



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2014 - 2019

Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

2014/2214(INI)

03.8.2015

OPINION

of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

for the Committee on Regional Development

on an EU strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian region
(2014/2214(INI))

Rapporteur: Marco Affronte

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety calls on the Committee on Regional Development, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

- having regard to Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (SEA)¹,
 - having regard to Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive)²,
 - having regard to Directive 2013/30/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 June 2013 on safety of offshore oil and gas operations and amending Directive 2004/35/EC³,
 - having regard to Directive 2014/52/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 April 2014 amending Directive 2011/92/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment⁴,
1. Recognises the essential link between economic development and environmental sustainability while taking into account the principle of subsidiarity; supports the promotion of economic and social prosperity in the region, which should not be pursued to the detriment of the ecological balance and biodiversity of the fragile coastal and marine ecosystems and their natural resources; highlights the need to include in the EUSAIR concrete actions to protect the environment, including projects:
 - (a) to protect the coastline and the coastal ecosystem and to combat erosion,
 - (b) to support climate change adjustment activities and risk management projects in order to prevent human- and non-human-related natural disasters,
 - (c) to promote the implementation of quality waste management, wastewater treatment and prevention systems in the field of water resources,
 - (d) to launch surveys and comparative studies on subsidence;
 2. Advocates for the blue economy as a solution to the economic crisis, since it stimulates the creation of new jobs and economic development, and especially jobs for women and young people in coastal and island countries; believes that the EU strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region cannot be pursued without factoring in the concept of the blue economy, which links the economic sectors relating to seas and oceans, aquaculture,

¹ OJ L 197, 21.7.2001, p. 30.

² OJ L 164, 25.6.2008, p.19.

³ OJ L 178, 28.6.2013, p.66.

⁴ OJ L 124, 25.4.2014, p. 1.

maritime and river transport and tourism to environmental protection;

3. Calls on the Commission to ensure that third countries involved in projects in the macro-region comply with the relevant Union *acquis* in order to guarantee sustainable exploitation of the Union's resources; recommends that agreements and conventions be used to involve countries outside the EU in European Union environmental projects; notes also that good governance mechanisms are crucial for the implementation of environmental policy;
4. Calls on the Commission to facilitate regular dialogue between EUSAIR and Scottish partners so each can be informed of good practices and the innovative approach to integrated coastal zone management in the North Sea;
5. Recommends the Member States to exchange experiences and good practices in relation to the Danube macro-region;
6. Calls on the Commission to regularly inform and consult Parliament about the results of the implementation of EUSAIR;
7. Calls on the Commission and the states participating in the strategy to develop common projects in line with the common fisheries policy;
8. Considers the coastline and stretch of sea between the Adriatic shore of Italy and the Balkan shore to be a natural area and environment of extraordinary value which should be protected and its profile raised;
9. With this in mind, views the supplementing of the road and transport infrastructures on both sides of the Adriatic Sea, their inclusion in the north-south and east-west TEN-T networks and corridors and completion of the links missing to be a prerequisite for attaining the environmental sustainability goals of the macro-region;
10. Recommends the active promotion of eco-innovation in the areas of fishing, aquaculture, maritime transport, tourism including cruising tourism, ports and related infrastructures, in order to exploit the important potential of the region and to stimulate blue growth thus creating new jobs and to ensure the rational and sustainable exploitation of marine resources in accordance with the Integrated Maritime Policy; supports the promotion of innovative, efficient and sustainable maritime freight and passenger transport services that can reduce transit times, transport and logistic costs and externalities and, above all, CO₂ emissions, and which dovetail with the adoption of low environmental impact mobility plans;
11. Calls on the Commission to promote the development of fisheries activities that are sustainable environmentally and in terms of the preservation of fish stocks, and also to promote integrated fisheries and tourism policies (fisheries tourism, mariculture, recreational fishing), in line with the principle of sustainability;
12. Recalls that commercially exploited fish and shellfish should be within safe biological limits in order to achieve good environmental status and safeguard the long-term sustainability of the fishing industry;

