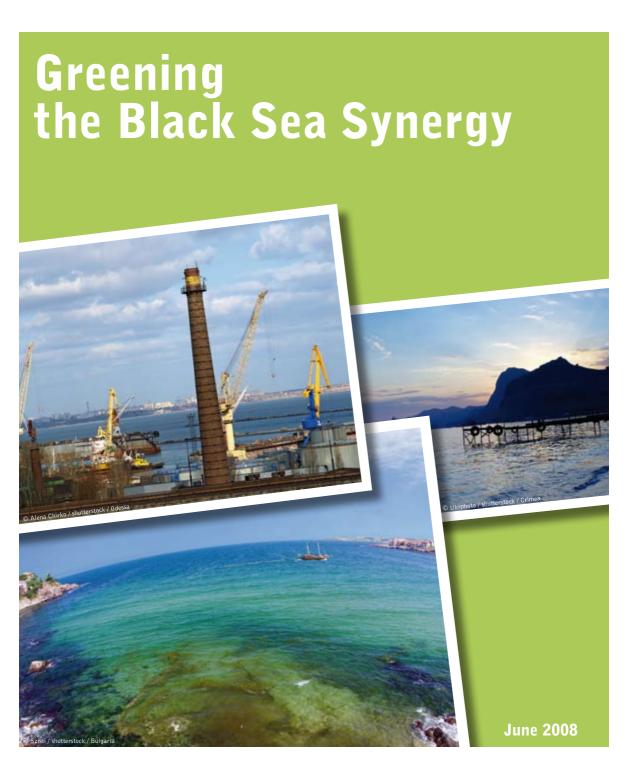


# HEINRICH BÖLL STIFTUNG EU REGIONAL OFFICE, BRUSSELS



#### **Credits**

This document is a summary of the study "Greening the Black Sea Synergy".

It can be downloaded from:

- http://www.boell.be/en/web/index\_242.html
- http://www.panda.org/about\_wwf/where\_we\_work/europe/what\_we\_do/wwf\_europe\_environment/initiatives/european\_neighbourhood\_policy/index.cfm

## The study was:

#### **Authored** by

- Nicolas Tavitian, Consultant, Prospect C&S, Brussels
- Jason Anderson, Joanna Chiavari, İnstitute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP)
- Oleg Rubel, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Odessa, and Nina Renshaw, Transport and Environment, Brussels
- Anja Wittich, Achim Maas, Alexander Carius, Adelphi Research, Berlin
- Claire Dupont, Milieu Environmental Law and Policy, Brussels

# **Coordinated by**

- Paloma Agrasot, WWF European Policy Office, Brussels

# Edited by

- Paloma Agrasot, WWF European Policy Office, Brussels
- Nicolas Tavitian, Consultant, Prospect C&S, Brussels
- Roderick Kefferpütz, Heinrich Böll Foundation EU Regional Office, Brussels

# Language editing by

Nicolas Tavitian, Consultant, Prospect C&S, Brussels

#### **Production**

Micheline Gutman

### Printed on FSC paper

This publication is also part of the "Greening the Neighbourhood Policy" project initiated in 2005 by WWF and the Heinrich Böll Foundation EU Regional Office in Brussels. The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Heinrich Böll Foundation or WWF.

Published June 2008 by WWF-World Wide Fund for Nature (formerly World Wildlife Fund) and Heinrich Böll Foundation EU Regional Office in Brussels.

Any reproduction in full or in part of this publication must mention the title and credit of the above-mentioned publishers as the copyright owners.

© text 2008 WWF and Hbf. All rights reserved.

#### **Acknowledgements**

Our thanks for the useful contribution provided by:

- Ahmet Kideys and Violeta Velikova, Permanent Secretariat to the Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution, Istanbul
- Malkhaz Dzneladze, WWF Caucasus Programme Office, Georgia
- Andreas Beckmann and Neringa Pumputyte, WWF Danube-Carpathian Programme Office, Austria
- Oleg Tsaruk, WWF-Russia, Russian Caucasus Regional Office
- Ahmet Birsel and Sedat Kalem, WWF-Turkey
- Georg Rast, WWF-Germany
- Michael Case, WWF-US
- Aaron McLoughlin, Stefania Campogianni, Pauline Denissel, Florence Danthine and Jean Shearn, WWF European Policy Office, Brussels, Belgium
- Patricia Jimenez, Heinrich Böll Foundation EU Regional Office, Brussels

Our special thanks go to representatives of the NGOs who actively contributed to the study during the workshop organised by Hbf and WWF in Odessa, February 5-7, 2008.

