



## Resolution 1021 (1994)<sup>1</sup>

# Preservation and development of the Danube basin

### Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Danube lies at the heart of central and eastern Europe. It has a total length of 2 857 km and its catchment area represents roughly one-third of the area of Europe.
2. The Danube basin - including the river itself and also all its tributaries - covers the whole of Hungary and Romania, nearly half the Czech and Slovak Republics, the greater part of Austria and the former Yugoslavia, large areas of Germany (like Bavaria and part of the Baden-Württemberg region), part of Bulgaria and areas of former Soviet republics such as the Ukraine and Moldova.
3. Despite the tribulations endured by this region for centuries, most recently during the decades of communist rule, the Danube has always been a unifying factor, linking the peoples of the countries along its banks not only culturally, socially and historically, but also economically.
4. Since the historic events of 1989 concerning central and eastern Europe, this river has taken on a great symbolic value and the development potential which its basin offers has emerged as a priority for international co-operation in the region.
5. The Danube basin could be the hub of integrated, balanced development of the entire region provided its economic and energy potential, transport, tourism and ecology are developed and co-ordinated by means of action taken on a basis of consultation and co-operation between all the riparian countries and regions.
6. This calls for a permanent dialogue between these states and regions, in which it should be possible to frame all policies in such a way as to create synergies within a coherent overall whole.
7. The Assembly is pleased to have taken the decision to devote the 2nd Pan-European Interparliamentary Conference on the Environment to the Danube basin. This conference held in Regensburg, Germany, from 14 to 16 October 1993, was a great success and produced some extremely practical conclusions.
8. It was important to discuss the situation of this great river within a parliamentary forum and, in particular, see to what extent the many initiatives already taken in its favour are likely to lead - owing to a lack of co-ordination - to fragmentation and inconsistency, thus making it impossible to achieve the desired results.
9. The Assembly particularly agrees with the wish of the conference that account should be taken, in particular, of the need for a new dimension to the planning of European territory, which should, in fact, be the spatial expression of a political programme and which should integrate all ecological, hydrological, economic, energy, communication, agricultural and demographic components.
10. The Assembly has therefore to subscribe to the final declaration adopted at the end of the Regensburg Conference and to agree with the participants on the need to set up a body capable of implementing and co-ordinating a truly pan-European policy in this region.
11. It also noted with satisfaction Romania's willingness to act as host country to such a body.

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1. Assembly debate on 26 January 1994 (5th Sitting) (see [Doc. 6992](#), report of the Committee on the Environment, Regional Planning and Local Authorities, Rapporteur: Mr Zierer). Text adopted by the Assembly on 26 January 1994 (5th Sitting).



12. The Assembly, therefore, decides:

12.1. draw up a European Danube basin charter which would lay down principles for permanent Danubian co-operation to be developed at intergovernmental level, in association with elected representatives of the riparian states and regions;

12.2. to concentrate, by this instrument, on co-ordinated action to make use of the Danube as a main waterway and, possibly, the core of a system of shipping channels, as a main source of ecologically acceptable energy production, as the principal reservoir of water both for human consumption and for use in industry and agriculture in the riparian regions, and as an area of relatively undamaged nature, which also offers the potential for touristic development;

12.3. to envisage such an instrument, prepared by the appropriate committee, as the basis for the setting up of an international council of the Danube as recommended at the Regensburg Conference, which - under the aegis of the Council of Europe - would be chiefly responsible for seeing to:

a. the co-ordination of existing initiatives;

b. the introduction of new, complementary schemes;

c. permanent consultation and dialogue among all the riparian states and regions;

12.4. to involve the Standing Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe (CLRAE), in co-operation with the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development and the Committee on Science and Technology, in the preparatory work on this charter;

12.5. to examine the above-mentioned project as soon as possible, in order to adopt and transmit it to the Committee of Ministers.