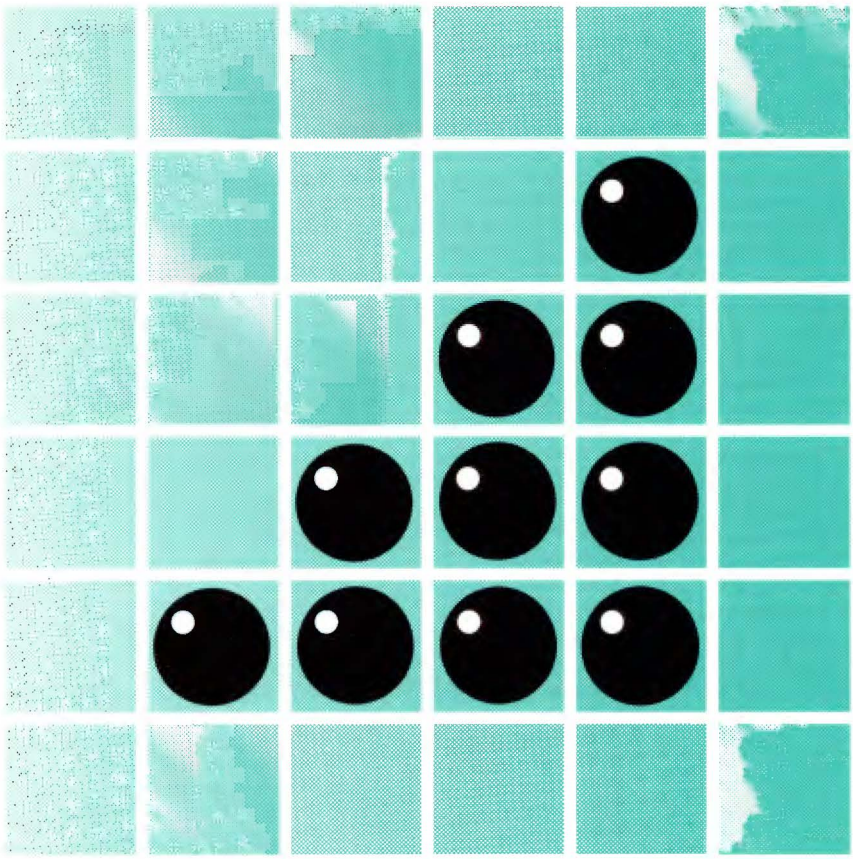
Periodical 1/1984

THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY'S ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY



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Introduction

It is now over a decade since European Community Heads of State or Government formally acknowledged that the economic growth inspired and fostered by the Community had to be linked with improvements in living standards, the quality of life and protection of the environment and natural resources.

They decided, at their summit meeting in Paris in October 1972, to establish a common European environmental policy, aimed at reconciling economic growth with the need — increasingly felt by a growing number of Community citizens — to preserve Europe's environment.

The threats posed to the environment by economic expansion — particularly pollution — were plain to see.

But while the resolution to do something about the problem was made in times of relative prosperity in Europe, the practical implementation of the Community's environmental policy has taken place against a backdrop of economic recession, with all the problems of scarce financial resources and the consequent narrowing of priorities that this implies.

Economic growth and environmental protection although initially seen as parallel objectives were sometimes regarded as conflicting, with the latter taking second place behind the need to keep Europe's battered economies afloat.

This paper will examine the Community's response to this dilemma. It will trace the Community's developing role in environmental protection, the aims and achievements of its policy over the past 10 years and look at its future plans and prospects. But first it is important to understand precisely, what is meant by the catch-all phrase 'the environment' and the extent to which it is now threatened in Europe.

I — The environment and the threats it faces

Everyone probably has a broad understanding of what is meant by 'the environment'. For the purposes of Community policy, the European Commission defined the environment as:

> 'the combination of elements whose complex inter-relationships make up the settings, the surroundings and the conditions of life of the individual and of society, as they are or as they are felt.'

This rather combersome-sounding definition covers both the natural environment (the countryside, its flora and fauna, rivers, lakes and the sea, the atmosphere, wildlife and their habitats, etc.) and the man-made environment (urban areas, the architectural heritage, and so on).

Most people, too, will already have a good idea of the way in which both the natural and man-made environment is threatened. Whether in the city or in the countryside, examples of environmental damage in everyday life are not hard to find.

Pollution

Some are more obvious than others. The chief threat, and the most serious, is pollution. It has a multitude of sources.

(i) In industry, factories and other plants involved in all forms of manufacturing produce wastes and effluents including some highly dangerous and noxious substances, such as certain chemicals and heavy metals (lead, mercury, cadmium, etc.). As well as frequently posing a direct health risk to man, industrial pollution causes widespread damage to the environment, wherever it occurs.

(ii) In lakes, rivers and the sea, pollutants poison fish, the micro-organisms they feed on and all aquatic plant life and make the water unsafe for bathing and other leisure activities as well as for use as drinking water and for other domestic purposes.

Particular hazards may be caused by poducts that are toxic, persistent and bio-accumulative. These substances cannot be broken down by nature's usual processes and tend to accumulate in the bodies of animals that come into contact with them.

Their harm is therefore potentially multiplied since it has both a direct and an indirect effect. For example, mercury accumulated inside a micro-organism will be passed onto the fish that eats it and again onto a larger predator that eats the fish and so on up the food chain to man.

(iii) In the atmosphere, pollutants, such as certain chemical gases and dusts are scattered by the wind over large areas. Some airborne pollutants, such as sulphur dioxide (SO_2), fall to earth again as 'acid deposits', poisoning the life out of lakes and rivers, contaminating crops, damaging forests and woodlands, corroding metal structures and paintwork and posing a health risk to the population living near the source of the pollution.