We also would like to thank the Directorates General for External Relations, Environment, Energy and Transport and Maritime Affairs of the European Commission for their useful inputs and the Governments of Bulgaria and Romania for their comments.

#### ٦

# 1. Introduction

The enlargement of the EU in 2007 brought the union to the shores of the Black Sea and prompted it to recognise the coherence and significance of the region as it launched its Black Sea Synergy (BSS).

The BSS aims to focus political attention at regional levels and to invigorate ongoing co-operation processes in the Black Sea Region (BSR). It represents an important attempt on the EU's part to promote regional co-operation in an area covered by separate EU policy processes for European neighbourhood countries, candidate countries and EU members as well as the Russian Federation. The Synergy covers six riparian countries as well as Armenia, Azerbaijan and the Republic of Moldova. It envisages that the EU will build on existing regional institutions to avoid duplication and focus on policy areas which are considered key in the EU's relations with the region: energy, transport, environment, migration and security.

What impact will this policy have on the Black Sea Region's environment? How can it contribute to conservation and sustainable development while preventing further damage? The Black Sea Region is rich in wildlife, landscapes and biodiversity and is a significant provider of environmental services and natural resources. But, it is also vulnerable, and current developments, especially plans concerning oil and gas extraction and transport as well as the development of transport infrastructure across the region, are a major cause for concern.

The region is also vulnerable to climate change, which could add to the stress natural systems are already under, increase the probability of extreme accidents, endanger livelihoods and even undermine security and stability.

Having emerged from the difficult years of transition, the Black Sea Region is now at an environmental crossroads. It may seek to draw inspiration from best environmental practice and move towards sustainable models of development; but it will also have to contend with a legacy of environmental damage, polluting industries, unsustainable and resource intensive development and poor governance compounded by today's growing interest in resource extraction and large-scale infrastructure projects.

This study on the Black Sea Synergy was initiated with a view to informing the debate on EU policies and the forms which Black Sea co-operation in the field of environment might take in the future. It aims to provide arguments to help make the Black Sea Region sustainable and to promote environmental protection and nature conservation in the entire region. It has been developed by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), the Heinrich Böll Foundation (Hbf) and a group of international consultants. Preliminary results were discussed with a large number of Black Sea stakeholders (civil society representatives) at a workshop in Odessa, Ukraine, in February 2008.

# 2. Environmental values and ecosystem services

The ecosystems of the Black Sea region make up a considerable part of Europe's biodiversity and natural wealth. Areas of great natural and biological diversity within this region include, in particular, the Caucasus, Crimea, and Anatolia, the Carpathian Mountains, the Danube delta and other important wetlands. Both the Caucasus and parts of Anatolia are considered by the European Environmental Agency as "biodiversity hotspots" because they combine a particularly rich biodiversity with an alarming rate of habitat loss.

Apart from its biodiversity value, the BSR also contributes a range of vital environmental services. The provision of freshwater is particularly noteworthy in this regard, with no less than 5 major rivers flowing into the Black Sea and whose combined watersheds cover a third of the European continent. The region's rivers, forests, steppes, soils and seas also provide transport infrastructure, energy, timber, fish and other food products, medicines and a number of other services, many of which have a direct economic value.

Economic activity remains limited in the BSR when compared to Western European standards. After a drop in the 1990s, GDP has now recovered to pre-transition levels in most countries, but industrial production has not. European Environmental Agency indicators show correspondingly lower levels of energy consumption, air pollutants and waste production for the countries of the region, than in Western Europe.

