



## Recommendation 699 (1973)<sup>1</sup>

# Environmental policy in Europe

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having taken note of the report of its Committee on Regional Planning and Local Authorities on environmental policy in Europe ([Doc. 3226](#)), and recalling the proposals already set forth, in particular in [Recommendation 659](#) adopted in January 1972 ;
2. Recalling the declaration, resolutions and recommendations adopted by the United Nations Conference in Stockholm in June 1972, and in particular the texts stressing the need for regional cooperation in warding off the dangers threatening the environment ;
3. Gratified by the convocation in March 1973 of a Ministerial Conference on the Environment, to be held in Vienna at the initiative of the Council of Europe, and welcoming the invitation to be associated with it ;
4. Recalling that national governments are responsible for ensuring a proper distribution of work on the environment between international organisations, and in particular between the European Communities and the Council of Europe, and bearing in mind the broader framework of the latter organisation ;
5. Reaffirming that one of the Council of Europe's most unchallengeable functions lies in the field of information, education and development of a European social conscience, where it must strive to create an awareness of the great problems affecting Europeans' lives,
6. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers :
  - 6.1. Invite the governments of member States to take action at European level on the proposals of the Stockholm Conference, in particular those which envisage :
    - a. an active contribution to international research programmes to acquire the knowledge necessary for the assessment of pollutant sources and pathways, and their harmful effects ;
    - b. a common definition, in cooperation with international organisations concerned, of quality standards and tolerance thresholds for the protection of the human and natural environment, and in particular of water, air and food ;
    - c. creation of an international system for the exchange of information on administrative standards and technical remedies to be applied ;
    - d. establishment of a European pollution monitoring system ;
    - e. participation in creating a United Nations Environmental Secretariat ;
    - f. signature and ratification of the November 1972 London Convention on the discharge of industrial waste into the oceans ;

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1. Assembly debate on 26 January 1973 (26th Sitting) (see [Doc. 3226](#), report of the Committee on Regional Planning and Local Authorities). Text adopted by the Assembly on 26 January 1973 (26th Sitting).



- 6.2. Invite the governments of member States to define a coherent national policy by drafting a general law on the environment :
  - a. based on the principles envisaged by the competent international and in particular European bodies ;
  - b. ordering the integration of the main principles of environmental protection into general laws and regulations, and determining the framework of appropriate new laws and regulations ;
  - c. compiling an inventory of natural resources which make up the national heritage to provide for their effective protection ;
  - d. inserting environmental policy into the broader context of regional planning policy ;
  - e. recognising the fundamental role of local and regional authorities in this field ;
  - f. making provision for initiatives by private associations and groups towards implementing this policy ;
- 6.3. Develop European action at the level of the Council of Europe by such means as :
  - a. signature and ratification of the draft Convention on Freshwater Pollution ;
  - b. substantial reinforcement of the European Information Centre for the Conservation of Nature so that it may play its full part in providing information, education and training on the protection of the human and natural environment ;
  - c. reinforcement of all media purveying information on environmental questions to an increasingly wide public and in particular the review *Nature in Focus* published by the Council of Europe, possibly in cooperation with other international organisations ;
  - d. preparation of a European nature declaration laying down the general principles of European action to promote the protection and management of nature and the countryside, the prevention of pollution, and the promotion of an awareness of nature in the general public ;
  - e. annual publication of a consolidated report on the state of pollution, national policies and European cooperation in environmental questions, taking into account any relevant European Community projects ;
  - f. close association with the activities of the Council of Europe of private institutions concerned with the protection of nature and the environment in Europe ;
  - g. making available the specialised services of the Council of Europe as a European centre for the Environmental Secretariat of the United Nations as envisaged at the Stockholm Conference ;
  - h. the use of its very flexible machinery, which is particularly well suited to participation by non-member States, to draft conventions on the environment.