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Oceans: state of the marine environment and new trends in the international law of the sea

Reply to Recommendation[1]: Recommendation 1388 (1998)
Committee of Ministers

The Committee of Ministers has studied carefully Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1387 (1998) on future challenges in European maritime science and technology and Recommendation 1388 (1998) on the oceans: state of the marine environment and new trends in the international law of the sea. It shares the Assembly's opinion that European countries possess huge potential in marine science and technology.

This potential should be brought into closer contact with the European maritime industry, with policy makers and the public.

As for the European Convention on the Protection of the Environment through Criminal Law, this treaty was opened for signature on 4 November 1998: eleven member states have signed it so far.

As for the Convention on Civil Liability for damage resulting from activities dangerous to the environment, this convention has been signed by nine member states.

As for the proposals in Recommendation 1388 (items iv.*a* to *g*), the Committee of Ministers does not consider that the Council of Europe is the most appropriate organisation to deal with such questions, especially in the light of the priorities for the Organisation set out in the Declaration and Action Plan of the 2nd Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 1997), the Declaration adopted at the 104th Session of the Committee of Ministers (Budapest, 1999) and the strategic plan endorsed by the Ministers on that occasion.

With regard to the creation of the European Maritime Agency, the Committee of Ministers took note with interest of the initiative of Portugal, supported by other countries, aimed at creating a European Ocean Agency. It was of the opinion that this initiative could be developed by interested states.

1. Joint reply to Recommendation 1387 (1998) and Recommendation 1388 (1998), adopted by the Committee of Ministers at the 678th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (8-9 September 1999).