



## Resolution 1446 (2005)<sup>1</sup>

# Co-operation and sustainable development in the Adriatic basin

### Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly stresses the importance of peace, democracy and stability in South-East Europe. It further emphasises the important role of regional and local authorities in achieving those objectives through co-operation in areas of common interest and concern such as sustainable development. The Adriatic region will greatly benefit from strengthened co-operation and partnerships on key issues, particularly those related to the protection and sustainable management of the Adriatic Sea Basin, as have other European regions and seas.
2. The Adriatic Sea, a semi-enclosed arm of the Mediterranean Sea, connects its bordering states, all of which are members of the Council of Europe. The Adriatic regions of these countries have historical links and a common cultural heritage as well as a common responsibility for the sea they share. Together, these coastal regions and countries form a distinct European region, which needs to achieve sustainable development and stability.
3. The Adriatic Sea is a highly sensitive marine area facing serious environment and development challenges such as pollution, the shipping of dangerous goods and hazardous materials, over-fishing, eutrophication, coastal development and tourism. All these issues, and the future of the region as a whole, need to be tackled in a comprehensive manner through transborder and interregional co-operation mechanisms.
4. The Adriatic region benefits from a range of programmes and tools of diverse nature to strengthen regional co-operation. Some have been set up at the initiative of the regions and countries concerned (for example, Adriatic-Ionian Initiative, the Trilateral Commission for the Protection of the Adriatic, etc.), while others have been set up by the European Union (for example, CARDS, INTERREG) or the United Nations (for example, the Barcelona Convention and the Mediterranean Action Plan).
5. One of the Council of Europe's significant contributions to the promotion of regional co-operation in Europe is the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities (ETS No. 106). The Committee of Ministers, the Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe have all adopted texts on transfrontier co-operation, linking transborder co-operation, democratic stability and sustainable development in Europe.
6. The coastal states bordering the Adriatic Sea rely heavily on this semi-enclosed sea that they share. Marine, maritime and coastal issues are consequently key concerns for the future development of the Adriatic region. Accordingly, Adriatic countries and regions have identified five priority areas for co-operation for the activities of the future Euroregion: environment, fishing, tourism and culture, agriculture and transport.
7. The Assembly fully supports the initiative of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, together with local and regional authorities of Adriatic countries, to strengthen interregional co-operation and establish an Adriatic Euroregion. It will follow with interest the adoption process of the statute

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1. Text adopted by the Standing Committee acting on behalf of the Assembly on 6 June 2005 (see [Doc. 10563](#), report of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs, rapporteur: Mr Crema).



of this Euroregion, which foresees in particular the participation of the Assembly in the planned “Adriatic Council”. The Assembly fully shares the ultimate objective of achieving sustainable development in the Adriatic region and improved quality of life for its population.

8. The Assembly considers that the Adriatic Sea should be managed in an integrated manner through the application of the ecosystem approach. It is therefore of the view that strengthened transfrontier co-operation, political will, co-ordinated action, adequate funding and partnerships between governments, parliaments, local and regional authorities, the private sector and civil society in the Adriatic Euroregion, will be needed to make the future Adriatic Euroregion a successful pilot model for other European semi-enclosed seas.

9. Consequently, the Parliamentary Assembly recommends that local and regional authorities, as well as national parliaments and governments of the Adriatic region:

*fully engage in the creation of an Adriatic Euroregion;*

*address the following issues as a matter of urgency (together with relevant regional and international organisations):*

- a. over-fishing, illegal fishing, and sustainable fisheries management, including the need to co-ordinate the activities of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation’s General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean; the European Union’s Regional Advisory Council for the Mediterranean; the United Nations Environment Programme’s Mediterranean Action Plan and the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Mediterranean;*
- b. the safety and control of oil tankers, and the treatment of ballast waters;*
- c. the tourism infrastructure and urban planning infrastructures;*
- d. the management of waste and waste water;*
- e. the use of nitrates in farming and management of water for agricultural uses.*

10. The Assembly recognises the important role that the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe plays in the creation of the Adriatic Euroregion and calls for its continued and active involvement and support during both the founding and operational phases of the Adriatic Euroregion.

11. Finally, the Assembly notes that only four Adriatic countries (Albania, Croatia, Italy and Slovenia) are parties to the 1980 European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities. It urges Greece and Serbia and Montenegro to sign and to ratify it, and Bosnia and Herzegovina to ratify it. As only Albania and Slovenia have ratified the two protocols to that convention, the Assembly urges the other Adriatic countries to consider doing so as soon as possible.