The pressures and threats which the region is subjected to are associated with the transition. The legacy of past mass industrial development generated industrial pollution in a number of areas; wetland, river and coastal ecosystems damaged by infrastructure projects; a polluted and impoverished Black Sea; and more. But industrial and chemical pollution from agriculture, as well as nutrient pollution in rivers and in the sea, have abated somewhat since 1991. The Chernobyl accident caused nuclear contamination covering large tracts of the Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova.

Economic hardship and weak conservation authorities are such that natural resources are often wasted or routinely abused. Illegal logging, poaching, overgrazing and overfishing in inland waters, for instance, are a source of environmental degradation in many of the poorer parts of the region.

Economic growth has now returned to the region and with it, the pressures resulting from infrastructure construction, urban development and large-scale industrial development. Generally speaking, in countries of the Black Sea region, nature conservation, including the implementation of international commitments, is hindered by poor implementation more than by inadequate legislation. Capacity and funding are inadequate to enforce policy and legislation and awareness is low, leading to low social demand and political prioritisation for nature protection while weak administrations are vulnerable to corruption, which further undermines enforcement.

To reinforce conservation policy in the region proirities will be to enhance public awareness of the region's conservation value, to increase the resources available for conservation and to develop capacity at all levels. Funding can be found from international sources and from alternative (non-budgetary) sources, but governments should also express their commitment to conservation in the form of increased budgetary allocations. An adequate scientific capacity is fundamental to effective conservation policy and this should be among the priorities.

The EU should also contribute to conservation policy in the region by ensuring that it effectively features on the ENP's and on the pre-accession process' agendas, by supporting conservation projects and by reacting to significant infringements on conservation policy and norms.

# 3. Main drivers and their expected impacts

# 3.1 Dealing with climate change

The effects of climate change on the region include sea level rise, increased water stress and drought. The future frequency and strength of storms is difficult to anticipate but the impact of storms and floods is likely to increase in any case as the region's environment becomes more vulnerable. A drop in food production is also to be anticipated, leading to a rise in food prices and food shortages.

Overall, climate change will mostly affect coastal areas, which tend to be both more vulnerable and populated, and hence are home to much of the economy of Black Sea countries. It will also strongly affect the agricultural sector, which remains economically significant in the region at between 25 and 40% of GNP, causing food production to decline.

Should such fears materialise, climate change may cause migration away from affected areas and increase livelihood insecurity in general. Appropriate adaptation measures will be crucial to allow the region to adapt to the expected upheaval.

### Recommendations

- **Cost-effective adaptation.** BSR countries should be helped to adapt to climate change notably through cost-effective adaptation measures such as, water conservation, public planning, awareness raising, developing partnerships and improving disaster or crisis management.
- **Capacity-building.** Specific technical guidance, through exchanges of experience, best practice, co-operation and projects on the ground should be provided.
- **Study the Effects of climate change.** The EU and its member states must carry out an analysis of the impacts of climate change on the BSR's security situation, including livelihood security. They must furthermore support concrete adaptation and mitigation measures while ensuring that national policies are supportive of adaptation and mitigation.

# 3.2 Challenges and opportunity in the energy sector

The nuclear industry is one of the legacies from the past. In total, 52 nuclear power plants are currently operational in BSR countries, nine of which are soviet-built and considered unsafe as they do not meet Western security standards. Uranium extraction is also part of the legacy, with significant operations in Ukraine and, on a more modest scale, in Romania.

The region has been affected by an oil boom in recent years: Russia and Azerbaijan are the main oil producers in the area. Oil industry installations are major sources of solid, liquid and gaseous waste to the air, ground and water and this has severely affected the environment in Azerbaijan.

Petroleum shipping is also a major cause of pollution, and is on the increase. The rush for profit has reportedly come at the expense of safeguards, and this may increase the risk of oil spills at sea. The Bosphorus is particularly vulnerable to collisions.

Safety and energy security concerns have prompted a drive to build major pipelines across the area. Current projects include the Odessa-Brody pipeline in Ukraine, Constanta-Triest, Burgas-Vlore and Burgas-Alexandropoulos pipelines (across the Balkan peninsula) and the Nabucco pipeline (from the Caspian to Austria via Turkey, Bulgaria and Romania). But while pipelines ease

transport bottlenecks in the regions, they also generate environmental impacts such as habitat disruption, fragmentation, and leakage. Russia alone reports 22,000 pipeline bursts a year! The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline was built through areas of pristine wilderness in a region of very high biodiversity value.

