies, every effort should be made to disseminate the best available technologies in order to prevent and minimize potential damage to the Caspian Sea marine and coastal environment, including at developing offshore fields and at transporting hydrocarbons in the Caspian Sea.

It is necessary to quickly localize and eliminate the occurring oil spills, and this should be achieved by high-level preparedness of special authorities with responsibility for response to oil pollution incidents in accordance with the Tehran Convention, the Aktau Protocol and the Regional Plan

Concerning Cooperation in Combating Contamination of the Caspian Sea with Oil Pollution in Cases of Emergency.

It is necessary to promote compliance with the principles of environmental safety, which are realized by PJSC "LUKOIL", in all Caspian littoral states. The concept of "zero discharge" should become a priority not only in the northern shallow areas, but also in the middle and southern deep-water areas of the Caspian Sea.

6. The Tehran Convention mechanisms should contribute to the achievement of optimal solutions for the conservation of aquatic biological resources of the Caspian Sea, and to the achievement of the environmental safety of the region under the oil-and-gas fields exploitation.

In order to conserve the biodiversity and bioresources value of the Caspian Sea northern part at developing oil and gas fields, it is necessary to update and to use special ecological and fishery requirements.

7. Since the Tehran Convention considers the Caspian Sea as a single geographically and ecologically integrated system, then any impact on the marine environment should be assessed in the context of the potential transboundary consequences.

It is necessary to support and to develop an effective the public regional cooperation at discussing economic projects which can negatively affect the Caspian Sea environment status. This is difficult to be ensured without adopting the Protocol on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context to the Tehran convention.

8. For effective functioning of the public network in support of the Tehran Convention, it is necessary to consolidate efforts of the public, state and private sectors, including the oil and gas sector, at addressing the Caspian Sea environmental problems, as well as to establish tripartite partnerships: public-business-government.

It is necessary to conduct joint scientific expeditions, and to develop sustainable, environmentally oriented tourism.

It is necessary to build capacity in the sphere of education and awareness, dissemination and promotion of scientific knowledge about the natural resources sustainable management in the region and conservation of the Caspian Sea ecosystem. This will contribute to the implementation of the sustainable development strategy in the region.