

13th European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT) (Ljubljana, Slovenia: 16-17 September 2003) on "Implementation of strategies and visions for sustainable spatial development of the European continent"

Resolution No. 3 on The prevention of floods and better co-ordination of all activities designed to minimise the risks and consequences of disastrous floods

*adopted at the 13th session of the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT), in Ljubljana, on 17 September 2003*

The ministers responsible for regional planning of the member states of the Council of Europe, with regard to the objective of sustainable development of the European territory,

- taking into account the frequency of floods causing important damage and noting that they can neither be understood nor mastered by local or national authorities alone, but require international co-operation, at least for the entire catchment areas of those river basins that belong to several states,
- deploring the loss of human lives, injuries and the great losses of economic resources and cultural, natural and landscape heritage, caused by the recent disastrous floods,
- conscious of the fact that natural catastrophes are also caused, or at least aggravated, by human activities, from modern production techniques in agriculture and forestry to construction of all kinds,
- underlining the particular role and responsibility of local authorities which have the necessary knowledge of their territories and must assume their responsibility in the face of citizens and enterprises affected by floods,
- adding that every approach must, of course, also include the role of local, regional and national authorities and, if necessary, of international institutions, which must assume their part of responsibilities, in particular with regard to their obligation to establish the conditions for cross-border and transnational co-operation by local governments,

reconfirm, first of all, their determination to undertake, within their own fields of responsibilities and in co-operation with other ministries of their governments, all appropriate action to reduce the negative effects of human activities;

commit themselves:

- to work out guidelines on the permissible use of land likely to be flooded;
- to establish an international working group charged with drafting a model of cross-border co-operation which could serve as a framework for the promotion of sustainable territorial development in each of the relevant river basins, in close co-operation with the competent local, regional and national authorities;
- to support meaningful activities designed to work out a first draft of a comprehensive concept of more effective international co-operation in the field of flood prevention by means of spatial planning, including a fairer sharing of costs and benefits resulting from preventive measures;

request the Committee of Senior Officials of the CEMAT to report on the progress achieved.