



**EURO-MEDITERRANEAN
PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY**



Brussels, 17 March 2009

RECOMMENDATION

of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly

**tabled on behalf of the Ad-hoc Committee on Energy and the Environment
of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly**

by Mr George Salagoudis , Chair of the Committee,

Based on the proposals presented by the rapporteurs,

*Mr Ioannis Kasoulides (European Parliament) and
Mr Abderrahmane Bouhrizi (Tunisia)*

*on the " protection of coastal and maritime ecosystems from
pollution, massive ports, tourist and industrial projects",*

and

Mr David Hammerstein (European Parliament)

*on "EC Solar Energy programme in the Euromed region : including "feed-
in schemes" and sharing of best practices as regards the extension of
programmes for solar electricity in remote areas, taking into
consideration large-scale, high-temperature Desertec proposals"*

On the "protection of coastal and maritime ecosystems from pollution, massive ports, tourist and industrial projects"

- having regard to the Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean held on 13 July 2008 and to the Final Statement of the Ministerial Conference in Marseille from 3-4 November 2008 on a "Union for the Mediterranean",
- having regard to the conclusions of the Ministerial Conference on Water held in Jordan on 22 December 2008,,
- having regard to the Resolution of the European Parliament of 16 December 2008 on "The regional development aspects of the impact of tourism on coastal regions",
- having regard to the study of the European Commission and the European Investment Bank on "Horizon 2020 – Elaboration of a Mediterranean Hot Spot Investment Programme (MeHSIP)" presented on 10 April 2008,
 - a) whereas the Mediterranean is home to more than 400 million people spread across 22 countries of whom 143 million live in coastal areas, with another 175 million visiting the region every year; whereas the well-being of all those people directly depends on the healthy environment of the Mediterranean Sea; whereas preservation of its natural heritage is indispensable for the sake both of the current generation and of generations to come, and, no doubt, for the future of mankind,
 - b) whereas, since numerous policies touch directly or indirectly on the sea (environment, transport, ship-building and repair of commercial ships and yachts, health, research, space, fisheries, agriculture, energy, biotechnologies...), a common, well-coordinated maritime strategy at the Euro-Mediterranean level is indispensable as an approach to those varied aspects which do not currently constitute the common vision,
 - c) whereas the Mediterranean, a symbol for the whole region and a vehicle for many non-marketable values (e.g. identity, social, cultural and especially heritage values), as well as a stable source of income, employment and pleasure for its people, has suffered serious environmental degradation, especially in past decades,
 - d) whereas the Mediterranean environment is one of the most vulnerable in the world, its marine and coastal environments being exposed to a number of sources of pollution, 80% of which is land-based, taking the form in particular of municipal waste, urban waste water and industrial emissions,
 - e) whereas more than half of the Mediterranean urban areas with a population of over 100,000 do not have waste water treatment plants

and 60% of the wastewater produced in these areas is directly discharged into the sea; whereas 80% of landfills in southern and eastern Mediterranean countries are not monitored,

- f) whereas the human pressures on the Mediterranean marine environment are extremely numerous and emanate from various sources, partly maritime but for the most part land-based, including municipal waste, urban wastewater, industrial emissions, agricultural waste, airborne particles and river run-offs carrying nutrients, pathogens, heavy metals, persistent organic pollutants, oil and radioactive substances,
- g) whereas the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean held on 13 July 2008 declared the “De-pollution of the Mediterranean” one of the major regional projects that could translate the goals of the Barcelona process and whereas this was launched as a priority key initiative in the framework of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM); whereas the Horizon 2020 initiative represents an umbrella programme, which is now the backbone of the “De-pollution of the Mediterranean” project;
- h) whereas a significant number of ongoing projects, like the Mediterranean Hot Spot Investment Programme (MeHSIP), the Strategy for Water in the Mediterranean, the EU Marine Strategy, the UNEP/MAP, the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD), the Mediterranean Environmental Technical Assistance Programme (METAP), the Mediterranean EU Water Initiative (MedEUWI), and the EMWIS, have been running both in the framework of the Horizon 2020 programme but also beyond and have been operated by different institutions and actors;

The ad hoc Committee on Energy and the Environment of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly (EMPA), reaffirms the importance of the sea, which has, from a historical point of view, played an important economic, political and cultural role for many Euro-Mediterranean countries, allowing them to acquire a global significance. The importance of maritime challenges for these countries therefore justifies their being identified and taken into account at all levels of Euro-Mediterranean policy. As a result, the Committee:

1. Stresses the fact that pollution does not stop at national borders and that environmental degradation caused by one country affects the whole of the Mediterranean and the health and livelihoods of all the population living in coastal areas and beyond; urges, therefore, all bordering Mediterranean countries or parties that make use of the Mediterranean for commercial, civil, security, military or any other purposes, to assume their responsibilities to protect the Mediterranean and restore its ecosystems and to make the de-pollution of the Mediterranean one of their top political priorities;

2. Considers that action at Euro-Mediterranean level bestows tangible added value on national or regional action, given the trans-boundary nature of pollution and the growing interdependence between the countries bordering the region in effectively combating this problem; fully endorses, therefore, the decision of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean to launch this project, which gives a fresh impetus to it and raises political awareness of the need for immediate, concerted and common action in the field;
3. Notes the great number of existing projects and actors working in this area, which reflects the growing interest and resources available for concrete action; observes, however, that there is a degree of fragmentation and lack of coordination between these projects that might prove detrimental to the overall positive and genuine impact as regards achieving the policy objectives relating to the de-pollution of the Mediterranean;
4. Stresses, therefore, the need to draw up a comprehensive strategy to integrate the principal objectives, tools, and structures of existing projects into a single framework and programme; stresses the need for a broad consultation process to set out the future integrated framework of this strategy, in order to take account of all challenges linked with the sea; considers that this single strategy will further raise visibility and awareness of the efforts made in the field, and can be more directly associated with the “De-pollution of the Mediterranean” launched in the framework of the UfM;
5. Calls for the promotion of an integrated strategy for coastal zone management by all coastal states, especially since their ecosystems are those most threatened by the consequences of an ever-increasing number of activities; urges the Euro-Mediterranean countries to commit themselves without delay to effectively protecting the Mediterranean, a semi-enclosed sea that is highly threatened, and to sign the Barcelona Convention on Integrated Coastal Zone Management in the Mediterranean (ICZM), if they have not already done so;
6. Recommends setting high-level environmental requirements regarding all maritime activities, as well as all land-based activities which impact, directly or indirectly, the quality of the marine environment; stresses, in this context, the need to increase efforts to improve cooperation between coastal Euro-Mediterranean countries so as effectively to adopt urban waste treatment policies and comply with international maritime law provisions and to pay particular attention to adapting means, practices and behaviours with a view to reducing risks inherent to production activities and ensuring the integrity of ecosystems where such operations take place;
7. Calls for a solution to the problem of dismantling and recycling end-of-life ships which has yet to be addressed in a satisfactory manner, as it involves risks for both man and the environment, especially in dismantling yards which are more often than not situated in areas where there is no guarantee of acceptable environmental and social conditions;
8. Calls for promoting maritime traffic security, adopting the highest level of safety and security measures, especially in closed seas and in the vicinity of

densely populated coastal areas, and monitoring, as well as deploying emergency plans in case of accidents, especially in cases of pollution by hydrocarbons and LNG, since these are indispensable measures to preserve marine ecosystems and resources;

9. Stresses the need to set up observation systems in order to prevent and minimise environmental risks and calls for the establishment of a Mediterranean observatory with a view to providing an early warning mechanism and ensuring more effective intervention; believes that such an organization should also play a role in the coordination of the existing projects and initiatives in the field;
10. Notes that tourism, typically the main activity in these regions, makes a positive contribution to social and economic development in terms of increasing GDP and employment levels; calls, however, on all Mediterranean countries to become more aware of the environmental impact of tourism on coastal regions, which can create serious pressures often due to rapid and unplanned urbanisation, and impose a strain on natural resources and coastal ecosystems; recommends the active promotion of sustainable development, joint programmes between the industrial sector and the tourism industry, cross-border cooperation and the exchange of experiences and best practices in order to halt the degradation of the coastline; recommends also the full implementation of the very successful "blue-flag beach" programme in the countries of the southern Mediterranean, and that ways should be considered to encourage common certificated standards for other quality and environmentally-friendly practices in the region;
11. Believes that the de-pollution of the Mediterranean is a common concern of all UfM countries, and not just those bordering on the Mediterranean; stresses that many Mediterranean countries do not have the means to meet their environmental protection needs, and that adequate financial resources need to be made available to that end; calls, therefore, on all actors involved (such as the EU, FEMIP, international donors) to step up their efforts in that direction; highlights the role of the European Investment Bank (EIB) in providing facilities or appropriations at the least possible cost to this end and stresses the need to stimulate private sector involvement in this area;
12. Welcomes the progress on the de-pollution of the Mediterranean achieved since the launch of the project within the UfM, especially following the Water Ministerial Conference on 22 December 2008, which drew up a calendar of concrete projects from 2009 on the issue of water management; calls, however, for the implementation of all related projects in the field to begin promptly with the identification of innovative, efficient and tangible priority actions for pollution reduction, for increasing capacity building, and for developing and sharing knowledge and best practices;
13. Stresses the fact that several Mediterranean coastal regions are now facing a serious challenge in ensuring freshwater extraction; believes that this is partly due to the fact that technological progress has lowered the cost of groundwater extraction, which has led in several cases to the unrestrained over-exploitation