While considerable investments are being made in fossil energies, the gap between the region's renewable energy potential and actual exploitation is larger than in the West of Europe. Significant potential exists for the sustainable use of biomass, wind, solar and energy efficiency. Most of the countries in the region have a good solar and wind energy potential, and countries such as Ukraine, Romania or the Republic of Moldova could also rely more on their biomass for energy. Romania and Bulgaria are so far lagging behind in the use of renewable energies.

This gap between RES potential and use is partly the result of an inherited development model based on fossil fuels and nuclear power. But it is also the result of a focus on fossil fuels by the region's western partners in recent years, a single-mindedness which has been further reinforced by rivalries between the US and Russia and by energy security concerns in Europe. At any rate, the process tends to be self-reinforcing as the construction of pipelines favours the intensification of oil exploitation in new areas, such as Central Asia, which in turn increases the dominance of oil and gas.

#### Recommendations

- **Exploit renewables potential.** The EU should help BSR countries to exploit their renewable energy potential through technical and economic support, particularly with regards to decision-making, data collection and cost-benefit analysis of policy options. BSR countries will also need help in devising policies that will facilitate the entry of renewable energy on the energy market, including the gradual removal of energy subsidies.
- More efficient energy markets. By promoting transparent and competitive markets in the region and facilitating access to financing mechanisms the EU can help attract potential developers and users of renewable energy to the region and stimulate the development of local know-how.
- Financial support. EU support for renewable energies can be mobilised *inter alia* through the implementation of ENP Action Plans, through the IPA, and other financial institutions and instruments (including the EIB, EBRD and GEEREF). Guidance should also be provided to countries in the region to make full use of the Kyoto mechanisms to develop renewable energies and improve energy efficiency.
- An EU energy policy for the BSR. The EU should adopt an EU energy policy for the region. It should ensure that it is in line with the EU's own sustainable energy goals, including with the strategy set out in the Energy Package. The EU should reduce investments in fossil fuel projects to invest more in renewable alternatives.

# 3.3 Transport infrastructure projects and their impact

Traffic to and through the Black Sea Region – maritime, fluvial, by road and by rail – is expanding fast. Freight between Europe and Asia, for instance, currently amounts to about €00 billion and is expected to grow by 30 to 35% by 2010. Transport is also one of the Black Sea Synergy's top priorities and the EU is promoting new infrastructure under the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) and other policies.

Under the TEN-T extension, the EU is currently working to develop three major transport axes to the Eastern neighbourhood: one Central Axis combining mostly inland waterways and rail will run East through the Ukraine and to Russia, one South-Eastern Axis will link the EU with the Balkans,

Turkey, the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea and one marine "axis" called the "Motorways of the Sea". The EU is also involved in developing transport through inland waterways through the NAIADES programme and is working bilaterally in the field of transport with BSR countries, particularly with Turkey, under the county's accession process.

The Black Sea Ring highway (BSRHW) is a separate, but major, project under Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC). If built, this road would circle the Black Sea, linking all littoral states. But many obstacles to its construction remain, not in the least, the cost but also questions about the road's added-value and the challenge of building through disputed areas such as Abkhazia.

These projects, and the growth in traffic they will generate, are bound to have a substantial environmental impact. Shipping in the Black Sea causes oil spills and other forms of contamination, generates air pollutants, including  $CO_2$ , and introduces alien species that often upset ecosystems. Ports require dredging, which pollutes the areas where the contaminated sludge is dumped, and transforms coastal landscapes.

Developing transport on inland waterways requires deepening the Danube, among other rivers, which would cause much harm to the river's ecology, and other works which also affect river ecosystems. The environmental impacts of road transport, including CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, other air pollutants and noise, are widely recognized. But rail in the BSR also has large- scale environmental impacts, particularly non-electric engines, which generate noise, greenhouse gases and other air pollutants.

