Greening the Mediterranean

Europe's Environmental Policy Toward Mediterranean Neighbors

Publication

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Twenty-one countries share the Mediterranean's coastline, with no single country responsible for its environmental deterioration or its protection. They are collectively responsible for both. Over four decades, the environmental dimension of Europe's policy toward its Mediterranean neighbours has become increasingly prominent. This article by Pamela Lesser, Fellow with Ecologic Institute, Washington DC, published in the Mediterranean Quarterly, Volume 20, Issue 2, deals with Europe's environmental policy toward its Mediterranean neighbours and the newly launched Union for the Mediterranean.

By combining political cooperation with environmental diplomacy, the Union for the Mediterranean may prove the most strategic method of combating environmental degradation and offer a pragmatic model to other regions coping with shared environmental concerns.

The central place of environmental projects in the Union for the Mediterranean, launched in July 2008, is the clearest indication of the growing place of the environment in Mediterranean cooperation. Growing public and political awareness of environmental problems in the region encourages a more concerted approach, embracing United Nations, European Union, and national initiatives â and a more "singular" approach to shared challenges.

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