

## ***Cooperation, Democracy, Sustainability That's needed around the Black Sea***

### **1 - Towards a Black Sea of the Citizens**

Violence and conflict as well as political and economic instability are key words for the situation at this moment in the Black Sea region.

Instead of cooperation, it is conflict, instead of harmony it is ethnic and national tensions that reign the public domain. This cannot go on; change is needed if we want to be able to deal with the current financial, economic and ecological crisis also affecting our countries deeply.

Black Sea Economic Cooperation started in the beginning of the nineties, but seems to have lost itself in a mirade of institutions, bureaucracy and total lack of ambition. Political, economic and ecological cooperation is however urgently needed to tackle the consequences of the war between the Russian Federation and Georgia, the shaken financial structures in some of the countries and the consequences of global warming.

The citizens of the countries of Black Sea region do not benefit from the competition between nations and big powers, the contrary they are the victims when competitions become violent.

This is a grim picture, that's why new energy is needed to overcome the inertia of the existing cooperation structures of the Black Sea countries. This situation has been discussed by the Green Parties of the Black Sea Countries gathering in Istanbul at the occasion of the International Black Sea Day.

First of all we call upon the citizens of the countries and their civil organisations to take their responsibility. Where governments fail in effective cooperation, citizens and their organisations should play their role in communication, dialogue and common initiatives. A lack of democratic culture in institutions and society can only be overcome by open, honest attempts to cooperate based upon respect of mutual interests.

The European Union, with Bulgaria and Romania as recent member states, is now directly a part of the Black Sea Area. This should be followed by concrete steps to live up to the expectations. The recently started Black Sea Synergy should be welcomed as a first step in the right direction, as it is not duplicating existing cooperation structures.

The Russian Federation has great responsibility in the region as it is the follow up structure to a great part of the former USSR. The now independent states ask for good neighbourship and good partnership, not for conflict and confrontation. Support should be given to the so-called five plus two negotiations concerning Transdnistria. We have learned that we cannot allow ourselves to live with 'frozen conflicts'.

The authoritarian development in the Russian Federation, the lack of freedom of organisation, the lack of freedom of expression is by many seen as a threat to existing rights and freedoms. Also the lack of democracy and freedom in the other states of the Black Sea region makes the peaceful solution much more difficult. Lack of democracy makes people open and fragile to the nationalistic manipulations, and authoritarian development becomes a vicious circle. We need a complete democracy, openness and freedom in all the Black Sea countries.

Militarist approaches to the problems are not solution to the ongoing conflicts. We strongly object arms trade to the conflict zones. The people in the Black Sea region need the strong relations on the basis of cultural and economic life, not by the arms and ammunition.

The Black Sea region has great cultural and ethnic diversity. We consider this a richness which should be protected, rather than accepting as a source of tension.

The war between Russian Federation and Georgia has caused great reverberations around the world and has great consequences for the international relations. The recognition by Russia of cesseded regions of Georgia cannot be excepted as it only hardens the conflict. An independent investigation on the environmental consequences of the war is necessary (as has been after the intervention in Kosova) to assess the damage and to see where assistance can be given.

The struggle for power over energy resources as natural gas and oil and the transport by pipelines over land is a direct contribution to instability.

The next president of the United States has to take into account that the existing wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have great consequences for big parts of the Black Sea Region. Further instability has to be prevented and for this the responsibility of the USA is great. This also applies to Turkey as a major power in this region: ethnic conflicts have to be solved not by violence or less democracy but by including more citizens in a free and open discussion.

## **2 - Global Warming - Priority to Tackle: Go Eco**

Global warming is the biggest challenge that we face also in the Black Sea region. Water and food crisis are among the major threats. Overcoming climate change in the coming decades needs decisive actions. None of the countries can face the consequences of climate change, while increasing its dependency to fossil fuels and carbon dioxide emissions. We support the leading action of EU to decrease the emissions into a clear target, but we do not consider these targets sufficient. Energy-Climate Package which is discussed by the EU leaders proposes the 20% decrease in the emissions and 20% increase the share of renewable energy in 2020. We call EU not to give up, but improve these targets, and we call the governments of the Black Sea countries to take these targets as guidance for their position in their national energy and climate policies, as well as climate talks in Poznan in December 2008.