13. Encourages the expansion of conservation areas to protect the environment and halt biodiversity loss, particularly through the enhancement of the Natura 2000 and Emerald networks, and the LIFE programme; highlights the importance of the preservation of endangered species and calls upon relevant Member States to implement through this macro-regional strategy proportionate measures to fulfil this objective; encourages Member States to invest further efforts in combating marine littering, in particular regarding waste pollution in the Adriatic islands;
14. Stresses the need for a comprehensive plan to combat sea pollution and the natural and man-made hazards and risks caused by climate change mainly flooding, drought, soil erosion and forest fires;
15. Stresses that pressure on marine and coastal ecosystems can be reduced through better understanding of biodiversity and that exchange of best practices between their managing authorities further enhances biodiversity;
16. Calls for a minimum objective of 10 % surface coverage by 2020 of the Adriatic and Ionian Seas by marine protected areas, in accordance with relevant international commitments and in support of achieving good environmental status in the Union's marine environment by 2020, in accordance with the Marine Strategy Framework Directive; calls for the establishment of a network of protected marine, coastal and inland areas and parks; encourages the Member States involved in the strategy to improve the environmental quality by carrying out projects seeking to cut chemical, physical and microbiological pollution by optimising the sustainability of maritime traffic, protecting biodiversity and investing in protected marine areas; calls, in this connection, on the Member States involved to promote integrated systems for environmental observation and monitoring of protected marine areas and to step up cooperation between regional environmental monitoring centres;
17. Expresses grave concern at the renewed interest in exploration and exploitation of oil and gas, both offshore and on land, especially in areas already heavily affected by significant environmental consequences; considers it important that relevant studies are carried out for the macro-region; stresses that exploration and exploitation of oil and gas must accord with the aims of the integrated maritime policy and maritime planning and that the focus of energy production should generally be on renewable energy, for example offshore wind power; emphasises that the Adriatic is a closed, shallow sea, which lacks the capacity to disperse pollutants and has a flourishing tourist trade on both its shores, and that the macro-region's growth should first depend on tourism and on economic activities linked to its specific environmental features and ecosystems; underlines the need for the Member States in the region to be consistent in implementing EU legislation and international conventions on environmental sustainability and the safety of maritime activities such as offshore oil and gas exploration and the development, installation and operation of offshore wind turbines; calls therefore for the full implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (2008/56/EC) and of the Safety of Offshore Oil and Gas Operations Directive (2013/30/EU); encourages, in view of macro-regional cooperation, the establishment of a system for intervention in case of accidents;
18. Highlights the link between the protection of the environment and the development

of sustainable tourism; encourages, in that regard, the region to pursue the development of sustainable tourism thus avoiding negative effects on the environment;

19. Calls on the Commission to step up exchanges of good practices such as the sustainable projects developed by the Coastal Action Groups;
20. Urges Member States to actively involve local authorities, communities, the civil society and other stakeholders in the implementation of the macro-regional strategy, so that they are able to exercise their right to participate in decision-making related to their local environment and public health when these are put in danger by pollution or by invasive or environmentally harmful infrastructures not compliant with the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive (2014/52/EU); invites Member States to share with the relevant authorities in neighbouring countries the findings of analyses of the impact of maritime economic activities that fall within the scope of the EIA Directive and those coming under Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment;
21. Recognises the fact that many regional communities declared themselves as GMO free zones; recommends, in that respect, cooperation and coordination in the framework of the EUSAIR in order to ensure protection against GMO contamination;
22. Endorses the Commission's view that a centre for the prevention of natural and non-natural disasters should be set up for the Adriatic and Ionian macro-region;
23. Encourages cooperation between the Member States' hydrometeorological institutes to achieve better coordination in tackling extreme weather events, climate change consequences, and disaster risk management;
24. Recognises water, agriculture and tourism as the sectors most vulnerable to climate change, therefore encourages cooperation between national authorities in order to establish a framework and a support mechanism for the implementation of adaptation and mitigation measures;
25. Recognises the high potential of underused renewable energy sources in the macro-region; encourages investing in further efforts to encourage and promote macro-regional energy cooperation in the context of the Energy Union which would involve Member States and non-Member States in order to achieve the climate and energy goals of the EU for 2030;
26. Encourages the Member States to pursue the development of an environmentally friendly transport sector, including but not limited to railroad infrastructure, especially in terms of cross-border infrastructure development; encourages the development of multimodal transport and integrated ticketing;
27. Encourages the use of the regulation on the monitoring, reporting and verification of emissions from maritime transport (Regulation (EU) 2015/757) for innovation and establishment of sustainable maritime transport in the macro-region by using alternative marine propulsion engines and fuels to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve energy efficiency in the transport sector.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	15.7.2015
Result of final vote	+: 56 -: 8 0: 3
Members present for the final vote	Marco Affronte, Pilar Ayuso, Catherine Bearder, Ivo Belet, Simona Bonafè, Biljana Borzan, Lynn Boylan, Cristian-Silviu Buşoi, Nessa Childers, Alberto Cirio, Mireille D'Ornano, Miriam Dalli, Seb Dance, Angélique Delahaye, Jørn Dohrmann, Ian Duncan, Stefan Eck, Bas Eickhout, Eleonora Evi, José Inácio Faria, Francesc Gambús, Iratxe García Pérez, Elisabetta Gardini, Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy, Jens Gieseke, Julie Girling, Sylvie Goddyn, Matthias Groote, Françoise Grossetête, Andrzej Grzyb, Jytte Guteland, György Hölvényi, Anneli Jäätteenmäki, Jean-François Jalkh, Benedek Jávor, Kateřina Konečná, Giovanni La Via, Peter Liese, Norbert Lins, Jiří Maštálka, Valentinas Mazuronis, Susanne Melior, Miroslav Mikolášik, Massimo Paolucci, Gilles Pargneaux, Piernicola Pedicini, Bolesław G. Piecha, Pavel Poc, Marcus Pretzell, Michèle Rivasi, Daciana Octavia Sârbu, Annie Schreijer-Pierik, Davor Škrlec, Renate Sommer, Dubravka Šuica, Jadwiga Wiśniewska, Damiano Zoffoli
Substitutes present for the final vote	Paul Brannen, Nicola Caputo, Fredrick Federley, James Nicholson, Marit Paulsen, Gabriele Preuß, Keith Taylor, Tom Vandenkendelaere
Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote	Lucy Anderson, Malin Björk, Jiří Maštálka