### **Recommendations**

- A sustainable transport policy. In view of the region's vulnerability EU and BSR countries must take responsibility for ensuring that none of the projects and infrastructures envisaged in the area present an environmental risk or present a threat to biodiversity. BS countries should be urged to develop a coherent transport policy in this regard and the EU should provide technical support towards the strategic environmental assessment of national transport policies.
- **Environmental Impact Assessments of transport projects.** The implementation of TEN-T networks should be carried out with due consideration of likely social and environmental impacts. Public participation and transparency should be ensured and full environmental and social impact assessments carried out before the adoption of individual projects.
- Extrategic Impact Assessment of transport corridors. A common Black Sea Transport Development Scheme should be developed as a framework for decision-making. This should be based on a strategic environmental impact assessment and cost-benefit analysis. All alternatives should be considered in this context, including multi-modal transport corridor analysis and investment in sectors other that transport if they provide a higher return on investment.
- Low-impact investments first. Harmonization measures aimed at, securing inter-operability between different national networks, at facilitating border crossings and at implementing international conventions are particularly productive investments and at a relatively low environmental cost.
- A new agreement on shipping and the environment in the Black Sea. An international agreement, possibly a protocol to the Bucharest Convention, should be negotiated between the EU and Black Sea countries for the protection and rational use of the Black Sea, covering a number of issues relating to shipping safety and the environment.

# 4. Peace, Security and Environment

The Black Sea region is affected by a number of disputes and conflicts that first flared up in the early 1990s in the post-soviet area (in Transdnistria/Moldova, South Ossetia/Georgia, Abkhazia/Georgia and the triangle Armenia/Nagorno Karabakh/Azerbaijan), insurgencies in Russia (Chechnya) and Turkey (involving the Kurdish minority) as well as serious non-military disputes between neighbours (Georgia-Russia, Moldova-Ukraine or Armenia-Turkey). The region includes two significant geopolitical and military players, Turkey and Russia, and it is affected by great power rivalries and competition for resources.

Conflicts have had a considerable impact on the environment. Due to continuing tensions, many areas remain essentially unusable for activities such as agriculture and forestry. Closed borders and land degradation further constrain already marginalised areas and local communities. In addition, environment is not a top priority for the countries and entities experiencing conflict, as security and economic development are more pressing concerns. Concurrently, environmental issues such as clean up (e.g. legacies from the Soviet era) have taken a backseat, with a following degradation of the environment.

Confidence-building initiatives on environmental issues have been attempted and environmental co-operation is a promising area to promote confidence-building and conflict resolution. So far however, such projects have not yet succeeded in significantly reducing tensions in conflict areas.

In the future, if violent conflicts were to flare up again, this is likely to have serious environmental consequences. Indeed, new oil infrastructure in the area is likely to invite attacks, whether in the context of a military confrontation or of a terrorist strike, with inevitable consequences in terms of soil, water and air pollution.

### Recommendations

- Investigate linkages. The EU and its partners should address the knowledge gap on linkages between environment, security, conflict and development issues in the BSR, notably by investigating potential environmental triggers of future conflicts and by conducting environmental assessments in areas of conflict. Environment related migratory patterns ought to be identified and investigated.
- **EU** involvement. Future EU programming in the area should be made conflict-sensitive. The EU should press countries in the region to not allow disputes to block cross-border or indeed multilateral environmental co-operation. The EU should also build its own capacity in tackling environment-security linkages, as well as the capacity of their counterparts and the local stakeholders. Generally speaking, the EU must actively use the potential of existing regional organisations in order to further dialogue and co-operation.
- **EU** Commission should become an observer partner of the intergovernmental ENVSEC initiative and share best practices and lessons learnt in the areas of natural resources, conflict management and peace-building. In addition, it should aim at harmonising approaches between ENVSEC members including the organisation of joint trainings and assessment missions.
- NGOs should be considered important partners in conflict resolution and confidence-building and the EU should open grants programmes to work in this field. Environmental NGOs in particular cannot only help address the environmental effects of conflict, they can also help build confidence between parties to conflicts by addressing common environmental concerns.