(iv) In the earth, pollutants can break down the natural structure of the soil, rendering it infertile or reducing its crop-yielding potential. Pollutants also seep through the soil to contaminate underground water sources, posing a health risk to humans and to domestic and wild animals.

Drums of chemical and other wastes are frequently found simply dumped on urban sites or in the countryside. The rise of stricter controls on waste disposal has made it cheaper for indiscriminate producers or contractors simply to dump waste in the hope that they will not be discovered.

A further hazard is posed by the wastes dumped in the years before any environmental risks were suspected and controls were imposed. In the Netherlands alone, some 4 000 sites have been found where industrial wastes have been dumped, most dating back to the times before authorization to dump was required.

Throughout the Community there must be tens of thousands of these unknown and unmapped poison legacies of Europe's industrial past posing untold risks to man and the environment.

In addition to the pollution caused by waste, industrial expansion and innovation has brought with it dangers that are directly linked to both manufacturing processes employed and the end products themselves. The production of certain goods requires the use of dangerous substances that pose risks not only for the workers in the factory concerned but also for the population living in the vicinity.

Similarly, the potential health risks involved with the production, manufacture and use of some products have only relatively recently come to light.

Asbestos, for example, a product acclaimed for its insulation and fire-proofing properties is today recognized to be a potential killer, whose fibres attack the respiratory system.

Lead used to be widely used in the manufacture of paint until concern at its health risks led to tighter controls. Similar concern has encouraged some Member States to propose measures to cut down the lead content of petrol.

The rapid spread of urbanization

Already Europe is one of the most densely populated regions of the world. If you draw a circle with a 400 kilometre diameter centred on Lille in north-eastern France, you will encircle the industrial heartland of Europe — encompassing the Ruhr and Rhine valleys, Antwerp, Brussels, northern France, Randstad Holland, Greater London and the Midlands, the industrial heart of the UK.

As it stands this high concentration of industry and population means heavy pollution and all the signs are that current growth will increase at faster rates in the future. The pace of post-war industrial expansion has led to unprecedented urban development.

Unfortunately the vast majority of this development has been achieved at heavy cost to the environment. The urban landscape itself has been scarred by careless planning and over-hasty development. This has often been at the expense of valuable architectural sites and landscapes. In the heart of London, for example, a recent architectural excavation had to be completed under extreme pressure before the bulldozers moved in and it was lost forever.

In addition to the spread of housing and factories, industrial expansion has spawned a vast network of roads, rail links and other infrastructure to feed it.

The pace of urban sprawl has increasingly led to social problems some of which have been directly linked to the degradation of the urban environment and the approach to urban re-

newal adopted by many planners, that takes little account of the sense of community in different parts of a city.

The changing shape of the countryside

Modern-day farming techniques and current EEC farm support policies, have encouraged a shift to intensive or 'industrial' farming, with the stress laid on maximizing production, often irrespective of demand.

Guaranteed a fixed price for virtually whatever they produce, many farmers have tended to uproot woodlands and hedgerows and drain off marshlands to make maximum use of their available land.

This however deprives dozens of species of flora and fauna of their natural habitats. Marshes and other wetlands provide valuable breeding grounds for wild birds and staging points for migratory species. Hedgerows and woods are habitats for countless species of insects, birds and small mammals as well as wild flowers and plants.

All these threats to the environment are comparatively tangible. Their effects on the environment can be seen either immediately or within a relatively short period of time. But there are other dangers too, that are less tangible and less readily visible, and therefore perhaps all the more serious.

The depletion of natural resources

Take, for example, the depletion of natural resources, such as fossil fuels (oil, gas, coal, etc.) and even land. These resources are finite and their exploitation therefore needs to be managed rationally, with an eye to the future. Without such careful husbandry, irreparable damage could be caused.

Serious harm can also be caused by careless management of non-finite resources. The fast destruction of rain forests in South America and parts of Africa, for example, to clear land for building or agriculture or exports of timber, could have far-reaching consequences for the Earth's climate.

Trees, like all plants, absorb carbon dioxide (CO_2) and other noxious gases, and 'exhale' life-giving oxygen. Twelve spruce trees are estimated to produce the daily oxygen requirement of one man, while a 100-year old beech tree purifies the air content of 800 homes annually.

Heavy concentrations of trees and plants, as in tropical rain forests, are therefore crucial to maintaining the climatic balance. The clearing of forests deprives the atmosphere of an important purifying element and allows an increasing amount of CO_2 to escape into the upper atmosphere.

This threatens to produce what scientists call the 'greenhouse effect' — a thickening layer of CO_2 in the upper atmosphere that raises the temperature on the Earth's surface, affecting its climate.

The destruction of forests and other uncultivated areas also takes a heavy toll on the wildlife that lives and breeds under its cover. A healthy beech wood, for example, can house up to 7 000 animal species. The destruction of a single plant species can mean extinction for 30 or more species of animal.

Control of air pollution is a priority task for the Community's environmental policy. Pollution from industrial sources, and particularly sulphur dioxide, comes down as acid rain and can poison lakes and rivers, and cause damage to forests and metals — not to speak of human health

The spread of urbanization and industrialization has had disastrous effects on wild animals and plants — even though some species have shown a remarkable ability to adapt. Foxes, normally regarded as timid, countryside creatures, have become accomplished urban scavengers and rare wild flowers flourish along motorway embankments.

All too often however man matches the unwitting harm he does to wildlife with deliberate hunting and killing of wild animals and birds for sport or economic gain.

These then are some of the major threats facing the environment. Of course, they are not new and for many years governments have tried, with varying degrees of commitment, to over-

come them, through nationally-run environmental policies. In some cases these efforts have yielded notable successes.