Nuclear power is not solution to the climate change. Nuclear is not an option for any of the energy problems, also because of its high costs, radioactive wastes and great risks. We call for a nuclear-free Black Sea. We call all the governments in the region, namely Turkey, Ukraine, Russia, Bulgaria and Romania who plans new nuclear power plants, to stop their nuclear projects. We need a common energy policy based on energy saving, energy efficiency and renewable resources, such as wind, solar, and geothermal. Black Sea countries are still have long way to go for an energy efficient model. We call the governments to invest and make legislative changes mainly for the energy efficiency. This would be the most effective, cheapest and most peaceful way to tackle the climate change as well as having a sustainable energy policy. Euratom exists as a institution to promote nuclear power, instead a Europe wide institution is needed to give a strong impuls to end the addiction to fossil fuels and nuclear power and concentrate on the change to renewable energy

### **3 - Topical Environmental Questions**

A -

Reports concerning the Winter Olympic Games scheduled for Sochi in 2010 in the Russian Federation give cause for alarm. It is reported that inhabitants are forced to leave their land and that construction causes undue environmental damage. This would be in violation of the Olympic Charter, therefore we ask urgently for an independent investigation.

B -

Meeting in Turkey the Black Sea Greens paid special attention to the national situation Turkey became a country which is a positive example for how a clear and determined opposition to the nuclear energy can become successful. The nuclear projects of Turkish government collapsed once more last month, when only one company dared to apply for Akkuyu nuclear power plant tender. This is the result of the struggle of Turkish Greens and other antinuclear activists. We call all the governments to take this example as the expected outcome of the miserable status of nuclear industry all over the world.

Coal power plants cannot be accepted neither, while the major cuts for the greenhouse gas emissions needed to prevent irreversible climate changes. Turkish government intends to give way to the new and huge coal power plants mainly on the Black Sea costs of Turkey, namely Samsun, Sinop, Zonguldak, and Bartin. These new coal power plants will result the pollution which will harm the environmental and public health, as well as destroy the natural life. Also new coal power will make to reduce CO2 emissions impossible. We call Turkish government and all the Black Sea governments to stop the projects and declare a moratorium for new coal power plants.

Natural environment of the Eastern Black Sea region of Turkey is under another major environmental threat because of small hydro power stations which will be built in small streams and creeks. These hydro power stations keep the water flows of the streams up from the source, and transfer the water via a closed system until it falls from a high altitude in order to get high kinetic energy to produce electricity. This technology results the drying up the valleys, destroying habitats of the endemic biodiversity in the region, and ruining the cultural life of indigenous people. We call the Turkish government to stop these small hydro power projects in the Black Sea region.

The 600 km of motor highways which was built on the natural coastline of Eastern Black

Sea region of Turkey resulted another environmental disaster in the Black Sea. This disaster unfortunately could not be prevented on time in spite of the opposition of environmentalists and Black Sea People. Now the Turkish government seems to intend to continue to build more motor highways also on the Western Black Sea region and to connect this highway to the scheduled new bridge on the Bosphorus. This project means destroying all the remaining natural coastlines, forests and biodiversity in the region.

Armenia	Green Party of Armenia
Azerbaijan	Party of Greens Azerbaijan
Bulgaria	Green Bulgaria - Bulgarian Greens
Georgia	The Greens Party of Georgia
Moldova	Green Alliance – Ecological Party of Moldova
Romania	The Green Party
Russia	Green Russia
Ukraine	Green Party of Ukraine
Greece	Ecologists Greens
Turkey	Green Party of Turkey