

Press statement

On the occasion of 31th of October International Black Sea Action Day 2007

Black Sea Greens say:

CURE THE BLACK SEA!

On the occasion of 31th of October 2007 the International Black Sea Day the Black Sea Greens have issued a statement in which they call for an Urgency Meeting of the Black Sea Countries to take further measures to save the Black Sea from continuing pollution and excessive fishery. 'The Black Sea is very ill from continuing pollution, loss of biodiversity and excessive fishery. The collapse of fish stocks has taken place, it is necessary to implement existing measures as well as to take new measures to cure the Black Sea and save it from further environmental degradation.' The Green Parties from the countries around the Black Sea also ask attention for the need to fight corruption and stimulate further democratisation. 'There is a clear link between existing pollution and excessive fishery in the Black Sea and the lack of rule of law, the weak implementation of existing (international agreements) and corruption. Citizens and representatives of NGO's are often hindered and harassed in their actions to protest. This may not happen, in the contrary they should be helped in their efforts' so say the Greens from the Black Sea

Statement of the Green Parties and Political Movements around the Black Sea on the occasion of 31th of October 2007 International Black Sea Action Day

Cure the Black Sea!

1. The Black Sea is very ill from continuing pollution, loss of biodiversity and excessive fishery. The collapse of fish stocks has taken place. As a semi-closed sea it belongs to one of the more fragile maritime regions in the world. The intense pollution by the surrounding countries that now goes on for already many decades has taken a heavy toll on the quality of the water and the sea-life as such.

Urgency Meeting of Black Sea Countries to decide on new measures is needed

2. Our governments do not seem to take this catastrophe as serious as is needed. As Green Parties we think it urgently needed to leave business as usual and we call therefore for an Urgency Meeting of Black Sea Countries to not only discuss and evaluate the recent data but to take immediate measures to stop pollution, establish biodiversity controls and implement drastic fishing limits. Global warming has become an undeniable fact, the current problems of the Black Sea Region will be aggravated by this trend. It is high time to step up action to cure the Black Sea.

Pollution by insufficiently treated sewage and over fertilisation by nitrogen continues

3. The over fertilisation of the Black Sea by nitrogen and phosphorus compounds, coming largely from agricultural, domestic and industrial sources (a process called eutrophication) has changed the entire Black Sea ecosystem. The compounds enter the sea from sources in the 17 countries in its drainage area. The coastal countries contribute roughly 70 % of the total amount and almost all the remaining amount enters the sea via the Danube River. Furthermore the annual discharge of more than half a billion cubic metres of insufficiently treated sewage continues and introduces microbiological contaminants into the Black Sea. This can pose great threats to human health and may hamper the development of sustainable tourism and aquaculture.

Curbing fishing in the Black Sea is not anymore enough for a cure

4. Recent scientific research confirms what many fishermen already knew: excessive fishing in the Black Sea has triggered major changes in the marine ecosystem, The collapse of fish stocks altered the sea's food chain, triggering a "regime shift" that allowed a species of invasive jellyfish to bloom, they said. But curbing fishing will not be enough to return the habitat to a stable state unless pollution and biodiversity controls are also adopted scientists warned recently in a study that has entered the Proceedings of the United Kingdom's National Academy of Sciences.

Fighting corruption and further democratisation is needed

5. Rule of law, good governance and fighting corruption are needed to strengthen the efforts to cure the Black Sea. Controls on pollution and excessive fishery should be strengthened and those who are violating the rules should be brought to court, as well as those civil servants that are not exercising their duties according to the needs.

Citizens and Civil Organisations in action for the environment have to be supported not to be harassed

6. Our governments should realise that many citizens and civil organisations are strongly dedicated to save the environment and the Black Sea. They should be valued strongly and supported, not to be harassed. Recently 15 environmentalists were put in jail because they were in action against deposition of nuclear waste. In Turkey due to lack of public participation in a new constitution, we fear that environmental issues will be not be taken up adequately.

Act immediately

7. The Black Sea is of great ecological, social and economic value for all surrounding countries. We cannot deal with the problems country by country, only by effective international cooperation there may be a chance on success. It is therefore that on the occasion of the International Black Sea Day 2007 we call upon our fellow citizens, civil society and on our governments and all international institutions to act immediately. Cure the Black Sea!

The Green Parties and Political Movements of

<i>Turkey</i>	<i>Yesiller, Greens of Turkey</i>
<i>Bulgaria</i>	<i>Green Party</i>
<i>Romania</i>	<i>Verzii, The Green Party</i>
<i>Moldova</i>	<i>Partidul Ecologist din Moldova. Alliante Verde (PEM AVE)</i>
<i>Ukraine</i>	<i>Partija Zelenykh Ukrainy, Party of Green's of Ukraine Green Party of Ukraine</i>
<i>Russian Federation</i>	<i>Zelenaya Alternativa (GROZA) Green Russia, Ecological Faction in Yablokov Party</i>
<i>Georgia</i>	<i>Sakartsvelo's mtsvaneta partia, Party of Greens</i>