

# Black Sea regional policy approach

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The Council held a brief exchange of views on a communication from the Commission on a new regional cooperation initiative for the Black Sea region. It adopted a series of conclusions in which it underlined that following the accession of two Black Sea littoral states, Bulgaria and Romania, the EU's interest in furthering stability and prosperity in the Black Sea area has become even greater.

The Council invited the future Presidencies and the European Commission to continue work on an enhanced and coherent EU engagement in and with the Black Sea area, particularly in the framework of a strengthened European Neighbourhood Policy and building on synergies with regional bodies and initiatives.

The aim should be to intensify regional cooperation in sectors of cross-border relevance such as energy, the environment, transport, telecommunications, science and technology, freedom, justice and security, as well as democracy, human rights promotion, respect for international law and civil society cooperation.

Given the strategic importance of the Black Sea area to the EU, the Council invites the Commission to carry out a review during the first half of 2008 of the development of the "Black Sea Synergy Initiative", as a basis for further consideration by the Council of its engagement towards the region as a whole.