

2.12.2021

## RECOMMENDATION

on Addressing the Impacts of Climate Change in the Euro-Mediterranean  
Region

Committee on Energy, Environment and Water

## **Recommendation by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean on Addressing the Impacts of Climate Change in the Euro-Mediterranean Region**

*The Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean,*

1. Considers that, 25 years after the Barcelona Declaration, an enhanced Euro Mediterranean partnership remains a strategic imperative for the region, as the challenges it continues to face today, ***especially the era of profound ecological uncertainty caused by the effects of climate change***, require a common response; ***welcomes, in this regard, the publication by the European Commission on 9 February 2021, of the new agenda for the Mediterranean, which offers a propitious framework for strengthening cooperation between the countries on both shores.***
2. Reaffirms its commitment to limiting global temperature increase to the goals of the Paris Agreement and to ensuring that the voice of the Mediterranean ***a common asset of the communities bordering the Mediterranean***, is heard at the international level. Recognises that only in a greater spirit of international commitment ***and approaches that ensure a balance of interests among all countries party to the Paris Agreement signed in 2015***, will it be possible to limit global warming below 1.5°C and to tackle the challenges the Mediterranean is facing, such as extreme heat waves, ***major fires, the intensification of heavy rainfall events***, water scarcity, drought, desertification of land and food shortages due to the reduction of viable agricultural land, ***as well as the impacts of climate change on the Mediterranean Sea (deep warming, acidification, pollution...)***.
3. Encourages concerted and coordinated climate action by all member states ***and regions***, building partnerships and alliances with states, institutions, ***producers, workers and their unions, scientists, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs)*** on both shores of the Mediterranean, as well as acting in different fora.
4. Notes the benefits of ***renewable energy with regard to diversification of national energy mix***, tackling climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, creating additional opportunities for employment and regional economic development, decreasing dependence on imported fossil fuels and alignment of trade mechanisms with low carbon economy.
5. Stresses the importance of ***a sustainable blue economy (including coastal tourism and fisheries)*** and of protecting the marine environment and biodiversity, as well as of promoting innovative solutions in low carbon ***for zero emission*** transport and environmentally friendly practices. Underlines that the temperature rise will cause irreversible damage to our planet and endanger biodiversity, which drives the common determination of action. ***The Mediterranean Sea is one of the most polluted seas. 80% of the waste comes from the Land, but the solutions are also to be found on the land.***
6. Recognises that global biodiversity loss and climate change pose a significant risk to public health and well-being, and that it is therefore necessary to ***urgently begin a transition to an environmentally sustainable, carbon-neutral, toxic-free and fully circular economy within the planet's limits by 2050. Stresses that the "One health" principle, which reflects the***

*fact that human and animal health and the environment are closely linked and that diseases are transmitted from humans to animals and vice versa, must be placed at the heart of joint action.* More attention should be given to water issues as a vital part of any effort to address the impacts of climate change, and priority should be given to the protection of oceans and biodiversity.

7. *Stresses that Mediterranean islands experience specific challenges in the context of climate change and the energy transition, particularly due to the additional pressure on water and energy demand especially during the touristic season.*

8. Calls on states to cooperate in *sustainable small island pilot projects*, promoting *enhanced deployment* of renewable energies, in particular solar energy, *and hydrogen produced from renewables* as well as the *related grid infrastructure for empowering citizens to produce, sell, store and consume renewable energy*, not only as a means of reducing pollution but also as an economic gain.

9. Notes that cooperation in urban Planning, the circular economy *within an approach to sustainable development* and sustainable mobility is crucial to avoid the pollution of cities, the use of waste-generating materials or the desertification of rural areas. Adopting more sustainable solutions, based on scientific evidence and implemented together with communities, creates more resilient cities and regions. Soil erosion is also a major challenge, and innovative joint programmes should, therefore, be further stepped up to avoid the expansion of the desert.

10. Considers it essential to cooperate in the more sustainable management of water and agri-food systems in the face of climate change, urbanisation and population growth. Stresses the need to *encourage regional production, marketing and consumption* and help and support farmers in farming practices that make efficient use of water resources and preserve land. Recognises that desalination projects are insufficient to mitigate the effects of climate change in the fight against water needs but can be seen as an additional and complementary solution, Agricultural practices should be reconsidered in order to use water resources efficiently, as well as to produce food in accordance with environmental standards to preserve the conservation of land *and ensure access to clean and healthy water, free of antibiotics and other chemicals is a human right.*

11. Is concerned about the increase in global temperature resulting from greenhouse gas emissions and calls on states to sustainably reduce *carbon dioxide emissions* and *preserve and restore natural carbon sinks offset carbon dioxide emissions towards decarbonisation* in order to achieve a global economy with low emissions and climate neutrality through the energy transition.

12. Stresses that post-COVID-19 recovery and reconstruction strategies *must be the opportunity to move forward with environmentally friendly solutions.* Including climate change issues *and certified emission trading schemes* in post-COVID-19 recovery strategies leads to fairer, resilient and climate-neutral economies. *Recalls that the carbon footprint of the richest 1% is currently 35 times higher than the 1.5 °C target of the Paris Agreement while the poorest populations are more exposed to the effects of climate change. Tackling climate change must therefore be accompanied by a better redistribution of wealth.*

13. Recognises that economic, social and health recovery requires the transition to a new sustainable economic model ***that considers ways to deal with climate change through the circular economy*** in terms of climate change that embraces the circular economy, promoting renewable energy, prioritising investment in environmental services, creating new jobs and adapting to climate change.

14. ***Emphasises that the implementation of an efficient and effective fight against climate change requires the mobilisation by developed countries of the necessary financial and technological means for the benefit of the developing countries in the Mediterranean region.***

15. ***Is alarmed that Mediterranean forests have undergone severe degradation and are increasingly threatened by climate change, population growth, forest fires and water shortages.*** Stresses the importance of continuously investing in reforestation ***and the restoration of marine and coastal ecosystems, including Posidonia, a species endemic to the Mediterranean,*** as a means of combating and barring extreme drought phenomena, but also as an effective way of sequestering greenhouse gases with benefits for land, biodiversity and the fight against climate change. ***Emphasises that agroforestry can contribute to efforts seeking to conserve biodiversity, diversify and sustain agricultural production, and provide much needed social, economic and environmental benefits for land users.***

16. Highlights the importance of climate change adaptation strategies at the national, regional and local levels, acknowledging the insufficiency of mitigation strategies, investing in more energy-efficient construction and nature-based solutions.

17. Calls on member states to work towards recognising Stable Climate as a Common Heritage of Humanity. This goal must be taken up at the foreign policy level to inspire other countries to take similar legislative initiatives.

18. ***Stresses the importance of adaptation to climate change and the need to fully support countries strategies, plans and projects to deal with current and future effects of climate change including those related to water, sea level rise, heatwaves and agriculture.***

19. ***Stresses the importance of international cooperation in particular predictable, appropriate and sustainable provision of finance and technology to support developing member states of UfM, to implement the current and future nationality determined contributions, and in line with priorities identified by the countries.***