

*Nagoya, 28 October 2010 Side Event – Monaco and Marine
Protected Areas
Speech by HSH the Prince*

Ladies and gentlemen,

Dear friends,

The images you have just seen are proof that it is still possible to undertake effective concerted action to protect marine biodiversity.

Day after day, we can all observe the shortcomings of the initiatives conducted all over the world. Even in the Mediterranean Sea, where pilot initiatives have been implemented for over thirty years, the degradation of biodiversity has reached disquieting levels today. The results of the Census of Marine Life announced in London

at the beginning of this month highlight the fact that the Mediterranean is the sea whose biodiversity is most in jeopardy.

The problem we face is clearly political in nature; it arises from the difficulty in mobilising energy on matters that generally strike us as remote, even minor, although they are truly essential for the future of our immediate environment. Current approaches, especially in a time of crisis, have trouble addressing such challenges, since they neither fit in with their rhythm, nor respect the traditional perimeters of political action.

And there is yet another problem confronting us, perhaps the most crucial: regardless of all the good will - which is

increasingly plentiful - there is a dearth of legal and technical solutions to comprehend such vast, complex and changing circumstances.

On their scale, Monegasque initiatives and the partnerships we have signed with our neighbours demonstrate that we can develop appropriate tools to deal with these issues on condition they prove their daring and creativity.

Today, our challenge is to devise new solutions and find ways to adapt those that already exist. In many parts of the world, it has become urgent to take action before it is too late.

Let me take just one example, that of Arctic zones, whose present situation is a major source of concern.

Last month, I was in Moscow where I had a chance to discuss this with Prime Minister Vladimir Putin. I launched an idea I would like to submit to you today: the creation of a high sea marine protected area in the Arctic. Located beyond State jurisdictions, this perimeter dedicated exclusively to scientific research would be a more flexible version of what has been done in Antarctica.

I believe that such an idea attests to what has become our responsibility today: devising answers to the new questions raised in the context of our duty to protect our Planet.

This duty entails profound renewal in moral and political attitudes: from now on, we must envision a world in which Man is not the omnipotent master exploiting valueless resources, but just one element among so many others, a player in a fragile equilibrium on which his survival depends.

Although this may seem obvious, I believe on the contrary that it represents a major break with tradition, habits and centuries of development. In so radically new a context, we must find innovative solutions.

This is why I intend to launch a reflection on marine protected areas in the context of the

CIESM (International Commission for Scientific Exploration of the Mediterranean Sea) of which I am President, and the Monaco Blue Initiative, an action group made up of major scientific figures I created to discuss these issues and whose second meeting will take place in Monaco next February.

I know there are fruitful orientations for putting an end to our incapacity to preserve marine biodiversity.

I hope these initiatives will be welcomed and followed as widely as possible. This would be the best way to have these questions find their place at the heart of the international agenda. In all events, I will use all my determination to achieve this.

Thank you