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Preface

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Preface

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The wave of multi-faceted crises we have experienced in recent years – both in the North and in the South – offer a salutary reminder of the risks of underestimating the climate crisis. Protecting the environment is not a luxury. The message from the scientific community is loud and clear: if humanity does not change its development model, fast, life itself will be under threat. In both the North and the South – and in particular in the Mediterranean region.

Every page of this book, written by some of the top specialists in the field on either side of the Mediterranean, reminds us of this. Beyond the blue sea and the beauty of the beaches, the Mediterranean is suffering. In fact, few regions in the world are as affected by climate change.

Which explains the purpose of bringing together, for the first time, the most recent findings on climate change in the Mediterranean regions. This book and toolkit will offer all those variously involved in decision-making on environmental policy in the Mediterranean and beyond a better understanding of our shared ecosystem. This innovative and cross-cutting approach to the fragility and the challenges facing Mediterranean peoples requires the development of a global integrated strategy.

What is true on a regional scale is also true on a planetary scale.

The Paris Accords signed on 12 December 2015 signalled a robust response to these demands from the international community, and heralded developments that were unprecedented in the struggle against climate change: for the first time, 195 countries from both the North and the South came together to proclaim the need to engage the whole of humanity in a global energy transformation. That proclamation must now be turned into action. Nothing less than a paradigm shift is called for. From all of us.

In welcoming the 22nd Conference of the Parties to Marrakesh from 7-18 November 2016, and in labelling this the ‘COP of action’, the Kingdom of Morocco is committed to implementing the Paris Accords.

The size of the task facing the COP 22 is, as we all know, immense. It means adopting the procedures and mechanisms to turn the Accords into a reality, drafting a plan of action for the pre-2020 period in terms of mitigation, adaptation, funding, capacity building, technology transfer and transparency, particularly in favour of the most vulnerable countries, such as the small developing island nations and the least developed countries.

To this end, our country will channel all its experience and expertise in the field. Since 2009, His Majesty King Mohammed VI has taken our country forward along the path towards sustainable economic development and global energy transformation – thus demonstrating remarkable leadership on the African continent and beyond. The whole of Africa, rich in youth and resources, has enormous potential. We must give it the support it needs to become an example of sustainable development for us all.

Our country intends to show the whole world that, even in a region as vulnerable to global warming as the Mediterranean, adapting to the environment is possible, particularly through the introduction of a sizeable renewable energy programme. Our considerable experience in the matter has already inspired a number of convictions about our shared mission: the energies mobilised by countries in the fight against climate change involve all of us, and in particular non-governmental actors, from civil society to the private sector, and from regional authorities to the media.

It is only through the firm commitment of every stakeholder to reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 2°C and ultimately to 1.5°C that we will turn back the tide of history. The task that lies before the actors at the COP 22 in Marrakesh is to prove the efficacy of measures taken in the North and the South to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change.

But there can be no effective solutions and innovations without research upstream. And there can be no research without reliable data. With its overview of current research in the Mediterranean, this book provides decision-makers with indispensable tools, which can be used to implement political action and outline those areas in which research must continue as a matter of priority. For there to be a solution a clear diagnosis and objectives are crucial.

It is through the joint efforts of all in Marrakesh – researchers and engineers, industrialists and farmers, elected representatives and CEOs – that we will breathe life into the paradigm shift of the Paris Accords, in order to witness the birth – in both the North and the South – of a new model of sustainable development able to ensure the economic and social wellbeing of all.