



Recommendation 626 (1971)¹

Legal aspects of marine pollution

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Recalling its [Recommendation 585 \(1970\)](#), on the legal problems raised by oil pollution of the sea, and its Written Declaration No. 4 (1970), on sea pollution in general ;
2. Regretting that the Committee of Ministers has as yet taken little concrete action on the above-mentioned recommendation ;
3. Having regard to the provisions on sea pollution contained in the 1958 International Convention on the High Seas ;
4. Alarmed at the extent to which the waters of the seas are polluted, and at the irreparable and irreversible damage already done to marine fauna and flora ;
5. Fearing the disastrous consequences of the uncontrolled discharge of waste into the oceans, and considering that the absence of fundamental oceanic research should be a reason for extreme caution rather than a pretext for dumping dangerous waste into the sea ;
6. Considering that the bulk of marine pollution is due to waste originating from the industrialised countries, and that those countries, in Europe in particular, should agree on a general waste management programme ;
7. Considering that, as a part of such a programme, the effects of the various sources of sea pollution should be dealt with internationally, either at world or at regional level,
8. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers :
 - a. give its full support to the work of the United Nations Organisation and its specialised agencies in the field of sea pollution, and stress the desirability of that Organisation submitting a detailed draft declaration of principles on sea pollution to the International Conference on Human Environment in 1972 ;
 - b. invite member States :
 - a. to prepare as soon as possible, within the framework of the Council of Europe and possibly in co-operation with other industrialised countries as well as with the international organisations concerned, a draft agreement regarding a total or partial ban on the discharge of certain pollutants into the sea, control of the direct dumping of refuse, prevention of pollution caused by the exploitation of underwater mineral resources and protection of marine fauna as an aid to the self-purification of the sea, and to submit this agreement as a basis for discussion to the United Nations Conference on Human Environment in 1972 with a view to considering whether such an agreement can be extended to all of the industrialised countries of the world ;

1. Assembly debate on 21 January 1971 (22nd Sitting) (see [Doc. 2896](#), report of the Legal Affairs Committee). Text adopted by the Assembly on 21 January 1971 (22nd Sitting).



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- b.* to concert and align their attitudes, taking due note of [Recommendation 585 \(1970\)](#) of the Consultative Assembly, with a view to presenting European proposals on pollution by hydrocarbons to the International Conference to be organised in 1973 by the Inter-governmental Maritime Consultative Organisation (IMCO) ;
- c.* entrust a committee of experts specialised in the subject with a study, as a matter of urgency, of the details of and arrangements for the European action to be taken on the occasion of the above-mentioned international conferences and the chances of initiating European co-operation in the field of marine environment protection.