

Mesdames et Messieurs les Ministres et secrétaires
d'Etat,

Excellences,

Mesdames Messieurs,

Chers amis,

Je suis très heureux de vous accueillir ce matin pour la
10ème édition de la Monaco Blue Initiative.

La première édition avait eu lieu ici même, en mars
2010, il y a tout juste neuf ans – certains d'entre vous étaient
déjà présents.

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L'idée en était née quelques mois plus tôt, lorsque la COP 15 de Copenhague avait abouti à un résultat décevant. Face à la difficulté d'avancer de manière globale, et face à l'urgence de prendre des initiatives pour les mers, il m'avait semblé nécessaire d'agir.

D'agir collectivement, en rassemblant tous les acteurs. Et d'agir en s'appuyant sur une réflexion large, sereine et éclairée.

Quelques mois plus tard, au printemps 2010, nous nous retrouvions ici, à l'invitation de l'Institut Océanographique qui célébrait alors son 100^{ème} anniversaire, et de ma Fondation, pour la première édition de ce think tank original, proposant une réflexion concrète et opérationnelle sur les enjeux de protection des mers et de développement de l'économie bleue.

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Neuf ans plus tard, nous sommes toujours là, vous êtes toujours là, et d'autres nous ont rejoints. Je veux les en remercier très sincèrement, leur présence témoigne de l'intérêt de leurs pays respectifs – de grands pays maritimes – pour ces questions.

Cet intérêt est pour nous une excellente nouvelle, car, face à une menace toujours plus précise, nous avons besoin de forces, d'idées, de moyens, d'énergies.

Ces énergies, de plus en plus, se manifestent.

Je pense à l'attention que les mers suscitent de plus en plus au sein des sociétés civiles. A l'inquiétude qui les entoure, et à la volonté de mieux les préserver.

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Je pense aux négociations internationales, qui avancent également et reprennent aujourd'hui même à New

York avec l'espoir d'aboutir à un vrai instrument juridiquement contraignant concernant la haute mer .

Je pense également aux solutions qui s'imposent, comme les aires marines protégées, qui occuperont une grande part de cette journée.

In 2009, when we had the idea for this Monaco Blue Initiative, marine protected areas were only rarely seen on the international agenda.

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Of course, the world's seas already had several marine protected areas. As a matter of fact, we had one here in Monaco

which was one of the first marine protected areas in the Mediterranean, created over forty years ago.

Specialists knew, ten years ago, the extent to which the development of these marine protected areas was necessary.

Indeed, as environmentalists we advocated their multiplication.

Yet ten years later, we must concede that the situation has progressed, even if we are still far from the 10% objective agreed in Aichi.

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First and foremost, it is our knowledge that has changed: we are now much more aware of the benefits of marine protected areas.

Their effects on biodiversity and fish stocks, of course. On all the ecosystems concerned, and on adjacent ecosystems too. On coastal economies as well. But also, on climate mitigation and ocean acidification .

Faced with these major threats, we now know with certainty that marine protected areas play a role, as they can act as bastions against rising sea levels and some natural disasters.

Likewise, we are able to measure the effects and potential of marine protected areas more effectively in economic terms.

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We know that MPAs have a high rate of return. Economic studies available estimate this between 10% and 25%, taking into account all the benefits reaped from the increased goods and ecosystem services obtained.

On a global scale, their development up to 30% of marine surfaces – a percentage which many of us hope for – could thus generate substantial financial flows and create new jobs.

If we have a better understanding of marine protected areas and their effects, we will also have greater support.

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We just have to look at the very impressive list of marine protected areas which have been created or extended over the last ten years to see this: the movement to promote sea protection is gaining momentum every year.

The time has therefore come to move forward and accelerate, before it is too late.

This is the aim of our work today.

The challenges in this respect I believe fall into two categories. There is the need to reinforce these areas both politically and legally. Then there is the need to expand them.

First of all, the status.

.../...

The very term of marine protected area in fact covers very different realities, as shown, for example, by their breakdown into seven categories by the IUCN.

As a result of such vagueness, we know how much this concept of marine protected areas can sometimes be used without sufficient precision. This can sometimes lead to confusion, in particular when management goals are insufficiently clarified, or when the areas concerned cover both terrestrial and marine expanses.

It is therefore essential, when considering the development of MPAs, as we will do at today's first session, to be firm and precise regarding their principles and their goals. And to be creative concerning their functioning, for which an increasing number of solutions are emerging and being developed. .../...

The second challenge with which we are faced is the expansion of these areas, which as I pointed out, many think should cover a third of our seas to ensure effective protection.

This expansion should, I believe, be achieved with a global vision. It is no longer a question of preserving a few ecosystems, but of inventing a global solution, at ocean scale.

First this means not limiting ourselves to areas exclusively under national jurisdiction. This is the aim of the work in which we are taking part at the UN focused on biodiversity beyond national jurisdictions. In concrete terms, marine protected areas in the High Seas need to be developed, where a great part of the future of our Planet is at stake...

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This also entails, as will be discussed in the second session this morning, promoting a network, a guarantee of efficiency, innovation and economy.

The development of marine protected areas of course raises a financial issue which we also need to address.

Here again, the solutions are manifold, such as the Trust Fund we have developed in the Mediterranean with France and Tunisia, the aim of which, with public and private funding, is to promote the development of marine protected areas and their networks.

Whatever the options chosen, private stakeholders need to be involved. Governments need to be involved. We must mobilise the human conscience: that is also the reason why you are all here. .../...

Together we need to invent.

Invent, through the sea, with the sea and for the sea, a new world. A more sustainable world.

Mesdames et Messieurs, Chers amis,

Il y a une phrase du grand historien Jules Michelet qui me vient souvent à l'esprit lorsque je pénètre dans ce Musée océanographique, posé au bord de la Méditerranée.

« C'est par la mer qu'il convient de commencer toute géographie » écrit Michelet.

Nous savons aussi que c'est par la mer qu'il convient de commencer toute histoire, car nous savons que nous sommes nés de l'océan et que nos civilisations sont nées de cette mer.

.../...

Mais c'est aussi par la mer, de plus en plus, qu'il convient de commencer toute économie.

Ce sera de plus en plus par la mer, j'en suis sûr, qu'il conviendra de commencer toute politique, toute morale, toute philosophie.

C'est pourquoi nos travaux sont importants. Et c'est pourquoi je suis heureux d'ouvrir cette 10ème Monaco Blue Initiative aujourd'hui.

Je vous remercie.