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Migrations et déplacements induits par les facteurs environnementaux: un défi pour le 21^e siècle

Réponse à Recommandation¹: Recommandation 1862 (2009)
Comité des Ministres

1. The Committee of Ministers has given careful consideration to Parliamentary Assembly [Recommendation 1862 \(2009\)](#) on “Environmentally induced migration and displacement: a 21st century challenge”. It has brought the recommendation to the attention of the governments of member states and has transmitted it to the European Committee on Migration (CDMG), to the Council of Europe Development Bank, to the European Ministers responsible for Spatial/Regional Planning (CEMAT) and to the Committee of Permanent Correspondents of the European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement (EUR-OPA). The comments received are appended to this reply.
2. The Committee of Ministers welcomes the attention of the Assembly on this issue and shares its concerns. It follows closely developments in this field, particularly those within the framework of the United Nations and other international bodies.
3. The Committee of Ministers shares the Assembly’s view that much can be done on a European level. In particular, it concurs that migration management could benefit from studies which would identify and anticipate the impact on population movements that may be provoked by climate change. The Committee of Ministers agrees that comprehensive cross-disciplinary research and co-operation between environmental, migration, climate and demographic research centres in this field should be encouraged.
4. The Committee of Ministers underlines that this phenomenon is one which affects mainly states beyond European borders. In this respect, it supports the efforts of the United Nations and other international bodies, such as the International Organisation of Migration, which are increasingly active in this field.
5. The Committee of Ministers acknowledges that the growing awareness of this issue has given rise to a number of questions and would urge member states to support and actively participate in the work of the organisations concerned.
6. The Committee of Ministers, in reply to paragraph 6.4, would also draw the attention of member states to the United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and recall Recommendation Rec(2006)6 of the Committee of Ministers on internally displaced persons.
7. At their Third Summit held in Warsaw in May 2005, the Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe reaffirmed their commitment to promoting sustainable development.² The Committee of Ministers points out that whilst it is essential to address the actual issue of environmentally induced migration and displacement, it also is necessary to mitigate as much as possible the causes of environmental degradation.
8. With regard to sustainable development and risk reduction, and in reference to paragraph 6.7, the Assembly’s attention is also drawn to the work underway within the CEMAT in particular with regard to its work in preparation of its 15th Session on “Future challenges: sustainable development of the European

1. Adopted at the 1063rd meeting of the Ministers’ Deputies (8 July 2009).
2. Action Plan, 17 May 2005, Warsaw: Section II, Point 7.



continent in a changing world" (Russian Federation, 2010) and its commitment to take into account questions on environmentally induced migration and displacement in national sustainable spatial development policies. For its part, EUROPA, will work, *inter alia*, on the possibility of a European and Mediterranean Ethics Charter on resilience to major disasters aiming at improving preparedness and dealing with ethical problems concerning victims of disasters.

9. The proposal to prepare a possible additional protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights was also raised by the Assembly in its [Recommendation 1614 \(2003\)](#) on the "Environment and human rights". In its reply, the Committee of Ministers, *inter alia*, pointed out that given that the Court's case law shows that the Convention already offers a certain degree of protection in relation to environmental issues and that the Court's case law will continue to evolve in this area, it was not considered advisable to draft an additional protocol to the Convention in this field. This is still the position of the Committee of Ministers.

10. However, the Assembly recommendation did lead to the subsequent preparation by the Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH) of a Manual on Human Rights and the Environment³ – Principles emerging from the case law of the European Court of Human Rights. The aim of the manual was to increase the understanding of the relationship between the protection of human rights under the European Convention on Human Rights and the environment and thereby to contribute to strengthening environmental protection at the national level.

11. Finally, with regard to paragraph 6.8 of the present recommendation, the Committee of Ministers would draw the attention to the appended comments of the Council of Europe Development Bank.

3. CM(2005)186 add2.

Annexe 1 – Comments from the European Committee on Migration (CDMG)

1. The CDMG welcomes the attention accorded by the Parliamentary Assembly to the issue of environmentally induced migration and displacement and considers it very well-timed and of high importance in regards to the increasing intensity of environmental change and its consequences. It fully shares the view that it is certainly one of the biggest 21st century challenges that our societies are faced with and serious efforts and co-operation are urgently needed.

2. Climate change may lead to growing competition for scarce resources and land availability and are together likely to increase the incidence of humanitarian crises, further increasing the risk of already fragile states to fail. Coastal erosion, the spread of desert regions, declining arable land, a scarcity of water, large scale pollution and damage to infrastructure from extreme weather can all undermine the security and stability of some countries and cause significant migratory flows.

3. In the broad field of migration, environmentally induced migration is a rather new phenomenon. Mostly due to that reason, no international legal framework covers all aspects of it and no international organisation focuses solely on the problems and consequences of it or the protection of this type of migrant, even though the number of people fleeing due to environmental changes surpasses the number of those fleeing because of persecution and armed conflicts.

4. In the area of migration management, co-operation between Council of Europe member states should be enhanced in order, firstly, to properly identify and anticipate the impact on population movements that may be provoked by climate change and, secondly, draw up policies and procedures that will facilitate the migration of people to new centres of safety and economic development. This co-operation should also be extended to non-European partner countries.

5. Member states are not prepared for the consequences that environmental migration might bring insofar as refugee flows and (internal) population displacement. Current integration and community relations policies should be reviewed to ensure that they adequately meet the challenges that will be created by the arrival of large numbers of immigrants from countries other than the 'traditional' countries of origin of migrants. The CDMG supports the PACE proposal to encourage comprehensive cross-disciplinary research and co-operation between environmental, migration, climate-research and demographic centres in this field.