# 5. Institutions for regional co-operation

Since 1991, a range of agreements, organisations and initiatives have been brought into existence in the Black Sea Region. These bring together some or all of the Black Sea countries. The region's organisation of reference, and the EU's chosen regional partner in the context of the Black Sea Synergy, is the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC). In February 2008 BSEC adopted a Joint Declaration and Action Plan calling for regional environmental co-operation, but its focus remains on economic cooperation and its concrete achievements in the field of the environment remain limited.

The Bucharest (Black Sea) Convention is the oldest of the region's environmental institutions. It has already contributed to tackling environmental challenges in the marine environment and coastal areas, but inertia has inhibited effective action and the Convention must now be updated, to at least allow the EU to join and contribute to its work.

Other organisations also serve as useful vehicles for cooperation and capacity-building to various extents, including a range of conventions intended to protect specific regions, such as the Carpathians and the Danube river, and the rapidly growing pan-European Ecological Networks. Some international bodies, finally, are dedicated to co-ordinating project development and funding. The DABLAS task force provides a successful example of such mechanisms, to be further developed or replicated.

Environmental co-operation in the BSR should benefit from exchanges or comparisons with other regional seas, namely the Baltic Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. The Baltic Sea's Northern Dimension for instance has succeeded in engaging Russia in environmental co-operation while the Mediterranean's Barcelona Process has successfully developed an extensive institutional dialogue involving many stakeholders. Its Horizon 2020 initiative, which aims to develop projects tackling the region's environmental hotspots, could also provide inspiration for the Black Sea.

#### Recommendations

- Romania and Bulgaria's role. As both EU Member States and Black Sea countries Romania and Bulgaria have a special role to play in promoting environmental co-operation in the region and their continued leadership is essential, as they help set the agenda and drive cooperation in the region.
- **EU** political guidance. The EU must provide guidance in streamlining environmental objectives into the numerous initiatives and institutions for the region, including the ENP's thematic dialogues and the Baku initiative on energy and transport.
- Inter-regional co-operation. Co-operation between the Black Sea on the one hand, and the Baltic Sea and Danube regions, on the other, appears particularly promising and would allow the involvement of other EU member states in the region. Co-operation between regional sea structures (Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission, Mediterranean Action Plan) should also be promoted.
- **EU** active and leading role. The EU must play an active and leading role in the region's institutions. It must join the Bucharest (Black Sea) convention, help improve its institutional structure and legal framework and press for increased co-operation. It should also build on existing co-operation between the European Environmental Agency (EEA) and the Bucharest Convention's secretariat as well as on BSR countries' participation in the work of the EEA

- **BSEC.** The EU must also invest in the BSEC, which can serve as a framework for the development of concrete projects, leading the Black Sea Synergy towards a co-operation similar to the Northern Dimension or the Euromed partnership.
- International funding. The DABLAS task force's remit should be extended to the co-ordination and development of projects in areas it does not yet cover, including waste, non-point sources of pollution, water use projects and flood protection. Other fora, though they have less potential, may also be used to build capacity and promote co-operation.
- **Ecological Networks.** The Black Sea Synergy should be used to support the development of the pan-European Ecological Network of protected areas (PEEN) in the region, including Natura 2000 and the Emerald Network, whose progress in the region should be monitored; all infrastructure projects envisaged or supported should be compatible with the PEEN.

# **Conclusions**

The Black Sea Synergy provides a major opportunity for the EU to promote sustainable development. The Union indeed has an essential role to play in this region in ensuring that the economic and industrial transformations that lie ahead are compatible with environmental protection. It can, and should, actively inspire environmental policy-setting and drive a process to boost international co-operation and capacity building.

At the same time, the Black Sea region presents a genuine challenge to the EU: it is comparably new and unfamiliar and remains fragmented and highly diverse. Furthermore, awareness of the region's environmental value remains low and environment does not rank highly on political agendas. BSR countries are also still relatively inexperienced in the field of international environmental cooperation.

The ability of authorities in BSR countries to deliver on policy and to implement legislation will be central in ensuring that the region's recent economic surge is environmentally sustainable. The strength of environmental institutions, prevailing attitudes to environmental protection, the rule of law and the fight against corruption will make the difference.

