

**The Twenty Third Plenary Session of the PABSEC General Assembly
Recommendation 75/2004*
on “Sustainable Development of the Tourism Industry”**

I. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation:

a. *welcomes* the adoption of a BSEC Action Plan on Tourism and the Tirana Declaration on the cooperation in the field of tourism, and emphasizes that the BSEC countries share a tremendous historical and natural richness which generates a challenge for sustainable tourism development and a great potential for regional cooperation in the field of tourism;

b. *recalls* the Recommendation 32/1999 which envisages a regional strategy for the ‘Development of Tourism in the Black Sea region’ by suggesting common measures among the BSEC member states in the field of policy making, legislation, employment and training, and in the field of marketing;

c. *recognises* that tourism has become a very important and dynamic sector in the world economy. Its growth affects not only the activities directly linked to tourism (mainly in the private sector) but also other sectors such as transport, environment and employment;

d. *stresses* that the opportunities presented by tourism development must be seized. However, it must also be ensured that this sector does not develop in an uncontrolled manner threatening the natural environment and the social and cultural life of the countries. The uncontrolled development of the sector risks its future being limited in the long term;

e. *acknowledges* that tourism is based mainly in the private sector and involves both large enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). However, the essential role of the public authorities must be taken into account. Political stability, good environmental management, security, etc. are essential factors in attracting tourists and the public authorities are largely responsible for these areas;

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Assembly debate on 2 June 2004 (see Doc.GA23/EC22/REP/04, Report of the Economic, Commercial, Technological and Environmental Affairs Committee on “Sustainable DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM INDUSTRY”, discussed in Sofia on 10 March 2004; Rapporteur: Mr. Aurel PANA (Romania).

Text adopted by the 23rd General Assembly in Saint Petersburg, on 2 June 2004

II. The Parliamentary Assembly therefore calls on the National Parliaments and the Governments of the BSEC Participating States:

A. At the national level

i. to adopt integrated management approaches that maximise economic, social and environmental benefits from tourism and minimise its adverse effects and ensure that tourism is balanced with broader economic, social and environmental objectives at national and local level by setting out a national tourism strategy that is based on knowledge of environmental and biodiversity resources, and is integrated with national and regional sustainable development plans;

ii. to improve the management and development of tourism by ensuring coordination and cooperation between the different agencies, authorities and organizations at all levels, and ensure that their jurisdictions and responsibilities are clearly defined and complement each other;

iii. to adopt or improve legislation for sustainable tourism development among others through participation in international legal acts including such agreements as the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora;

iv. to assist host communities in managing visits to their tourism attractions for their maximum benefit, while ensuring the least negative impacts on and risks for their traditions, culture and environment, with the support of the World Tourism Organization and other relevant organizations;

v. to undertake efforts to attain sustainable tourism that contributes to social, economic and infrastructure development through the following measures:

a. implementing projects at the local, national and subregional levels, with specific emphasis on marketing Black Sea tourism products, such as adventure tourism, eco-tourism and cultural tourism;

b. establishing and supporting national and cross-border conservation areas to promote ecosystem conservation and to promote sustainable tourism;

c. respecting local traditions and cultures and promoting the use of indigenous knowledge in natural resource management and eco-tourism;

d. assisting host communities in managing their tourism projects for maximum benefit while limiting negative impact on their traditions, culture and environment;

e. supporting the conservation of Black Sea's biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources, in accordance with commitments that countries have under biodiversity-related agreements to which they are parties.

B. At the regional level

- i. to encourage regional cooperation which is useful, as it allows economies of scale to be made, common solutions to be found to common problems and it facilitates the exchange of good practices;
- ii. to harmonize tourism legislative and institutional framework in line with the requirements for the sustainable development of the sector and improve regulations on transnational recognition of qualifications in tourism;
- iii. to support the efforts of the BSEC to establish a framework of activities in the tourism sector in order to allow tourism to develop sustainably, thus ensuring its positive contribution in the long term development of the Black Sea countries;
- iv. to give special attention to the exchange of information and experience in the field and to analyze the tourism potential of the region by taking into consideration tourism statistics and data, forecasts, demographic, socio-economic data which can be used for tourism development projects;
- v. to develop common programs, including education and training programs, that encourage people to participate in eco-tourism, enable indigenous and local communities to develop and benefit from eco-tourism, and enhance stakeholder cooperation in tourism development and heritage preservation, in order to improve the protection of the environment, natural resources and cultural heritage of the Black Sea region;
- vi. to jointly explore possibilities and means of technical assistance from international organizations to the countries of the region to support tourism business development and investment and tourism awareness programs to improve domestic tourism, and to stimulate entrepreneurial development;
- vii. to promote cooperation in the field of tourism among member states through:
 - a. networking and exchanges between governmental bodies responsible for tourism;
 - b. development of partnership and regular communication between travel agency associations such as the Black Sea Tourism Cooperation (BSTC);
 - c. encouragement of the development of corporate BSEC tourism products (as the formation of Yachting Association, cruising lines, etc);
 - d. mutual participation in tourism fairs and exhibitions in BSEC member states;
 - e. improvement of investment climate in tourism industry;
- viii. to cooperate at regional and international level in establishing mechanisms of protection of tourists and touristic sites against fraud as well as attacks in order to ensure safety, security and stability.

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