(i) Perhaps one of the most noteworthy successes of national environmental policy in recent years has been the return of salmon and other fish species to stretches of the River Thames in England formerly so polluted that they could not sustain fish life.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the British Government introduced controls on the discharge of pollution into the river, especially at the North Sea estuary, where pollution was found to be acting as a barrier to migratory fish, such as salmon, entering the river and moving upstream to breed.

The government also put limits on the siting and operation of power stations that use the Thames river water for cooling purposes. It was found that this had raised the temperature of the water by about 3 degrees centigrade in some stretches and by much higher levels in small local areas.

Regular sampling and testing of water in the Thames has been carried out and fish collected and checked for the presence of heavy metals (such as mercury, cadmium and lead) in their body tissue.

The first salmon (a species noted for its sensitivity to pollution) was spotted in the Thames in 1974 and many more have been seen in the river since. A variety of other sea and freshwater species have also been spotted in the Thames, including, in 1976, a sea-horse, another species particularly sensitive to pollution.

(ii) In the Federal Republic of Germany, dust emissions from industry were cut by 65% during the 10 years from 1964 to 1974, using a combination of measures aimed at reducing production of dust, ensuring more efficient collection of waste dust and filtering it out of emissions.

As a result of these actions, dust production from coal-fired power stations was cut by 73% over the 10 year period, by 50% in crude steel production, while the uniform grey coating of dust that used to mark the siting of cement factories has all but disappeared.

(iii) In many EEC countries, valuable historic buildings and sites have be preserved from development by State intervention and wildlife and nature reserves established.

(iv) Legislation has also been passed aimed at controlling pollution and setting stricter environmental standards on industry, construction and planning.

Why then was it thought necessary for the European Community as such to become involved in environmental policy-making as well? What advantages could new Community action have over existing national measures? How did the Community come to be involved in a field that was not specifically mentioned in the Treaty of Rome?

The answer to these questions lies both in the nature of the European Community and of the problem of environmental protection itself.

II — The European Community and the environment

A commitment to improve living standards

The *first and chief reason* for European Community involvement in the environment is quite simply that it has a long-standing commitment to do everything within its power to improve the living and working conditions of its 260 million citizens. The Community's founding Treaty of Rome, signed by the original six Member States (France, the FR of Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg) in 1957, lays down as one of its principal objectives:

> '. . . the constant improvement of the living and working conditions of their people,' . . . [1]

This charges the Community with a clear responsibility to ensure that Europeans live and work in the best possible surroundings, that the air they breathe is clean, that the food they eat and the water they drink are as pure as possible and that they have access to nature as uncontaminated by the march of progress as possible.

Preserving free trade

The *second reason* for a Community environmental policy is that differences between national environmental legislation could affect the operation of the common market by creating distortions in competition and technical barriers to trade in the Community.

If, for example, firms in one Community Member State were obliged to conform to stricter nationally-imposed anti-pollution requirements (the installation of often expensive purifying or emission control equipment, for example) than their counterparts in neighbouring EEC countries, their production costs would be higher and their ability to compete on equal terms therefore impaired.

Similarly, if one country imposed tougher noise controls on, for example, construction site equipment or tighter exhaust emission curbs on motor vehicles, than its neighbours, imports from other EEC countries might be hindered and free trade therefore suffer.

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[1] Preamble to the Treaty of Rome, 1957.

In both cases, the consumer would suffer too, either through increased prices passed on to him by the producers or through a narrowing of the range of goods available to him, restricting his freedom of choice.

The need for harmonization of legislation and/or technical standards at Community level has to be carefully examined case by case to safeguard both the good operation of the common market and the environment.

The international nature of the problem

The *third reason* for Community involvement in environmental policy stems directly both from the nature of the Community and from the nature of the problems involved in protecting the environment.

Pollution does not stop at national boundaries. One country's waste disposal all too easily becomes its neighbours' pollution, particularly water and air-borne pollution. In the Community, where 80% of lakes and rivers are shared by two or more Member States, the problem is particularly sensitive.

The best-known example of this is the River Rhine. Today, five years after two international conventions were signed in Bonn by the five riparian States — France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Switzerland, Luxembourg and the Netherlands — aimed at cutting the level of salt and chemical pollution in the Rhine, some 15 million tonnes of salt a year, or some 380 kg per second, are still being pumped into the river. [1] This figure is in fact substantially higher than the rate of discharge when the conventions were signed.

Added to this there are estimated to be some 1 200 different chemical substances being dumped into the river from the vast concentration of chemical industries in the Rhine valley (home of some 20% of the world's chemical industry).

The chief sources of salt pollution are the potash mines in the Alsace region of France, which are alone responsible for 40% of salt pollution in the Rhine. Industry in the Federal Republic of Germany is responsible for most of the rest of the salt pollution, but dumps in much smaller concentrations and over a much wider area.

The salts and chemical pollutants mingle with other effluents from Europe's industrial heartland to form a noxious 'cocktail' that drains downstream. It causes particular pollution problems in the Netherlands — the last stage on the river's journey to the North Sea. Rhine water is widely used in the Netherlands for irrigation by farmers and market gardeners and also as an important source used to prepare drinking water for the population.

Huge sums of money have to be paid out by both the Dutch Government and individual farmers and market gardeners to purify the water for its various uses. The annual bill paid by

[1] The European Community was also a signatory of the Bonn Convention on chemical pollution of the Rhine, although not of the second convention on salt pollution.

Dutch agriculture, horticulture, industry, water companies, etc. to decontaminate Rhine water has been estimated by Dutch environmentalists at some UKL 30 million.

In addition, polluted Rhine water seeps into the subsoil and underground water supplies, contaminating crops and groundwater, while pollution around the Rhine estuary has long caused serious problems.

It now appears possible that a solution to the level of salt pollution may be found by injecting the waste from the Alsace potash mines into the subsoil — as has been done with chloride and other salt wastes in Hessen, Germany, for many years, without significant environmental damage. But this is only likely to be a partial solution, since the Bonn Convention calls for a ceiling on discharge of salt wastes of 60 kg per second, while currently only the equivalent of 20 kg per second are destined to be injected underground.

International problems require international solutions. The Community, as the practical expression of unity and cooperation between 10 European nations obviously has a role to play in settling disputes and trying to ensure a coherent approach both to the problem and its solution.

The Community can play this role more effectively than individual Member States working bilaterally or multilaterally, because it can take a broader, more complete view of the problems involved, untrammeled as it is by narrow, short-term considerations, such as national interest, electoral or party politics.

This broader Community outlook spills over, too, into the wider international context. The nature of pollution makes it inevitable that disputes arise between countries and that governments and international organizations (like the United Nations and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) seek the widest possible support for pollution controls and other environmental agreements.

The transfrontier nature of environmental problems has made the environment a leading field of international discussion and cooperation, cutting across ideological as well as geographical boundaries.

The Community has long played a role in this cooperation. Its considerable experience in international negotiations makes the European Community both an effective spokesman for the Ten — whose influence on the world stage is enhanced by their speaking with a united voice on key issues — and a valuable partner in helping the wider international community find solutions to common problems.

The Community has been a strong force in the development of common procedures for testing chemicals and exchanging information amongst the 24 nations in the OECD. The 1983 OECD Council Decision on the minimum pre-market set of data for the initial assessment of the hazards of chemical substances endorses a basic set of information that is essentially the same as that required in the Community. OECD member countries are obliged to implement the Council decisions, so that the Community has become part of a growing, harmonized international system of chemicals control.

One good example of the Community fulfilling both roles is in the field of transboundary air pollution. Scandinavian countries have long complained that toxic sulphur dioxide (SO_2) gases discharged into the atmosphere by factories and homes in the United Kingdom, Germany and other northern EEC Member States, are carried north on the winds and fall as 'acid rain', destroying forests and farm crops and literally poisoning plant and fish life in lakes and streams.

Efforts to find a solution to this problem — which is by no means confined to Scandinavia, since the damage caused by 'acid rain' is now being recognized within the Community itself — have been sought chiefly within the framework of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN/ECE). A convention aimed at reducing all forms of transboundary air pollution was signed in Geneva in 1979.

The Community was closely involved in the negotiations leading up to the signature of the convention and became party to it along with the individual Member States.

Further examples of the Community's involvement in international efforts to protect the environment are given below.

Responding to public concern

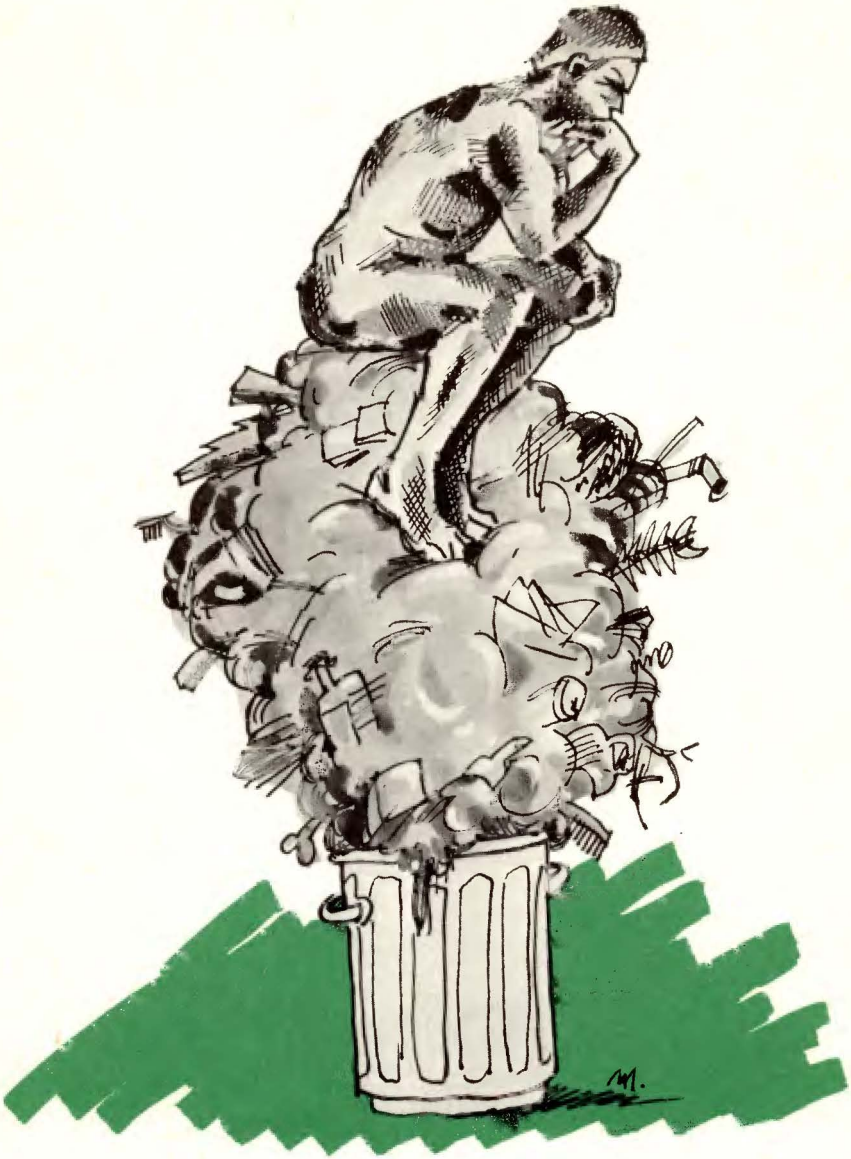
In deciding to frame a European environmental policy, EEC governments were also responding to increased public concern about the state of the environment, both natural and man-made, and the threats it faces.

The blossoming of non-governmental environment pressure groups in the 1960s and 1970s bore witness to the growth in public awareness of the careless speed with which 20th century man appeared to be destroying his environment.

The European Community was inevitably playing a role in this destruction. The development of EEC policies in a widening number of spheres, from agriculture and energy to industry, transport and regional development, has in many cases shifted a share of the responsibility for environmental damage caused by the implementation of these policies onto the Community's shoulders.

While the individual Member States are still responsible for the way these policies are translated into national law in the vast majority of cases, the Community as such plays a coordinating and often initiating role.

Some EEC policies, agriculture and transport, for example, can and do have serious impacts on the environment.



III — The economy and the environment

The costs of pollution

For all these reasons, then, European leaders recognized the need for an EEC environmental policy and the clear role that the Community had in initiating and coordinating it.

Nevertheless, the question might reasonably be asked whether the European Community as an economic union committed to the promotion of continued growth and development would not find itself facing constantly conflicting objectives, since the desire to promote economic growth and the need to safeguard the environment are often seen as opposing ends. Environmental protection is seen by many in authority as a luxury, only to be afforded in times of steady economic growth and too costly in periods of recession.

The shock of successive sharp increases in oil prices during the 1970s tumbled Europe's economies, along with the rest of the industrialized world, into a recession from which they have yet to recover fully.

Against the backdrop of the current recession, marked by low if not zero growth, peristent high inflation and balance of payments deficits, the decline of traditional industries and, especially recently, a staggering rise in unemployment, environmental protection has tended to take second place behind the need to sustain economic activity.

The desire to avoid imposing additional costs on industry has led to a reluctance on the part of some Community governments to agree to tougher pollution controls, land-use requirements and curbs on potentially dangerous materials or production processes. The tangible short-term costs to the economy of such measures have all too often outweighed the frequently intangible and longer-term benefits to society of a healthier environment and substantial longer-term economic costs of failure to prevent pollution.

In fact, recent studies carried out by the OECD and a number of other research institutes have established that the costs of environmental protection are marginal.

The inflationary effect of environmental policies — their effect on production costs, consumer prices and the cost of living — has on average been very small (about 0.2-0.3% according to the OECD). Public spending on the environment in OECD countries (which include all Community Member States, the United States, Canada and Japan) has been minimal at between 1 and 2% of gross domestic product (GDP).

In stark contrast, OECD countries spend between 3 and 5% of their GDP each year repairing damage caused by pollution. In France in 1978 alone, the bill amounted to between 70 500

million and 88 000 million francs (between UKL 7 050 and UKL 8 800 million) or between 3.3 and 4.1% of GDP.

The OECD has estimated that in its 11 European member countries damage caused by sulphur dioxide pollution alone amounts to between FF 100 000 million and FF 150 000 million annually.

In *France* in 1978, FF 110 000 million — some 3.4% of gross national product (GNP) — was spent on repairing the damage caused by pollution and on measures to combat pollution. Over FF 80 000 million was spent on repairing pollution damage and the French Ministry of the Environment calculated that this amount was broadly equivalent to the 'cost' of unemployment in France that year (taking account of loss of income to the unemployed, the charge to the State of unemployment benefits and other social security expenses).

Perhaps suprisingly, since its effects are rarely as readily visible as those caused by other forms of pollution, noise was reckoned to have caused the most damage (to buildings, underground mines, cost of noise insulation, and so on) at between FF 175 000 million and FF 22 000 million (see table on page 21).

Second most costly item on the French pollution bill was air pollution (FF 16 000 million to FF 20 000 million). Some 17 million tonnes of airborne pollutants (gases and dusts) are discharged annually by industry, motor vehicles and heating systems. The cost of tackling this vast gas cloud represents between 0.75% and 0.93% of France's GNP. (In the *UK*, the cost is much higher — between 1.7% and 2.34% — while in the *United States* it ranges between 2.2% and 2.9% of GNP. In *Italy*, however, the cost is lower at an estimated 0.69% of annual GNP.)

The 13.5 million tonnes of industrial and household wastes dumped each year into French rivers caused damage estimated at between FF 13 000 million and FF 16 000 million in 1978. Costs ranged from the FF 3 420 million spent by the water companies to purify contaminated water for domestic and industrial use to the additional budget burden of importing freshwater fish (such as salmon) which can no longer survive in many polluted rivers.

The cost of disposing of solid wastes cost the French taxpayer between FF 7 500 million and 9 500 million. Disposal took a variety of forms, including the burial of some 42 million tonnes of industrial and 13 million tonnes of domestic wastes (the annual average), with its inherent risks for the soil, groundwater supplies and so on.

While this is only an estimate of the actual cost of cleaning up pollution, it gives a good idea of the amounts of public money currently being spent on repairing damage caused by just one of the many threats to the environment.

Such figures can be — and often are — used by the authorities to compare the cost of cleaning up pollution with the cost to industry of imposing tougher curbs to prevent it occurring.

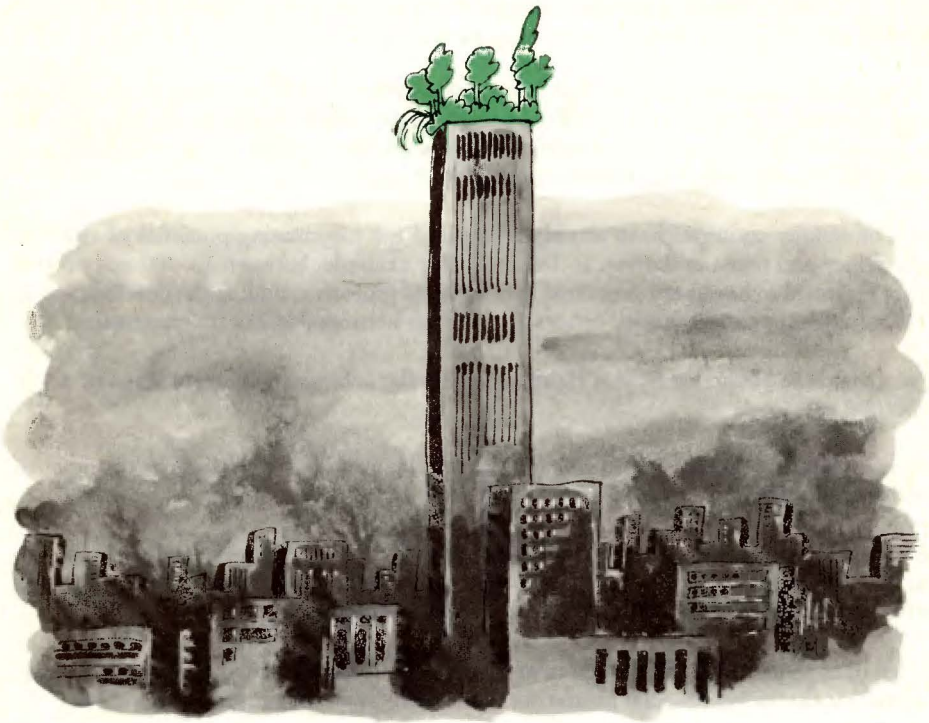
But this equation ignores the fact that the cost to industry of tighter pollution controls — although it may, in the short term, prove heavy — is very often a once-off expense, such as the installation of filters or other purifying equipment, while the cost to the taxpayer of cleaning up pollution is recurrent.

Damage caused by pollution and nuisances in France in 1978
(in 000 million francs)

Pollutant	Best hypothesis	Worst hypothesis	% of total damage
Noise	17.5	22	25
Air	16.0	20	23
Water	13.0	16	18
of which:			
classic pollution	7.0	8	9
toxic pollution	4.0	5	6
oil pollution (fresh and sea water)	2.0	3	3
Thermal and radiation pollution (incl. sea)	5.5	7	8
Nitrates, phosphates, pesticides (water and soil)	11.0	13.5	15
Solid wastes	7.5	9.5	11
Total	70.5	88.0	100
as a % of GDP	3.3	4.1	

Source: 'Données économiques de l'environnement 1980'. Ministère de l'environnement, 14 bd. Général-Leclerc, 92522 Neuilly.

It also ignores the longer-term effects of sustained pollution on the environment and the irreparable damage that can be caused. While some of these effects can be measured in financial terms — the destruction of agricultural crops and timber, the cost of purifying polluted water,



the cost to the social services of health problems caused by pollution, and so on — many cannot. How can one express in figures the 'cost' of losing acres of woodland or stretches of river that might have otherwise been used for leisure and recreation? Equally, how can the 'cost' in terms of increased stress and discomfort of living and working in a polluted environment be calculated in financial terms?

Clearly, these calculations cannot be done, but they have to be taken into account in any cost/benefit analysis assessing the economic merits of environmental protection.

Assessing the benefits of environmental policy

Just as all the costs to society of pollution cannot be enumerated so too many of the benefits of an active environmental policy are next to impossible to calculate. Some however, can be.

The OECD has brought together a number of studies which conclude that environmental policies have a small positive short-term effect on employment. It is estimated that the environmental protection industry in the Community currently employs about 1.25 million people and has an annual turnover of USD 24 000 million, exporting much of its know-how and equipment to countries outside the European Community.

Given no change in existing economic or environmental policies, the industry will continue to expand at about the same rate as Community gross national product.

Environmental protection schemes, like the creation of nature reserves, construction of new sewage treatment facilities or the installation of pollution control equipment in factories, can help create new jobs, particularly in poorer regions worst hit by the recession, where the quality of the environment may have been neglected in the past.

Some Community countries have already recognized the job-creating potential of environmental policy and taken initiatives. In Denmark, for example, between 12 000 and 15 000 jobs are reckoned to have been generated by a range of projects including the development of new technologies, publicly-funded restoration of slum-housing and forest management.

In France and the Netherlands, it is claimed that similar schemes will create between 8 000 and 30 000 new jobs.

There is some doubt therefore as to whether the conflict between economic growth and environmental protection is as clear-cut as is usually stated.

There is still considerable support for the case against the 'consumer society', relying on unfaltering economic growth, and in favour of a type of economic development concentrating on improving the quality of life and rational use of natural resources.

But even if, as seems almost certain, present economic growth policies continue to hold sway, the argument that environmental protection is too costly, does not appear to stand up.

The way to begin resolving what genuine conflict there is between environmental protection and economic growth is to consider potential environmental impacts at the earliest possible stage in decision-making at all levels and in all fields.

This shift away from action taken to cure or clean-up damage to the environment and towards action designed to prevent that damage occurring in the first place is one of the key principles of the European Community's environmental policy.

IV — The aims and principles of Community environmental policy

The principles of the Community's new environmental policy were set out by EEC governments in October 1972. They include the following:

(i) the best environmental policy consists in preventing the creation of pollution at source rather than subsequently trying to counter their effects;

(ii) environmental policy can and must be compatible with economic and social development;

(iii) effect on the environment should be taken into account at the earliest possible stage in all technical planning and decision-making processes;

(iv) any exploitation of natural resources or anything which causes significant damage to the ecological balance must be avoided;

(v) standards of scientific and technological knowledge in the Community should be improved with a view to taking effective action to conserve and improve the environment and combat pollution and nuisances. Research in this field should therefore be encouraged;

(vi) the cost of preventing and eliminating nuisances must in principle be borne by the polluter;

(vii) care should be taken to ensure that activities carried out in one State do not cause any degradation of the environment in another State;

(viii) the Community and its Member States must take account in their environmental policy of the interests of the developing countries, and must in particular examine any repercussions of the measures contemplated under that policy on the economic development of such countries;

(ix) the Community and the Member States must make their voices heard in international organizations dealing with aspects of the environment and must make an original contribution to these organizations;

(x) the protection of the environment is a matter for all in the Community, who should therefore be made aware of its importance;

(xi) in each different category of pollution, it is necessary to establish the level of action that befits the type of pollution;

(xii) major aspects of environmental policy in individual countries must no longer be planned and implemented in isolation;

(xiii) Community environmental policy is aimed, as far as possible, at the coordinated and harmonized progress of national policies, without, however, hampering potential or actual progress at the national level. However, the latter should be carried out in a way that does not jeopardize the satisfactory operation of the common market.

The aims of the policy were approved along with the first Community environmental action programme just over a year later, on 22 November 1973. Its primary objectives are to:

(i) prevent, reduce and as far as possible eliminate pollution and nuisances;

(ii) maintain a satisfactory ecological balance and ensure the protection of the biosphere;

(iii) ensure the sound management of and avoid any exploitation of resources or of nature which cause significant damage to the ecological balance;

(iv) guide development in accordance with quality requirements especially by improving working conditions and settings of life;

(v) ensure that more account is taken of environmental aspects in town planning and land use;

(vi) seek common solutions to environmental problems with States outside the Community, particularly in international organizations.

To translate these principles and aims into practice, the first EEC environmental action programme, drawn up by the European Commission, designated three broad categories of action:

(i) to reduce and prevent pollution and nuisances;

(ii) to improve the environment and the quality of life;

(iii) Community action, or where applicable, common action by the Member States in international organizations dealing with the environment.

These categories have remained the guidelines for Community environmental policy through the second action programme (adopted by EEC Ministers for the Environment in May 1977) and into the third programme adopted in February 1983.

What follows is a brief summary of progress to date under each of these three categories in the first and second Community environmental action programmes.

V — European Community action to protect the environment

Despite its relatively short life and the constraints imposed by the economic recession, the European Community's environmental policy has achieved notable results. In all, some 70 pieces of environmental legislation have been passed under the first (1973-77) and second (1977-82) action programmes.

Given the scale of the task involved in protecting the environment and the limited human and financial resources at its disposal, the European Commission decided to concentrate on the most immediate threat to the environment — pollution.

Most of the 70-odd environmental directives, regulations and decisions are therefore connected with efforts to control pollution.

Measures to reduce and prevent pollution and nuisances

Water pollution

Measures to curb pollution of fresh and sea water are aimed as far as possible at preventing pollution at source. They centre on a number of priority areas:

(i) The definition of quality objectives: a number of directives have been adopted establishing minimum levels of quality for fresh and sea water taking account of the various uses to which the water concerned will be put. Directives have been approved setting minimum quality standards for surface water, drinking water, bathing water, water supporting fish life and shellfish. Systems for regular surveillance and monitoring of water resources have also been set up.

(ii) The protection of the aquatic environment from pollution by dangerous substances: in May 1976, the Council of Ministers adopted a framework directive aimed at preventing pollution by products which, because of their toxicity, persistence and bio-accumulation pose a particular and lasting threat to the environment. This has been followed up by a directive limiting discharge of mercury into Community waters from the chlor alkali-electrolysis industry. Further proposals for eliminating pollution by other hazardous products, such as cadmium and aldrin, endrin and dieldrin and mercury used in industrial sectors have been presented by the Commission.

(iii) The protection of the sea against oil pollution: incidents of serious oil pollution in Community waters have become alarmingly regular in recent years — the *Amoco Cadiz* grounding off the Brittany coast in 1978 being only one in a series of major accidents. That disaster prompted the Council to ask the European Commission to draw up Community measures to combat marine oil pollution.

The Commission proposed the establishment of an EEC advisory committee on control and reduction of oil pollution at sea and an information system for preventing and combating oil spills. The task of the committee, composed of experts from the Ten, would be to coordinate national and EEC anti-oil pollution policies. It would make recommendations to the Commission on all problems connected with the implementation of its programme against oil pollution and act as a forum for the exchange of information between Member States.

The planned EEC information system would consist of a permanent inventory of staff, equipment and products for controlling oil spills and a compendium of national and regional contingency plans.

Unfortunately oil pollution is not confined to sensational major spills like the *Amoco Cadiz*. The sea is often regarded as an open sewer for dumping waste oils from ships or aircraft and for fuel-tank cleaning operations. The Community has concentrated its efforts to curb these problems on action at a wider international level and is signatory to a number of international conventions outlawing such dumping at sea (for details see below under 'International action'). Since the accession of Greece in January 1981, the Community has become the world's leading shipping power, controlling one third of registered tonnage and as such has both a major responsibility and a key influence in helping to avoid pollution at sea.

(iv) Measures specific to certain industries: because of the nature of their production processes, some industries are responsible for greater, and more harmful, water pollution. The titanium dioxide industry is one example where EEC action is in hand to reduce pollution. Under both action programmes, measures were envisaged to curb potential water pollution by energy producing industries through the discharge of cooling water into the sea or rivers from power stations.

Air pollution

The first steps to curb air pollution in the Community took place before the Community's environmental policy proper was implemented. In March 1970, as part of the EEC's industrial action programme, measures were adopted to cut down pollution by exhaust fumes from motor vehicles.

This has been followed up under the first and second environmental programmes with a number of other directives aimed at cutting air pollution caused by both petrol and diesel powered vehicles (including agricultural tractors) and limiting the sulphur content of certain liquid fuels and the lead content of petrol.

