

Utilizing environmental diplomacy to ease the Greek-Turkish dispute over the Aegean Sea

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Introduction

“The window to take urgent climate action is closing rapidly. Unless countries dramatically scale up their efforts to counter the climate crisis, the world faces a global catastrophe”.¹ In this concise statement, the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres expressed his own thoughts about climate change during last COP27 in Egypt. It is a matter of fact that the previous discussion upon “climate change” seems to be obsolete as we already face a climate crisis. Even though governments acknowledge this alarming situation by including specific action plans for climate crisis,² geopolitical competitions all over the world set back the fight against the problem. That is also the case for the Greek-Turkish relations and the ongoing status in the Aegean Sea.

Indeed, since 1970’s, when Turkey chose to transfer geopolitical competition with Greece from Cyprus to the Aegean Sea, many issues have held in a state of abeyance, due to, among other factors, the disagreement between the two sides about whether the dispute is a political or a legal one and whether there is one or more issues to be settled. These different approaches paved the way for the degradation of the environmental challenges, as most of them were taken into account only as a matter of low politics in comparison with other issues of high politics. Issues like the protection of biodiversity and maritime life from extensive fishing activities, the protection of the seabed from unilateral illegal actions in zones without delimitation and the controversy of the international law -especially the International Law of the Sea- have to be taken into consideration in a more holistic way as environmental and -not only- geopolitical challenges.³

Under these circumstances, bearing in mind that the EU is perceived as a normative / regulatory power and leader of a rule-based international order⁴ with dedication and great

¹ UNEP, News, Stories & Speeches, Story, Climate Action, “World headed for climate catastrophe without urgent action: UN Secretary-General”, 27/10/2022, <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/world-headed-climate-catastrophe-without-urgent-action-un-secretary-general>.

² Ντόκος Θ. (2023), «Ποιο πρέπει να είναι το δόγμα εθνικής ασφαλείας», *Καθημερινή*, 2 Απριλίου, https://www.kathimerini.gr/politics/foreign-policy/562208218/poio-prepei-na-einai-to-dogma-ethnikis-afaleias/?fbclid=IwAR3TyQ6NaQTWHfh1vtIao4_9Ukm6K5eT_6qEnQQohz9QzDcwWrT1zflsk.

³ Alongside these environmental issues, the reduction of plastic waste is also added as another bothering issue that prerequisites bilateral cooperation between Greece and Turkey, in: Stergiou A., Tsikas T., Tsitselikis K. & Heraclides A. (2023), “Towards a different approach to Greek-Turkish relations: the logic of mutual benefit with emphasis on the environmental dimension”, *ELIAMEP*, Policy Paper #139/2023, p. 4. The author of the present policy paper does not share the same perception regarding the context and the ideas presented in the policy paper above, yet, it recognizes “plastic waste” as an additional issue that demands bilateral coordination in order to be tackled.

⁴ Στεφάνου Κ. Α. (2020), «Οι Εξωτερικές σχέσεις της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης και το trade-off μεταξύ αποτελεσματικότητας και συναίνεσης» στο Γκόφας Α., Ευαγγελόπουλος Γ. Λ. & Κοππά Μ. (επιμ.), *Ένας Αιώνας Διεθνών Σχέσεων 1919-2019*, Αθήνα: Πεδίο, σελ. 489.

contribution not only to environmental issues⁵ but also with respect to international law, this policy paper seeks to depict the environmental challenges that both Greece and Turkey should address in the Aegean Sea. The International Ocean Governance Agenda 2022 (IOGA), an important political tool published by the EEAS under the supervision of the European Commission and the High Representative of the Union,⁶ given the pressure of the worrying environmental and climate issues in the broader region of Eastern Mediterranean, seems apt to tackle them.

As such, this policy paper proposes solutions, in line with the context of the IOGA 2022 that could pave the way for the delimitation of the EEZ and Continental Shelf, under the auspices of the EEAS and the EU, in respect of the international law and specifically the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). In other words, how could the EU through EEAS establish a functional “climate diplomacy” between Greece and Turkey for a peaceful dispute settlement under the scope of marine environmental challenges?

Taking a step back before bringing to the forefront both the context of the IOGA and the role that EEAS could play in this venture, it is necessary to bring into the spotlight the context of the Greek-Turkish relations regarding these issues over the last few years.

