

THE SEVENTEENTH PLENARY SESSION OF THE PABSEC GENERAL ASSEMBLY

RECOMMENDATION 49/2001*

ON “BLACK SEA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION: NEW CHALLENGES”

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation:

1. *being aware* of the fact that in spite of some achievements in protecting the Black Sea ecosystems, continuing degradation of the environment is posing serious threats to the overall sustainable development of the countries in the region;

2. *reaffirming* its commitment to the *Declaration on the Establishment of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation* and its principles, which stipulates that the participating states will “*take appropriate steps, including by promoting joint projects, for the protection of the environment, particularly the preservation and the improvement of the environment of the Black Sea, and the conservation, exploitation and development of its bio-productive potential*”;

3. *recalling* its Recommendation on ‘Black Sea Environmental Health’ (5/1994) and the *Final Declaration of the First Inter-Parliamentary Conference on the Environmental Protection of the Black Sea* (Istanbul, 1996) which constitutes an important step in reinforcing awareness on the environmental health of the Black Sea region;

4. *appreciating* the work taking place within the BSEC Organisation and the initiative of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on organising the Conference of the Mediterranean and Black Sea Basins which stresses the interdependence of the environmental problems of the two seas, as well as the activities of the Black Sea Environmental Program;

5. *stressing* the importance of the implementation of the Bucharest Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution (1992), the Odessa Declaration (1993) and the Strategic Action Plan for the Rehabilitation and Protection of the Black Sea (1996);

6. *emphasising* that environmental protection and sustainable development as defined in the Rio Declaration and the Agenda 21 signed in Rio de Janeiro in July 1992, should remain a major target in cooperation among the BSEC member states for the years to come which requires coordinated and articulated actions by National Parliaments, Governments and

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Assembly debate on 20 June 2001 (see Doc. GA17/EC16/REP/01), Report of the Economic, Commercial, Technological and Environmental Affairs Committee on “BLACK SEA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION: NEW CHALLENGES”, discussed in Moscow on 14 March 2001; Rapporteur: Mr. Eleftherios TZIOLAS, (Greece).

Text adopted by the 17th General Assembly in Baku on 20 June 2001

NGOs as well as by international and regional organisations in order to meet the new environmental challenges of the 21st century;

I. The Parliamentary Assembly therefore recommends the National Parliaments and the Governments of the BSEC Member States:

1. to embark upon a new stage of multilateral cooperation in the field of environment safeguarding the following principles:

i. sustainable development as defined in the Rio Declaration, in particular through reducing and eliminating unsustainable patterns of production and consumption;

ii. precautionary principle through preventive measures when there are grounds for concern;

iii. anticipatory approach through the implementation of Environmental Impact Assessments and harmonisation of the assessment criteria at a regional level;

iv. use of clean technologies through the replacement or phasing out of high waste generating technologies and the application of the principle of Best Available Technologies;

v. the 'polluter pays' principle introduction and implementation and extended use of *use of economic instruments* and incentives for introducing environment friendly technologies & activities;

vi. sectoral integration of environmental considerations into the policies of economy & trade, energy, industry, tourism and agriculture;

vii. stimulation of public awareness on the problems of environmental pollution and promotion of *public participation* in environmental planning supported by the provision of ecological education;

2. to enact enabling legislation and amend, as appropriate, existing legislation and administrative structures in order to strengthen the legal framework and increase institutional capacity for the protection of the environment with a view to ensure compliance with international commitments while accelerating approximation with the European *acquis* particularly for those BSEC states that aim at EU membership;

3. to develop efficient systems for monitoring implementation and evaluating compliance with existing international agreements and ensure ratification or accession to, as appropriate, regional and global treaties which relate to the protection of the environment and sustainable development, particularly to implement the *Agenda 21* adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED, Rio de Janeiro, July 1992);

4. to cooperate in the exchange of information and harmonisation of standards, codes and guidelines on environmental protection as well as in management systems and to encourage setting up national data banks while studying the possibility of establishing a regional data bank in that respect; and to this end to establish an international service of parliamentary control on the following up of the current legislation on the Black Sea environmental protection in the framework of PABSEC.

5. to support interaction among the BSEC Organisation, the PABSEC, the BSEC BC, the BSTDB and the ICBSS with the aim of identifying environmental priorities and common projects as well as their collaboration with the Black Sea Environmental Program and the Black Sea Commission of the Bucharest Convention in view of assisting in the

implementation of the Strategic Action Plan and other environmental projects of priority for the region;

6. to undertake initiative in establishing regional mechanisms on early warning and assistance in environmental emergencies in order to mitigate the consequences of industrial and maritime accidents, considering the use of satellites in creating an optimal alarm system;

7. to allocate necessary resources to national projects which give priority to sustainable development and to cooperate in attracting financing from domestic, regional and international sources as well as investments on environment while encouraging the engagement of the private sector;

8. to involve local and municipal authorities as well as NGOs in the process of environmental management and planning;

9. to advocate common actions at the national and regional level, addressing the following issues:

A. Reduction of Pollution

i. to reduce the negative impact of human activities on the environment and to support initiatives at a regional and international level on reduction and monitoring of air, water and soil pollution (especially from chemicals, nitrates and hydrocarbons) and through common actions in fighting air-born and land-based sources of pollution;

ii. to support initiatives on subregional and “where appropriate” level of common quality standards and methodology in measuring pollution levels and **to ensure** rational use of natural resources;

iii. to take urgent measures on prevention or reduction of waste generation and on waste management, the implementation of ‘clean-up’ projects, the supply of suitable mechanical equipment, and the establishment, where necessary, of stations on controlling transboundary movement of wastes and pollution;

iv. to ensure safety of all nuclear installations in order to prevent dramatic consequences for the population of the region and far beyond it;

B. Living Resources Management

i. to encourage the development of a network of protected areas in the BSEC region to conserve safeguarding the existing ecosystems as part of their natural heritage;

ii. to appropriate concrete actions on the protection of commercially exploited resources, biological diversity, habitats and landscape:

a) to develop a common Strategic Plan of the Black Sea Region countries aimed at fighting sea-shore erosion, through the combined efforts of National Governments, relevant research and development institutions and NGOs, seeking necessary national and international financing;

b) to put in place concrete programs on the rehabilitation of inland waters and lakes with a positive impact on restoring ecosystems and their populations for the benefit of the actual human population;

iii. to implement the forest principles adopted at UNCED recognising the importance of the forest ecosystems;

10. to follow-up the ongoing BSEC environmental projects, particularly: the finalisation of the Convention on Fishing in the Black Sea; the Agreement on cooperation with the UN Environmental Program and the Black Sea Hydrological Cycle Observing System;

11. to encourage further dialogue between the BSEC Organisation and its Parliamentary Assembly and the relevant European organisations and institutions in the field of environment and to this end;

i) to establish a PABSEC-BSEC Working Group on the elaboration of a wide program for the salvation of the Black Sea in order to improve the level of coordination of the environmental protection efforts;

ii) ii) to create an environmental protection security fund in the framework of PABSEC on the basis of BSEC member states seeking necessary funds for concrete investment projects.

II. The Parliamentary Assembly invites the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC to consider this Recommendation.