



**Resolution 926 (1989)<sup>1</sup>**

## **Danger of climatic changes and the protection of the ozone layer**

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Recalling its Resolutions 733 (1980) on the prohibition of the use of chlorofluorocarbons and on other measures to preserve the ozone layer, and 919 (1989) on the destruction of tropical forests - Causes and remedies, and its Recommendations 846 (1978) on energy and the environment, 958 (1983) on environment policy in Europe, 977 (1984) on air pollution and acid rain, and 1060 (1987) on protecting forests ;
2. Having considered resolutions on the conservation of climate as part of the common heritage of mankind, on the greenhouse effect, on the protection of the ozone layer, and on East-West scientific, technological and environmental co-operation, recently adopted by the European Community, the United Nations General Assembly and the North Atlantic Assembly ;
3. Deeply concerned at the fact that since 1800 the carbon dioxide content of the atmosphere has increased from 280 ppm to approximately 350 ppm, and that its concentration is expected to increase by 30% in the next fifty years ;
4. Also concerned at the build-up of other gases such as methane, nitrous oxide and chlorofluorocarbons, as their combined effect is already almost equal to that of carbon dioxide ;
5. Noting the existence of technologies permitting significant reductions in the emissions of most of these gases ;
6. Noting that there is a danger that the increasing concentration of greenhouse gases eventually will absorb and send back so much of the infra-red radiation emitted from the earth's surface to balance the incoming solar radiation that the global mean temperature will rise between 1,5 and 4,5° C by the year 2050 (the so-called greenhouse effect) ;
7. Noting also that this process could lead to profound changes in climate, the effects of which cannot be reliably assessed in detail at present, although preliminary work on this subject shows that the risks are alarmingly high and the likely direct and indirect consequences potentially disruptive ;
8. Noting, however, that such consequences would probably include :
  - a. a sea-level rise of 20 to 165 cm, threatening inundation of some low-lying coastal areas and islands
  - b. a reduction of water resources in some regions, sometimes leading to desertification ;
  - c. modifications and possible reductions in agricultural and fisheries production ;
  - d. a reduction of the thermal gradient between the Equator and the poles, leading to important shifts in ocean currents, winds and the whole hydrological cycle ;

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1. Assembly debate on 25 September 1989 (15th Sitting) (see [Doc. 6110](#), report of the Committee on Science and Technology, Rapporteur : Mr Holst ; and [Doc. 6112](#), opinion of the Committee on the Environment, Regional Planning and Local Authorities, Rapporteur : Mr Fajardo). Text adopted by the Assembly on 25 September 1989 (15th Sitting).