Greek-Turkish relations under the scope of environmental challenges

Overfishing and the loss of biodiversity

For decades, one of the main problems between the two countries was fishing.⁷ Both sides tend to present this issue as if it is only a matter of economic exploitation of the natural resources of the sea or part of the broader political dispute. In fact, over the years, overfishing has become a severe environmental challenge as well. The problem derives from the fact that Greece exercising fishing activities in accordance with the European fishing / environmental regulations, has sovereignty and full control over maritime life only within six nautical miles of its shores, the zone known as “territorial waters”. According to the UNCLOS, outside the territorial waters, in absence of EEZ, is the “High Sea”, where there is an absence of state sovereignty. Given that the largest

⁵ Λιαργκόβας Π. & Παπαγεωργίου Χ. (2018), *Το Ευρωπαϊκό Φαινόμενο: Ιστορία, Θεσμοί, Πολιτικές*, Θεσσαλονίκη: Τζιόλα, 2^η έκδοση, σελ. 635-648.

⁶ EEAS, Climate, Environment & Energy, International Ocean Governance, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/climate-environment-energy_en#1093.

⁷ Συρίγος Α. Μ. (2015), *Ελληνοτουρκικές Σχέσεις*, Αθήνα: Πατάκης, σελ. 209.

fishing fields in the Aegean Sea are located outside Greek territorial waters, Turkey has the opportunity there to exercise its fishing rights to a greater extent, without being influenced by European regulations. These regulations ensure that, by respecting the proper methods, periods, and locations of fishing, such human activities do not harm maritime life. In other words, while Greek fishing ships abstain from fishing activities, e.g., from July to October, in respect of the European regulations for the protection of the offspring of many species, Turkish fishing ships continue exercising these activities without being monitored, and thus, jeopardize the maritime ecosystem of the Aegean Sea.⁸ It's worth mentioning that, according to the National Statistic Service of Greece, the available fishing population in the Aegean for the years 2002-2010 was reduced from approximately 71.812 to 58.618 tones.⁹

It is worth mentioning that the European Commission holds exclusive competences regarding fishing among the Member States,¹⁰ a policy field that tends to be shifted from a solely economic to an environmental issue as well. In 1983 the European Council adopted the 170/1983 Regulation, recommending each Member State claim their own exclusive fishing zone.¹¹ Greece was an unfortunate exception by not claiming its zones, despite the fact that the European recommendations on these issues returned several times with other Regulations like 3760/1992 and 2371/2002. The last Regulation upon fishing zones was the 1380/2013 which, according to article 20, expanded the protection and management of fish to twelve nautical miles.¹² In addition, the EU's competences on fishing issues are based on the acceptance of UNCLOS as part of the communitarian law,¹³ a fact that could also be used by Greece to resolve the issue.

On top of that, IOGA also seems to share common concerns on fishing issues, as it prioritizes the protection of biodiversity at seas and the combating/monitoring of overfishing in favor of ocean sustainability. The Agenda also gives great importance to UNCLOS, considering it a prerequisite for rule-based multilateralism. Even though fishing zones are not mentioned in the Convention expressly, they are widely accepted as part of customary law, a situation that tends to

⁸ Συρίγος Α., Ντόκος Θ. (2020), «Τουρκικές διεκδικήσεις σε Αιγαίο και Ανατολική Μεσόγειο: Αλφαβητάρι των Ελληνοτουρκικών Σχέσεων», *Καθημερινή*, ειδική έκδοση, σελ. 31.

⁹ Συρίγος Α. Μ. (2015), *ό.π.*, σελ.747-748.

¹⁰ Συρίγος Α., Ντόκος Θ. (2020), *ό.π.*

¹¹ Βαληνάκης Γ. (2020), *Η Ελλάς των Τεσσάρων Θαλασσών: Το Σχέδιο «Ελλάς επί Τέσσερα*, Αθήνα: Ι. Σιδέρης, σελ. 242.

¹² Συρίγος Α., Ντόκος Θ. (2020), *ό.π.*

¹³ Βαληνάκης Γ. (2020), *ό.π.*, σελ. 243.

be established with many provisions of the Convention as a whole. Given that, the aforementioned legal frame and -of course- the necessary political willingness for cooperation could lead to specific proposals connected with short and long-term goals.

Meanwhile, there is the challenge of unilateral activities in non-delimited areas of the Continental Shelf, a situation that, several times in the past, ignited severe crises between Greece and Turkey (e.g., 1976 and 1987). This completes the wider picture of the Greek-Turkish relations regarding this policy field. The next part briefly illustrates the history and ongoing situation in the region regarding this pressing challenge.

Unilateral activities in non-delimited areas of Continental Shelf

The delimitation of the Continental Shelf in the Eastern Mediterranean is perhaps one the most challenging regional issue that the Mediterranean countries face, due to geopolitical competition that arises from competing interests. It's indicative that IOGA not only highlights the threats caused by unilateral and arbitrary actions taken in Continental Shelf against environmental protection, but also points out peaceful dispute settlement (in line with international law) as its number one priority.¹⁴ Given that, it is clear that the EU places great importance on the issue, considering the long and complex background for both Greece and Turkey.

Indeed, the Greek-Turkish dispute over this issue could certainly be examined in a separate policy paper, as it dates back to the 1970's and has innumerable factors to be considered. For this reason, this issue will be elaborated within the environmental framework, avoiding the very specific legal content.

Greece's interest on the exploitation of the Continental Shelf dates back to 1959 and more systematically to 1969, when the Greek authorities granted permissions for extensive maritime research in the Aegean. Turkey, having not protested previously against the Greek initiatives, expressed for the first time its own interests in research of the Aegean Continental Shelf in 1973 by granting permissions to the Turkish Petroleum Company (TPAO) for research activities.¹⁵ Since

¹⁴ European Commission & High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (2022), *Setting the course for a sustainable blue planet – Joint Communication on the EU's International Ocean Governance agenda*, (Brussels, 24.6.2022 JOIN (2022) 28 final), https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-06/join-2022-28_en.pdf.

¹⁵ Συρίγος Α., Ντόκος Θ. (2020), *ό.π.*, σελ. 43.

then, both sides started constructing their legal arguments against each other, while at the same time the threat of a military conflict was present. 1982 was a turning point as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea was signed. Even though UNCLOS consolidated Greek arguments regarding the Continental Shelf, the abstract wording of its articles (Article 83-Delimitation of the Continental Shelf) paved the way for the controversial Turkish arguments. This led Turkey reject ratifying the UNCLOS. Today, Turkey is the only country in the region that does not recognize UNCLOS as common ground for negotiations,¹⁶ not only threatening war with a neighbor,¹⁷ should the latter exercise a legal right provided by the Convention, but also destabilizing the whole region. Moreover, Turkey is opposed to accepting fundamental Articles of the Convention regarding the rights of islands in maritime zones apart from territorial waters;¹⁸ an argument that is the basis of Turkish expansionism.¹⁹ The Turkish “Blue Homeland” (Mavi Vatan) and the MoU on 27/11/2019 between Turkey and the transitional Government of Libya exemplifies this reality. Turkey’s constant escalation deriving from practices opposed to international law -a situation highlighted by the EEAS through the IOGA- affects the environment in multiple ways, as potential illegal research / drilling activities might harm the Continental Shelf and the maritime life that depends on it in an irreparable way. For the EU and especially for Greece, this could be a multidimensional disaster.

For this reason, the EU should demand a constructive role through EEAS, as one of the competent authorities for the external relations of the EU, in pursuing the implementation of UNCLOS in the region, as the only safe environmental framework. It is necessary to mention that Articles 208 and 214 of UNCLOS are focused on “the protection of the maritime environment from the pollution caused by activities in the Continental Shelf”.²⁰ Article 208 underlines that “states should adopt regulations for the prevention, mitigation and control of the maritime

¹⁶ Israel has not ratified UNCLOS as well, but after the Israeli-Lebanese delimitation of their maritime zones (27/10/2022), it seems that Israel respects the provisions of UNCLOS as part of the customary law.

¹⁷ It is worth mentioning that, according to the fundamental Article 2 para. 4 of the UN Charter, “All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations”. The Turkish “casus belli” against Greece is opposed to the article above.

¹⁸ Article 121 para. 2 of UNCLOS clearly states that: “Except as provided for in paragraph 3, the territorial sea, the contiguous zone, the exclusive economic zone and the continental shelf of an island are determined in accordance with the provisions of this Convention applicable to other land territory”.

¹⁹ In 2022 the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs published 16 maps illustrating the growing Turkish revisionism / expansionism since 1973. Υπουργείο Εξωτερικών, *Παρουσίαση τουρκικών παράνομων διεκδικήσεων μέσω χαρτών*, <https://www.mfa.gr/zitimata-ellinotourkikon-sheseon/eidikotera-keimena/maps.html>.

²⁰ Ιωάννου Κ. & Στρατή Α. (2013), *Δίκαιο της Θάλασσας*, 4^η έκδοση, Αθήνα: Νομική Βιβλιοθήκη, σελ. 159.

pollution produced by activities in the seabed when located under their authority”. These regulations, so the article goes, “should not be looser than the international ones”. Article 214 has an additional function, signifying the “need for the implementation of the measures taken, by all means”.²¹

Given the circumstances under which Greece and Turkey co-exist in the Aegean Sea, the next part will try to consolidate the rationale of the paper by highlighting three central points: a) The context of IOGA 2022 as the suitable “agenda setter” of the negotiations, b) the key role of the EU as a “regulatory power” when it comes to issues with environmental concerns and c) the importance of a Service such as EEAS that could contribute not only by providing special technical support during negotiations, but also by functioning as an honest-broker in order to enhance more constructive cooperation between the two sides.

The suitable framework of the negotiation

It’s an undeniable fact that for the last three decades, the EU has played a crucial role in climate and environmental policymaking.²² Some characterize the EU as a “global leader” for environmental issues thanks to European ambitions and actions regarding climate. The EU, so the argument goes, is the global leader both in terms of “exemplary” and “diplomatic leadership”,²³ promoting various aspects of the climate agenda. It is this certain assumption about the central role of the EU vis-à-vis climate that confirms the rationale of this paper, regarding the contribution of the EU to the environmental aspect of the Greek-Turkish dispute. The same confirmation derives from the context of the IOGA, an Agenda supported by the European External Action Service.

IOGA points out the multiple functions of the oceans, both for beneficial and harmful purposes, highlighting threats such as overfishing and the loss of maritime biodiversity. Notably, the Agenda underlines the societal importance of the oceans/seas for activities highly connected to human life, as well as the geopolitical competition at sea, especially in the Eastern Mediterranean, as a major driver of instability that sets back environmental priorities. For this

²¹ Ιωάννου Κ. & Στρατή Α. (2013), *ό.π.*, σελ. 354-355.

²² Biedenkopf K. & Petri F. (2021), “The European External Action Service and EU climate diplomacy: Coordinator and supporter in Brussels and beyond”, *European Foreign Affairs Review*, 26:1, p. 74.

²³ Oberthür S. & Dupont C. (2021), “The European Union’s international climate leadership: towards a grand climate strategy?”, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 28:7, p. 1097.

reason, the Agenda promotes an enhanced “global, regional and bilateral framework of cooperation”, based on multilateralism and the respect of international law, especially the UNCLOS, as common ground for coordinated actions. For the Agenda, what is at stake is the achievement of the “ocean sustainability” and the -so called- “blue economy”.

Apart from that, IOGA projects some of the main advantages of the EU, facts that Greece should take into consideration. According to the IOGA, the EU holds the largest combined EEZ in the world,²⁴ while at the same time, it’s the “last man standing” when it comes to the respect of the rule-based order by promoting multilateralism in a fruitful way.²⁵ A prudent analysis would conclude that it would be in favor not only of Greece but also of the EU, as a geopolitical and normative power, for the latter to claim sovereign rights in the Eastern Mediterranean through the Greek (consequently –in terms of law- European) EEZ and Continental Shelf, maritime zones that will be protected under the European environmental norms and UNCLOS as integral parts of the European legal structure.²⁶ Taking into account the political complexity of such a diplomatic maneuver and the lack of trust between Turkey and the EU, this paper underlines the importance of the role of the EEAS as an honest-broker, which, following suit the provisions of the IOGA, could construct a stable avenue for negotiations between Greece and Turkey.

The European External Action Service (EEAS), one of the main contributors when it comes to the application of the European foreign policy vis-à-vis non-EU countries, was created as a new autonomous institution by the Lisbon Treaty and came into force in 2010 under the frame of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).²⁷ The EEAS actively supports the High Representative regarding the representation of the EU in the world²⁸ and simultaneously coordinates actions taken by European institutions and Member States in promoting European interests and influence abroad in a clear way.²⁹ Despite the European Commission’s climate competences,³⁰ the EEAS also plays a crucial and supportive role in contributing to non-traditional

²⁴ European Commission, *op.cit.*, p. 3.

²⁵ Jørgensen K. E., Kaas J. G., Knudsen T. B., Svendsen G. T. & Landorff L. (2022) “The EEAS navigating foreign policy paradigms”, *European Politics and Society*, 23:1, p. 84.

²⁶ Ιωάννου Κ. & Στρατή Α. (2013), *ό.π.*, σελ. 189.

²⁷ Δικαίος Γ. (2016), «Ευρωπαϊκή Υπηρεσία Εξωτερικής Δράσης: Προκλήσεις και προοπτικές», *Η Ευρώπη, η Ελλάδα και ο Κόσμος: Μελέτες για την Ευρωπαϊκή και Διεθνή Πολιτική*, τχ. 6, σελ. 33.

²⁸ Λιαργκόβας Π. & Παπαγεωργίου Χ. (2018), *ό.π.*, σελ. 608.

²⁹ Δικαίος Γ. (2016), *ό.π.*, σελ. 35· Biedenkopf K. & Petri F. (2021), *op.cit.*, p. 73.

³⁰ Δικαίος Γ. (2016), *ό.π.*, σελ. 37.

issues of foreign affairs, like the environment³¹ and it's at the forefront of bilateral relations between the EU and third parties regarding environmental issues.³² The creation of the Ambassador at Large for Climate Diplomacy (2019) as part of the EEAS is indicative of European ambitions in this certain field.³³ Nevertheless, scholars bring the competition between the EEAS and the European institutions into the spotlight, alongside overlapping competences, as obstacles for a more coherent European foreign policy.³⁴ Needless to say, despite all the malfunctions, the EEAS works as a diplomatic force multiplier for smaller Member States,³⁵ an assumption that Greece should adopt regarding the subject of this paper.

Taking all the aforementioned into consideration, three assumptions can be made: First, the EU stands as a well-respected international organization with great contributions to environmental issues. Second, the EEAS is an experienced political body in terms of administrative and technical support in policy making procedures and negotiations. Finally, the IOGA can be considered a useful political tool of EEAS and as a well-structured agenda regarding the environmental challenges of today's world. These three "components" can be perceived as the pillars that compose the most suitable framework for such a demanding venture as is the Greek-Turkish dispute settlement under the scope of pressing environmental challenges.

The frame of the negotiations as described above will additionally provide not only legal support for the whole procedure, but also a political boost when needed. Nevertheless, more coherent proposals are necessary in order for functional environment diplomacy to be established and produce tangible results. The following part presents specific policy proposals / recommendations on overfishing and unilateral actions.

Recommendations

Overfishing

When it comes to overfishing and the loss of biodiversity, first establishing a common

³¹ Biedenkopf K. & Petri F. (2021), *op.cit.*, p. 72.

³² Jørgensen K. E., et al. (2022), *op.cit.*, p. 88.

³³ Biedenkopf K. & Petri F. (2021), *op.cit.*, p. 78.

³⁴ Δικαίος Γ. (2016), *ό.π.*, σελ. 35. Juncos A. E. & Pomorska K. (2020), "The European External Action Service", *Oxford Research Encyclopaedias: Politics*. DOI: 10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.1081., p. 6.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

mechanism between Greece and Turkey under the auspices of the EEAS and in line with the IOGA for tackling the “Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing” could function not only as a counter measure against this threat but also as a Confidence-Building Measure promoting scientific cooperation over combating the loss of maritime biodiversity. A further step would be the delimitation of fishing zones between the two countries in accordance with UNCLOS, given the technical support of the EEAS and the special interests of both countries regarding fishing. A previous Greek initiative in August 1963 for the delimitation of fishing zones was not fruitful.³⁶ Nevertheless, the whole procedure could bring about a similar initiative that could lead to mutual acceptance of the procedure for delimitation of other maritime zones, namely the EEZ and Continental Shelf. The recent example of the Croatia-Slovenia dispute over the delimitation of “zones of ecological protection and fish management”, which lasted from 2003 to 2009 until both countries finally agreed on resolving their dispute in International Court of Justice (ICJ), according to the provisions of UNCLOS, could be an example to be followed.³⁷ The procedure followed as well as the acceptance of UNCLOS as the legal framework for the final decision of the ICJ would enhance the Greek position that prioritizes respect for UNCLOS and a legal -rather than a solely political- settlement for the Greek-Turkish dispute.

Unilateral activities in non-delimited areas of Continental Shelf

On the other hand, regarding the more demanding challenge of the unilateral activities in non-delimited areas of the Continental Shelf, the political willingness of both sides and a dedication to resolve rather than perpetuate the dispute is essential. Additionally, the contribution of the EU in this venture seems to be indispensable. Under the auspices of the EEAS, when it comes to framing negotiations or providing technical support, Greece and Turkey could work together to prevent pollution of the seabed by abstaining from illegal activities in the Continental Shelf and, moreover, agree on a rule-based framework for the delimitation of their abovementioned zones. During negotiations, not only could a useful moratorium of abstaining from tensions be achieved, but a cooperative political environment could also be established between the two countries. On top of that, an EU- reminder that a productive / special relationship between the EU

³⁶ Συρίγος Α. Μ., (2015), *ό.π.*, σελ. 209.

³⁷ Ιωάννου Κ. & Στρατή Α. (2013), *ό.π.*, σελ. 32 & 185.

and Turkey would be furthered by the normalization and -if possible- settlement of the dispute with Greece, could serve as a motivator for Turkey during the negotiations.

Conclusions

For decades, environmental issues were perceived as part of low politics. Yet, under pressuring environmental circumstances, environmental and climate issues have been upgraded to issues of high policy. Despite the fact that there are still difficulties with coordination not only between states but also between states and individuals, regarding actions to be taken against climate threats, there has been enhanced cooperation over environmental issues like never before. Within this frame, the EU is expected to act accordingly.

Greece should follow suit. Being in a very unstable region like the Eastern Mediterranean, as IOGA states, Greece should be in the forefront of European action in every policy field. The “Europeanization”³⁸ of the Greek foreign policy, meaning the active contribution of Greece in the formation of the European foreign policy (up-loading procedure), should be a priority, through which Greece will enhance its diplomatic voice in European institutions for other aspects of politics. At the same time, Greece can also utilize provided European tools, such as the EEAS, in order to resolve issues central to Greek foreign policy.

This policy paper brings into the spotlight two central environmental issues that Greece should address. First, regarding the protection of maritime biodiversity and the mitigation of overfishing, Greece should act within the beneficial European legal framework and try to incentivize Turkey to establish a more cooperative relationship, through which both countries could not only tackle the challenge of biodiversity loss, but also consolidate permanent scientific cooperation.

Second, regarding the more demanding issue of the unauthorized use of the Continental Shelf, Greece should also make clear what is on the line, apart from the geopolitical issue. Again,

³⁸ The term “Europeanisation” is used to describe a bidirectional procedure between a Member State and the European Union as an institution. While the “up-loading” procedure depicts a bottom-up interaction between the two parts, meaning the contribution of the Member State in the formation of the European foreign Policy, “Europeanisation” is mainly used for the opposite direction. This top-down approach, called “downloading” procedure, highlights how the EU influences the formation of the foreign policy of a Member State, in accordance with the principles, the values and the priorities of the Union. For more, see, Ντόκος Θ., Τσάκωνας Π. (2019), *Ο Δρόμος Είναι τα Βήματα Μας: Οδικός Χάρτης Εθνικής Ασφαλείας για την Ελλάδα του Μέλλοντος*, Αθήνα: Ι. Σιδέρης, σελ. 106.

the European framework, based on UNCLOS's provisions, provides a springboard for Greek arguments. At the same time it ensures the consideration of the environmental dimension of the issue, a factor of great importance for a country with extensive maritime territory.

In conclusion, through mediation and political / technical support provided by the EEAS to Greece and Turkey for the issues mentioned in this paper, both countries could construct a stable and cooperative relationship, especially regarding scientific and environmental coordination, that could help ease tensions, reject Turkish revisionism, and settle the Greek-Turkish dispute over the EEZ and the Continental Shelf.