Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Order 504 (1995)[1]

Comprehensive and integrated European conservation policy European Nature Conservation Year 1995

Parliamentary Assembly

1. In 1970 the Council of Europe launched European Conservation Year. The campaign, which was a great success, made people realise the importance and indeed necessity of protecting our environment.

2. That was the start of a concerted move to co-operate in nature conservation matters, and particularly in setting up protected areas.

3. Twenty-five years later, it must nevertheless be admitted that extensive damage is being caused to the environment and that our planet's ecosystem is genuinely at risk.

4. This makes it imperative to frame comprehensive and effective emergency strategies to protect our environment, not only in protected areas but also where human activities pollute and endanger the resources on which our survival depends.

5. First the "Brundtland report", then the Rio Conference demonstrated that development can be planned, accepted and encouraged only if it does not jeopardise natural - that is vital - resources, and consequently, the life of future generations.

6. We must therefore direct our efforts towards the areas in which our society carries out its activities, whether productive or otherwise, and reconcile the human race and nature so that the two may live together in harmony.

7. With its many years of experience, the Council of Europe was bound to take action to promote this approach to conservation policy, and European Nature Conservation Year (ENCY), in the form in which it is planned, can make a valuable contribution to the collective efforts deployed for the purpose.

8. The Assembly is convinced that in view of the themes, chosen by the participating countries according to their own distinctive features, and the partners (decision-makers, civil society, economic operators, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), etc.), ENCY has every chance of attaining the goals assigned to it.

9. However, it is fully aware that this calls for a real commitment by all the groups concerned, united by a shared will to succeed.

10. The Assembly therefore decides:

10.1. to monitor carefully and, if appropriate, take part in the activities organised as part of European Nature Conservation Year 1995;

10.2. to make its own contribution by arranging a colloquy on the role of NGOs in implementing environmental policies;

10.3. to help facilitate the central and east European countries' participation in the ENCY;

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1. Assembly debate on 1 February 1995 (5th Sitting) (see Doc. 7217, report of the Committee on the Environment, Regional Planning and Local Authorities, rapporteur: Mrs Graenitz). Text adopted by the Assembly on 1 February 1995 (5th Sitting).

10.4. to make a comprehensive assessment of the results of European Nature Conservation Year at the beginning of 1996 on the basis of a report drawn up by the Committee on the Environment, Regional Planning and Local Authorities.