To help shift the BSR towards sustainable development, the EU will have to work with, and rely on, the resources of civil society. Environmental organisations in the Black Sea region are at the forefront of efforts to protect their heritage and combat projects that affect it. They are now increasingly networking at regional level.

The non-governmental sector is indeed essential in promoting awareness and putting the environment higher up on the political agenda. NGOs should therefore be considered privileged partners by policy-makers and they should be supported. A shift to sustainable development in the BSR will also require that civil society be empowered through the full implementation of the Aarhus convention and the involvement of civil society at all levels, from international processes to national policy implementation or conflict resolution.

The EU, governments and other international organisations should ensure that relevant funding programmes are tailored to the needs of, and effectively accessible to, targeted NGOs and should make sure that information on relevant programmes, projects and activities is made available to them.

# **Annex**

## **The Odessa Declaration**

A number of NGOs of the Black Sea Region meeting in Odessa in February 2008, at the invitation of the WWF and The Heinrich Böll Foundation, adopted a common statement expressing major concerns and formulating proposals aimed at their governments and the EU. The need to address the environmental impact of new projects was a prominent theme in this text, as were the need to question the excessive focus on fossil fuels in the area. Their statement is a reflection of the concerns of society in the region, and the first text expressing the views of NGOs on the future contribution of the Black Sea Synergy

# The Black Sea (BS) and the Environment (Greening the Black Sea Synergy)

Civil society position paper addressed to the BS Ministerial Conference in Kiev, February 14, 2008 – ODESSA, February 7, 2008

An alliance of Environmental NGOs,<sup>1</sup> who met in Odessa on February 7, 2008, at the invitation of the Heinrich Böll Foundation and WWF:

- Welcome the Ministerial Conference, organised by the Government of Ukraine with the participation of the EU, as an important step towards long term regional cooperation in the BS region.<sup>2</sup>
- Wish to stress the importance of the EU Black Sea Synergy, as a critical instrument to promote sustainable development, environmental protection, integration and governance, and an opportunity for "stimulating a regional dialogue with civil society" in the BS region.
- Call for greater involvement of the EU in the Black Sea regional cooperation by promoting political dialogue and sustainable development.
- Note the considerable environmental values of the Black Sea Region, the many services its natural environment provides to human society and economies and the presence in the region of particularly sensitive areas; and point out that regional environmental cooperation, can also contribute to reinforcing cooperation in the region more generally.

<sup>1.</sup> List of NGO attending the meeting is enclosed. Representatives signed in their personal capacity.

Black Sea Synergy countries include: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine, Greece.

- Highlight that climate change is leading the region to a scarcity within the natural resource base, in particular fresh water and may lead to irreversible environmental degradation, increased poverty and migration flows if immediate, coordinated and cooperative action is not taken.
- Strongly believe that national and international support for concrete environmental projects, with involvement of all stakeholders, will strengthen confidence, stability and cooperation in the so-called frozen conflicts.
- Recognise that a severe and additional pressure on the BS environment stems from recent illegal, uncontrolled and unsustainable tourism developments within existing protected areas and furthermore the privatisation of state lands will make the establishment of protected areas increasingly difficult.
- Stress that fossil and nuclear power are not solutions to climate change as fossil fuel based energy leads to further greenhouse emissions and nuclear energy poses a severe risk from its hazardous waste. These sources of energy must be phased out as a necessity for sustainable life on our planet. Oil and gas extraction from the BS shelf is a major threat to marine protected areas and wetlands.
- Are concerned by rapidly increasing environmental impact of transportation, especially shipping of oil by sea between BS countries as well through the Bosphorus Strait.
- Neglecting of modern safety standards and regulations increases probability of accidents, unfortunately exemplified by the recent one in November 2007 (Kerch accident).
- Request attention to the construction of Winter Olympic 2014 facilities within protected areas of the Sochi National Park and the buffer zone of the Caucasian State Reserve.

