

9th European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning (CEMAT) (Ankara, Turkey: 4-5 November 1991) on "Instruments for achieving rational use of land"

Resolution No. 1 on Improving the instruments for rational use of land

The ministers attending the ninth meeting of the European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional/Spatial Planning, which was held in Ankara on 4 and 5 November 1991;

Having taken note of the report submitted by the Turkish minister,

Recalling that the first priority was to develop, on the basis of the principles adopted in 1988 at the Lausanne Conference, instruments for promoting, implementing and managing a policy of judicious and restrained use of land and, in particular,

- information and monitoring instruments;
- regulatory and administrative instruments;
- socio-political instruments,

Taking into consideration the review of member countries' experiences, which has revealed that a large array of Instruments for rational use of land exists in each country, but that the effectiveness of any instrument is ultimately a product of the political will for its implementation;

Noting that regional/spatial planning contributes to the pursuit of the goal of sustainable development, defined as improved quality of life and living conditions and the equitable distribution of natural resources between present and future generations;

i. Re-affirm the following fundamental principles on which any regional and spatial land-use policy should be based:

- land should be used rationally by reconciling the temporal and spatial requirements of economic and social development and the need to protect, qualitatively and quantitatively, this limited natural resource which cannot be increased and can be reclaimed only with difficulty;

- political choices and priorities involving land use should be more clearly defined and co-ordinated by/at the various decision-making and executive sectors and levels; better intra-sectoral and inter-sectoral co-ordination is essential when such choices are made;
- short-term approaches should be based on long-range thinking and forward-looking approaches, while taking into account the precautionary principle, with specific emphasis on the need and the right of future generations to have enough land for their requirements;
- local decisions should be taken within a coherent system of the widest possible regional/spatial development and planning in the light of the prospects for lasting development in the future;

ii. Agree to the principle of a European strategy for the rational use and conservation of natural resources;

iii. Believe that, in order to improve the existing situation,

- all Interested parties and decision makers should be alerted to the concerns of rational use of land. In this connection, training should receive due importance in the process of building awareness;
- the importance of “well-tailored” information should be recognised for purposes of long-range decision making, constant reappraisal of goals, monitoring and developing efficient communication between decision makers and people at large;
- transparency of decision making should be a major goal so as to encourage public participation, cherish private initiative and promote public and private co-operation;
- global impact assessment studies, not just environmental but also socio-economic, should be recognised and adopted by all governments as an essential tool of any policy for the rational planning of land use;

iv. Emphasise that:

- international co-operation to promote exchange of information and experience and prospective research into future possibilities for the balanced development and rational use of land at European level should be developed and strengthened;
- overall medium- and long-term priorities should be increasingly studied, specified and defined at European level; implementation however should be a matter for national, regional and local authorities as a rule;

In this context, they propose to implement this policy by considering the results of seminars and experts' work undertaken in the inter-sessional period;

v. Recommend to governments that they show strong political commitment and take all measures to create the legal and administrative framework needed to increase the effectiveness of instruments for rational use of land;

vi. Recommend to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe that it agree to the proposals made in Resolution No. 1 on soil protection by ministers attending the 6th European Environmental Conference;

vii. Instruct the Committee of Senior Officials to:

- co-operate with the European Ministerial Conference of the Environment on the proposal to draw up a framework convention for soil protection, both qualitatively and quantitatively;

- consider ways and means of making the European Regional/Spatial Planning Charter and the European Regional/Spatial Planning Strategy more operational;

- study the possibilities of setting up a system of technical co-operation between national institutes specialising in data collection on the rational use of land, to form the basis for a European regional/spatial planning strategy.