Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Recommendation 997 (1984)[1]

Regional planning and protection of the environment in European coastal regions

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having considered with satisfaction the final resolutions of the 6th European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (Torremolinos, May 1983) and of the 4th European Ministerial Conference on the Environment (Athens, April 1984) ;

2. Endorsing the general principles and objectives, as set out by the ministers in these resolutions, for a better definition of regional planning and environment protection policies in coastal areas ;

3. Welcoming the adoption by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe of Recommendation No. R (84) 2, on the European Regional/ Spatial Planning Charter, which constitutes the realisation of an Assembly initiative for the reduction of regional disparities and the improvement of European regional planning ;

4. Congratulating the Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe on its decision to hold the 2nd Conference of European Island Regions in the Azores in March 1984, so permitting island representatives to discuss the specific problems of these regions which could be considered as a special case in coastal regions ;

5. Noting with satisfaction the adoption, in October 1981, by the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions, of a European Coastal Charter with the aim of reconciling protection and development of European coastal areas ;

6. Considering that European coastal regions are not only an area where economic activity depends on the presence of the sea, but are also attracting mass tourism ;

7. Aware of the diversity of these regions, some being heavily urbanised, others less densely populated, and of the richness and fragility of the different coastal ecosystems, and aware of the significant part of the European cultural heritage that is represented in the coastal regions ;

8. Emphasising the need to consider the coast as an entity composed of two elements, the land and the sea, which should be the subject of an integrated planning policy combining land and maritime activities ;

9. Considering that measures to protect the environment of coastal regions cannot be effective unless they are integrated in a regional planning policy which takes account of the economic, industrial, cultural and tourist development of these regions ;

10. Emphasising the need substantially to improve knowledge of coastal ecosystems in order to ensure their effective protection,

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1. Assembly debate on 4 October 1984 (21st Sitting) (see Doc. 5280, report of the Committee on Regional Planning and Local Authorities). Text adopted by the Assembly on 4 October 1984 (21st Sitting).

11. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers :

a. invite the governments of member states :

1. to convene a joint meeting of the European ministers responsible for regional planning and for the environment in order to reach a better co-ordination of their policies ;

2. to ensure forms of ownership and management of coastal territory which permit the preservation of its natural resources and promotion of its essential role in economic and tourist development, while guaranteeing free access for all citizens ;

3. to limit tourism in areas where the natural balance is particularly delicate ;

4. to promote proper management of coastal ecological reserves which seem specially sensitive ;

5. to ratify as a matter of greatest urgency, if they have not already done so, the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats ;

6. to respect the historical context of the environment and to maintain and encourage recognition of the past by including cultural heritage considerations in the planning process for coastal regions ;

7. to promote the drawing up, ratification or implementation of European conventions on the architectural, archaeological and underwater cultural heritage ;

8. to transmit the final resolutions of the 6th European Conference of Ministers for Regional Planning and of the 4th European Ministerial Conference on the Environment to their national parliaments, so that they may contribute towards the drafting of legislation on these matters ;

b. make an effort to harmonise the law of member states relating to the coastal environment ;

c. draw up an inventory of the pressures on the environment in European coastal regions, in order to ensure their effective protection at the international level ;

d. make a real effort to unify the different national definitions of the "coastal fringe" ;

e. set up a programme for the protection of European coastal regions including, in particular :

1. the collection of information and its dissemination by means of computers ;

2. the exchange of experience and co-ordination between the different administrative levels concerned (national, regional, local) ;

3. public education and participation ; iv. promotion of initiatives in the environment field which might create new jobs ;

f. instruct the Secretary General of the Council of Europe :

1. to transmit the final resolutions of the 6th European Conference of Ministers for Regional Planning and of the 4th European Ministerial Conference on the Environment to the governments of European non-member countries ;

2. to publicise widely among the governments of non-member states the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats and the European conventions relating to the cultural heritage ;

3. to inform member states and competent international organisations that the Parliamentary Assembly will monitor the implementation of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats.