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Towards Council of Europe seas and oceans strategies against the climate crisis

Motion for a resolution

tabled by the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

Thanks to the seas, we share common destinies and areas of exchange. However, they are under threat from massive ocean pollution, acidification, and eutrophication. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has warned that rising sea levels are inevitable. It is not just our health but our survival that is in danger. We must, as far as we can, repair and preserve this heritage. Together with the land we live on, they form part of one and the same system, according to the Framework Convention on Climate Change. Our borders will not protect us.

In its [Recommendation 1888 \(2009\)](#) “Towards a new governance of the oceans”, our Parliamentary Assembly called for a new governance of the oceans and seas. While the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea provides a general legal framework, there is a pressing need for such governance. We must review the quality of our actions and strengthen them if necessary, at European level. The climate crisis requires a response to this emergency situation and to the multiple challenges of enforcing second- and third-generation rights in territorial waters and beyond. Member States are committed to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 14. As a guardian of human rights, the Council of Europe must ensure that they are upheld.

Our Organisation steers its action by pursuing various thematic strategies and country-focused action plans. It must now equip itself with additional tools covering all the seas bordering our continent. To respond to the climate emergency, these will be geared to promoting the working method of the Council of Europe based on assistance between peers and constant improvement of public intervention. Given the spatial dimension of these strategies, all the driving forces of our Organisation will have to be mobilised, in particular the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and the national parliaments brought together in the Assembly.