Annexe 2 – Comments of the Committee of Permanent Correspondents of the European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement (EUR-OPA)

After careful examination of Parliamentary Assembly [Recommendation 1862 \(2009\)](#) at its meeting in Paris on 6 and 7 April 2009, the Committee of Permanent Correspondents of the European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement (EUR-OPA):

1. Shares the concern of the Parliamentary Assembly concerning environmentally induced migration;
2. Notes that major hazards (floods, drought, epidemics, and climate change related events) are a fundamental cause of environmentally induced migration and that risks are increasing due to environmental degradation, population growth and climate change;
3. Notes that the European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement (EUR-OPA) sees climate change as a phenomenon likely to increase risks to people's life and property, environment and cultural heritage due to the increase of extreme weather related events (floods, drought, heat waves) and other hazards such as marine risks, forest fires or geomorphological risks; furthermore, notes that in this context, the Agreement is also working on ideas on how to improve preparedness and resilience of societies to these issues. It also encourages states to include disaster risk reduction in climate change adaptation policies and in climate change negotiations;
4. Supports a more decisive role of the Council of Europe on the prevention of environmental degradation and on disaster risk reduction;
5. Encourages Council of Europe member states to take a more proactive approach to victims of natural and man-made disasters, particularly people displaced by environmental problems, and to improve the preparedness of societies, both in Europe and in other regions;
6. Notes that the European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement (EUR-OPA) will work on the possibility of a European and Mediterranean Ethics Charter on resilience to major disasters aiming at improving preparedness and dealing with ethical problems concerning victims of disasters including environmental refugees.

Annexe 3 – Comments of the Committee of Senior Officials of the Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Spatial/Regional Planning (CEMAT)

The Committee of Senior Officials of the Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Spatial/Regional Planning (CEMAT):

1. Notes that the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe agreed to communicate Parliamentary Assembly [Recommendation 1862 \(2009\)](#) “Environmentally induced migration and displacement: a 21st century challenge” for information and possible comments (decision taken by the Deputies at their 1048th meeting, 11 February 2009);
2. Thanks the Committee of Ministers for consulting it on this question;
3. Thanks the Parliamentary Assembly for inviting the Committee of Ministers to adopt a recommendation calling on member states to develop a common European approach to preventing and managing extreme climate phenomena as the main cause of environmental migration in their spatial planning policies;
4. Recognises that environmental degradation and natural disasters will increasingly determine the nature of human mobility as well as its humanitarian and human security dimensions;
5. Recalls the provisions of Recommendation Rec(2002)1 of the Committee of Ministers on the Guiding principles for sustainable spatial development of the European continent, as regards reducing environmental damage;
6. Underlines that environmental problems, which may result from inadequate co-ordination of sectoral policies or local decisions, should be prevented;
7. Notes to this end, that spatial planning policy should support the prevention or mitigation of various kinds of environmental harm, e.g. by promoting less damaging agricultural or forestry practices, encouraging more environment-friendly forms of transport and energy systems, regenerating derelict urban areas and rehabilitating their environment, preventing industrial accidents, regenerating areas damaged by industrial pollution and former military activities as well as by containing the extension of the suburban areas;
8. Announces that the 15th CEMAT Session on “Future challenges: sustainable development of the European continent in a changing world” will be held in the Russian Federation in 2010 and agrees that the issue of migration and their territorial impact are included in the Committee of Senior Officials’ 2007-2010 Work Programme;
9. Confirms its commitment to taking into account questions on environmentally induced migration and displacement in national sustainable spatial development policies and agrees on the importance of dealing with this serious issue in the draft 15th CEMAT Moscow Declaration which is being prepared;
10. Encourages the development of a clear definition of environmentally induced migration and displacement, which could pave the way to European or even international consensus, which could be the starting point for common action;
11. Draws the attention in this context, to the importance of taking into account the spatial dimension, bearing in mind the geographical (main landscape regions of Europe) and local dimensions, the different types of territories (rural, urban, lowlands, plains, river basins...) presenting completely different risks or potentials.

Annexe 4 – Comments of the Governing Board of the Council of Europe Development Bank

"The Governing Board examined [Recommendation 1862 \(2009\)](#) of the Parliamentary Assembly, inviting the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to "prioritise the actions of the Council of Europe Development Bank that contribute to protecting and improving the environment. Projects that provide appropriate responses to urgent needs and to sustainable prevention action of environmental deterioration in a long-term perspective should be particularly supported;"

The Governing Board recalls that, according to Article II, section a of the Articles of Agreement: "a. The primary purpose of the Bank is to help in solving the social problems with which European countries are or may be faced as a result of the presence of refugees, displaced persons or migrants consequent upon movements of refugees or other forced movements of populations and as a result of the presence of victims of natural or ecological disasters."

In addition, the Overall Policy Framework for Loan and Project Financing foresees that: "The CEB's actions are aimed at strengthening social cohesion in Europe through three sectoral action lines, namely strengthening social integration, managing the environment and developing human capital."

Over the period 2003-2007, the contribution of the CEB in the sector of managing the environment represented a cumulative amount of almost € 3.4 billion in terms of projects approved, including € 810 million for 2007 alone. Since 2003, loans disbursed in favour of environmental management have reached a cumulative amount of over € 1.5 billion. For 2007, a total of € 353 million was disbursed, including €240 million for the benefit of the target group countries.

Over and above its specific action in favour of protection of the environment, the CEB systematically takes into account the environmental aspects of all the projects it appraises.

The CEB also signed, on 30 May 2006, the Declaration of European Principles for the Environment. This declaration associates the European Commission and several other IFLs (EIB, EBRD, NEFCO, NIB) in a joint effort to implement "the fundamental right of present and future generations to live in a healthy environment".

The Governing Board also decided to bring this resolution to the attention of the Administrative Council, which is responsible for approving projects.