9. Pointing out that most of the greenhouse gases emissions are due to human activities such as the burning of fossil fuels, wood burning, agricultural activities and the use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) ;
10. Noting that the ozone layer in the stratosphere has an important influence on the earth's climate and protects the earth's surface against certain types of ultraviolet radiation ;
11. Concerned by the fact that the use of CFCs considerably depletes the ozone layer, thus enabling ultraviolet rays in the medium range to attack ecosystems and the human immune system, entailing, inter alia, a risk of skin cancers ;
12. Noting that CFCs are used in the manufacture or operation of aerosols, refrigerators, foam plastics, solvents, etc., and that recent research indicates that alternatives could soon be developed at a reasonable cost for most uses of CFCs ;
13. Having regard to the responsibility of the industrialised countries, among which some of the member countries of the Council of Europe are major producers and exporters of CFCs ;
14. Having regard to the Vienna Convention, on the protection of the ozone layer, and to the Montreal Protocol of 16 September 1987, on substances that deplete the ozone layer, whereby it is acknowledged that the emission of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) can significantly deplete and otherwise modify the ozone layer ;
15. Noting that recent research indicates that the situation is more dramatic than what was anticipated two years ago and points out that provisions of the Montreal Protocol are inadequate to prevent further depletion of the ozone layer ;
16. Believing that a ban on the use of CFCs in a single sector, for example that of aerosols, or in a single country or group of countries, has only a limited effect in protecting the ozone layer and in preventing the greenhouse effect, and, therefore, only worldwide action can give satisfactory results ;
17. Welcoming recent decisions taken by several governments to phase out the use of chlorofluorocarbons by the end of the century, and the unanimous adoption, by eighty-six states represented at the Helsinki Colloquy on the protection of the ozone layer (2-5 May 1989), of a resolution to ban the production of all CFCs before the year 2000 ;
18. Stressing the importance of the conclusion of a worldwide agreement in the field of environmental protection, this being a problem of worldwide dimension, although aware of disagreement from some developing countries ;
19. Having regard to the importance of research work on the decision-making process, and welcoming preparations for the 7th Parliamentary and Scientific Conference, that will take place in Ottawa from 11 to 14 June 1990 on the theme : "Coping with global environmental change : the role of science and democracy", with a view to establishing an accurate overall picture of the situation, its causes and the likely consequences of the different policies available, in order to allow decision-makers to review and reassess their priorities in this field ;
20. Considering that national parliaments could more actively contribute to environmental protection, on the one hand, by playing their part in the procedures of ratification of legal instruments, on the other, by keeping a check on budgetary allocations for environmental affairs ;
21. Stressing the importance of environmental education, in order to bring young people to appreciate the real factors necessary for the survival of their natural and cultural heritage ;
22. Pointing out the need to obtain essential scientific data on changes in the atmosphere and to develop research on their potential consequences for human life and the environment, in order to establish the measures to be taken to avoid or reduce harmful effects ;
23. Welcoming recent initiatives by international organisations such as the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme initiated by the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU), the World Climate Programme and its World Climate Research Programme supported by ICSU, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Meteorological Organisation, the Global Environmental Monitoring System and other UNEP programmes, the Man and the Biosphere programme of Unesco, and research initiated under the auspices of the European Science Foundation and OECD,

24. Calls on the governments of member states :
- a. to adopt as soon as possible a new protocol to the Vienna Convention on the protection of the ozone layer, that would implement the resolution to ban the production of all chlorofluorocarbons by the year 2000, unanimously adopted by eighty-six states at the Colloquy on the protection of the ozone layer (Helsinki, 2-5 May 1989) ;
  - b. to examine the creation of a European charter for the defence of the environment, providing for a European court for the application of protection standards and sanctions for cases of non-application ;
  - c. to implement energy policies to diminish emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, in order to reduce the risks of future global warming. This should be achieved through both an increase in the efficiency of energy production, transport and consumption and a switch to non-fossil fuel energy systems. A concrete first step could be the implementation of more stringent measures against the emission of pollutants from motor vehicles and the introduction of new transport policies ;
  - d. to promote forest management policies providing for appropriate reforestation and the increase of forest areas ;
  - e. to develop activities to inform and educate, and especially young people, about damage to the environment and health from atmospheric pollution ;
  - f. to initiate the development of a comprehensive global convention as a framework for protocols on the protection of the atmosphere, as called for by the Commission of the European Communities ;
  - g. to support initiatives of international organisations such as those referred to in paragraph 23 above, inter alia by means of reviewing and upgrading their financial commitments to such organisations ;
  - h. to create a world climate fund, aimed at assisting developing countries to cope with the stringent international regulations that will be needed to face climate changes ;
  - i. to introduce a system of financial incentives to regulate the control of CFC emissions when old equipment containing such gases is put out of use ;
  - j. to press for the adoption of the above-mentioned measures at the World Climate Conference to be held in 1992 ;
25. Calls on the governments of non-member states to co-operate in the development of international initiatives within the framework of the competent international organisations ;
26. Calls on the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the European Science Foundation (ESF), the European Community and other international organisations to coordinate and intensify their research, with a view to obtaining a better assessment of the processes and consequences of climatic changes, and to define measures to limit such changes and to adapt to their effects ;
27. Expresses the wish to be kept informed, by the authorities mentioned in paragraphs 24, 25 and 26 above, on the concrete measures taken to implement this resolution.