# NGOs request the countries of the Black Sea Region and the EU to:

- 1. Implement the Aarhus Convention to ensure civil society organizations have access to environmental information, participation and access to justice and are involved in the development, implementation and evaluation of regional sustainable development policies as well as in the reform process in every BS country.
- **2.** Ensure that civil society is able to participate effectively in the development and implementation of the Black Sea Synergy.
- **3.** Treat environmental NGOs as important peace building actors in conflicting areas and to establish a special EC grants program dealing with activities related to conflict resolution.
- **4.** Promote biodiversity conservation, notably through the establishment or strengthening of existing protected areas networks, in particular transboundary protected areas in conflict zones.
- **5.** Promote implementation of the SEA¹ and EIA² legislation (UNECE and EU) and ensure careful and proper assessment of future development plans with particular attention to protected areas.
- **6.** Support fundamental research for sound decision making. Encourage joint studies and monitoring of the state of the environment and natural resources coordinated at the level of the BS countries.
- **7.** Promote technology transfer of the best available energy conversion and end-use technologies together with decarbonisation of economies. Obsolete technologies and the waste materials produced in one country should not be exported to countries with lower standards.
- **8.** The energy end-use efficiency and renewable energy integration should be given a priority in the regional cooperation.
  - 9. Phase out existing subsidies for fossil fuels and nuclear energy.
- 10. Promote international safety rules and standards and properly coordinate the construction of oil infrastructure by BS states. Avoid duplication of terminals due to political reasons and competition.

# **NGO** participants

- Association for Sustainable Human Development, Armenia
- European Integration, Armenia
- Institute for Peace and Democracy, Azerbaijan
- Environmental Law Center "Ecolex", Azerbaijan
- Bulgarian Black Sea NGO Network, Bulgaria
- Georgian Energy Efficiency Center, Georgia
- Green Alternative, Georgia
- CEE Bankwatch Network, Georgia
- Ecotiras International Environmental Association of Rivers Keepers, Republic of Moldova
- NGO "Ecospectrum-Bender", Republic of Moldova
- Mare Nostrum, Romania
- "Save Taman'!", Russia
- Environmental Watch on North Caucasus, Russia
- Russian Geographical Society, Russia
- Black sea NGO Network, Turkey
- EUROSOLAR (Turkish Branch of EUROSOLAR European Association for Renewable Energies), Turkey
- KADOS Kadikoyu Friends of Science Culture and Art Association, Turkey
- TÜRÇEP Environmental NGOs Platform of Turkey
- BAKÇEP Western Black Sea NGOs Platform, Turkey
- MARÇEP Marmara Region Environmental NGOs Network of Turkey
- Ecoclub Ukraine, Ukraine
- Centre for Black Sea Studies, Ukraine
- Centre for Regional Studies, Ukraine
- Econad, Ukraine
- Resource & Analysis Center "Society and Environment", Ukraine
- National Ecological Centre of Ukraine
- ECOPRAVO Lviv, Ukraine
- NGO Black Sea Women's Club, Ukraine
- Youth Ecological Center, Ukraine
- Wetlands International, Ukraine
- WWF European Policy Office, Belgium
- WWF Danube-Carpathian Programme Office, Austria
- WWF Caucasus Programme Office, Georgia
- WWF Danube-Carpathian Programme Office, Ukraine



# for a living planet®

WWF is one of the world's largest and most experienced independent conservation organisations, with almost 5 million supporters and a global network active in over 100 countries. WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by conserving the world's biological diversity, ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable and promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption.

## For more information about the project:

Paloma Agrasot WWF European Policy Office Tel: +32 2 743 88 00 pagrasot@wwfepo.org www.panda.org/eu

# HEINRICH BÖLL STIFTUNG EU REGIONAL OFFICE, BRUSSELS

The Heinrich Böll Foundation sees itself as an agency for Green ideas and projects, as well as a forum for the exchange of ideas both nationally and internationally. Working together with more than 100 project partners in over 60 countries, it supports the development of democratic civil societies worldwide. The Heinrich Böll Foundation maintains offices in 24 countries. A particular focus of the Foundation's work is the promotion of sustainable development.

Roderick Kefferpütz Heinrich Böll Foundation EU Regional Office Brussels Tel: +32 2 743 41 00 kefferpuetz@boell.be www.boell.be