of this finite natural resource; highlights the fact that the combination of legal and illegal freshwater extraction has transformed naturally dry landscapes into heavily irrigated areas that have a short life-span with immediate consequences for the long-term distinction and degradation of precious resources such as soil and water;

on "EC Solar Energy programme in the Euromed region : including "feed-in schemes" and sharing of best practices as regards the extension of programmes for solar electricity in remote areas, taking into consideration large-scale, high-temperature Desertec proposals"

14. Affirms the great social and environmental benefits of a fully interconnected Euro-Mediterranean energy market; believes in this regard that a Smart-Grid intelligently integrating and managing local grid transmission and distribution networks, storage capacity and consumption as well as a Super-Grid, that would combine long-distance electricity transmission with decentralised load management technologies and concentrated solar power to join up Europe, North Africa and the Middle East in the supply of clean, efficient energy should be promoted; welcomes these prospects and urges better financing via the EU recovery plan, the European Investment Bank and the forthcoming EU financial perspectives; recommends to integrate the Euromed Solar Plan into all of the National Action Plans of the European Neighbourhood Policy.
15. Recognises the great potential of Concentrated Solar Power and Photovoltaic energy to meet growing electricity demand in the Euromed region, and notes the possibilities offered by the new EU Renewables Directive that permits EU countries to meet their binding targets in renewable energy by importing it from non-EU countries, and recommends that the commitments of the clean development mechanisms of the Kyoto Treaty be oriented toward renewable energy projects, in particular solar energy projects in Euromed partner countries, in order to promote social and environmental well-being and to ensure clean technology transfer;
16. Calls upon the Union for the Mediterranean to carry out the Euromed Solar Plan with sufficient resources, concrete pilot projects and a strong political commitment; recognises the considerable solar energy production potential in the Euro-Mediterranean region that could play a key role in fighting climate change, diversifying energy sources and strengthening economies, and promoting qualified job markets and democratic structures; points out that this is an issue of global and regional interest that affects the future stability, security and social viability of all our societies and that a key reason for substantively increasing renewable energy in the Euro-Mediterranean region is to guarantee access to fresh water through desalinisation and clean sources of energy for millions of people who lack these facilities;
17. Welcomes the promotion of solar and other renewable sources through support schemes and feed-in tariffs in many countries, both in Europe and North Africa; encourages all EMPA countries to set targets for renewable energy production in order to ensure that renewable energy accounts for a significant proportion of overall energy consumption according to the capabilities of each

country; calls on the European Commission to provide technical aid together with the private sector to join countries in strengthening solar projects, both large and small;

18. Notes the great potential of thermal solar energy for domestic hot water and heating and cooling in the Euromed region that should be tapped by broad-based decentralised programmes; underlines in this regard that in the Euromed region in particular demand for cooling is increasing significantly and that in a number of countries peak electricity consumption no longer occurs in winter, but in summer; believes that the market development of cooling from renewable energy must be accelerated; emphasises that this kind of solar energy is very efficient, relatively inexpensive and can result in very substantial electricity savings;
19. Calls upon the European Commission, in cooperation with Egypt, the Palestinian institutions and private firms, to build a pilot project consisting of a concentrated solar energy plant near Rafah in order to supply electricity to Gaza and probably to supply energy for an electrically generated desalination plant, as part of the Euromed Solar Plan and the plans for reconstruction of Gaza;
20. Calls upon the European Commission and Mediterranean governments to integrate solar energy projects as a key part of the economic stimulus plans being implemented to address the present economic crisis.