A directive has also been adopted setting up a system for the biological screening of the population to check body lead levels and a common procedure for exchanging surveillance and monitoring data on levels of sulphur dioxide in the air has been established.

One of the single most important moves was the adoption in July 1980 of a directive setting down limit and guideline values for sulphur dioxide and suspended particles in the atmosphere. This directive sets deadlines for the gradual reduction of amounts of SO_2 being discharged into the atmosphere by industry and from other sources.

Noise pollution

Six directives designed to reduce noise levels have been adopted by the Council and generally implemented by the Member States. They concern maximum permitted noise levels for motor vehicles, buses, heavy trucks, motorcycles, agricultural tractors and subsonic aircraft. A general measurement method for noise emitted by construction plant and equipment has also been adopted.

Seven draft directives are still being examined by the Council of Ministers. They seek to fix maximum permitted noise levels for different types of construction equipment, including air compressors and pneumatic picks, and, even closer to home, for lawn mowers. The proposals aim to reduce existing maximum noise levels and require manufacturers to provide details of noise levels as part of the users' information and to make it easier for official inspections to be carried out.

The Commission is also giving particular attention to noise in the home and is preparing a set of proposals making it compulsory for manufacturers of domestic equipment (washing machines, vacuum cleaners, kitchen mixers, etc.) to provide information on noise levels on product labels.

The Commission and the Member States are working together on a measurement programme of noise around airports covering current and anticipated future levels of traffic. The aim of the project will be to make different national measures against noise comparable.

Chemical products

In recent years, public authorities have faced increasing problems caused by the use (and abuse, such as illegal dumping) of chemicals, the effects of which on health and the environment were insufficiently tested beforehand.

Both the first and second environmental programmes lay special emphasis on the importance of controlling the manufacture and use of chemical compounds.

This has resulted in a series of directives which fall under three broad categories:

(i) Directives setting out Community standards for certain types of chemical products, for example, directives on the biodegradability of detergents and on the classification, packaging and labelling of pesticides, solvents, paints and varnishes.

(ii) Directives regulating the use of certain substances and preparations which proved dangerous in individual cases, for example, the directive limiting the use and sale of various dangerous substances and preparations (PCBs, etc.) and that banning the marketing and use of phytopharmaceutical products containing certain active substances. The Council decision recommending curbs on the use of chlorofluorocarbons — the gas propellants widely used in aerosols, which are thought to have a damaging effect on the ozone layer in the earth's upper atmosphere — also falls into this category.

(iii) Preventive measures introducing general control procedures: in 1979, the Community adopted a uniform system which requires that new chemicals be tested and certain data be

given to the Member States before marketing. This initial notification is supplemented by mandatory tests for health and environmental effects at certain levels of production and as seems necessary.

The chemical notification system applies to all chemicals marketed for the first time after 18 September 1979; thus it establishes an information system about new chemical substances that will require industries to test and to evaluate the potential risks of their products before marketing. It will enable the Community States to monitor, review and control dangerous chemicals before potential problems become serious.

In addition, the Commission is cooperating with the USA and other non-EEC countries on the application of Community legislation to their manufactured products and vice versa.

The so-called 'post-Seveso' directive is aimed at harmonizing measures required in the Member States to prevent and to limit the consequences of major accidents caused by certain industrial activities.

For the first time, Member States are required to consult each other and the citizens of neighbouring countries in the Community that might be affected by a major industrial accident. Thus the Community has reinforced its policy of preventing pollution throughout its territory by creating a direct responsibility to inform and to consult across national borders where transfrontier effects may be expected.

Measures to improve the environment and the quality of life

In its resolution of 17 May 1979, accompanying the adoption of the Community's second environmental action programme, the Council of Ministers called for greater emphasis to be laid on the preventive aspects of environmental policy and for particular attention to be given to the protection and rational management of land, the environment and natural resources.

They stressed that preventive management of natural resources and the inclusion of qualitative considerations in the planning and organization of economic and social development are essential conditions for further growth.

This shift towards a preventive policy is a major step in reconciling environmental protection with economic growth.

The protection and rational management of land. — Land in the Community is a very limited resource requiring careful husbandry. Land-use planning decisions taken today can determine the quality of the environment for some years to come.

In order to ensure that particularly sensitive land areas in the Community are not ill-used, the European Commission has developed an information system which, when completed, will enable decision-makers to have a picture of the state of the environment throughout the Community at any given time, to assess the condition of the environment over a period of time, to trace the impact of land-planning decisions on the environment and to spot signs of serious environmental degradation early enough to take remedial action.

In addition, studies have been carried out in particular zones already facing their own special problems, such as rural areas and forests (with a view to enhancing the good effects of agriculture and minimizing its harmful effects on the environment, particularly the problems involved in intensive farming and the use of pesticides); urban areas (with the aim of safeguarding the Community's rich architectural heritage, offsetting the problems of inner city areas and preserving the vitality of older, industrial areas); coastal areas (the Community has carried out case studies in Brittany and Puglia to investigate the problems involved in the practical implementation of a coastal planning policy. Particular attention will be paid to coastal erosion and the protection of beaches, especially from pollution and the impact of tourism); mountain areas (to try to ensure that development, for agriculture, tourism, energy or transport purposes, should not result in major degradation of the environment.

Protection of flora and fauna. — The use to which land is put can also have an effect on the conservation of flora and fauna. The Community has therefore adopted an integrated approach designed to protect both endangered species and their habitats.

Since the start of the environmental policy, the Community has made substantial progress in this field. On 2 April 1979, EEC governments adopted a directive on the protection of birds, which lays down general protection rules, restricts the number of species that can be hunted and the means used to hunt them, limits trade in certain species and sets out general rules for protecting habitats.

In January 1981, in response to widespread public concern, the Community decided to ban the import of certain whale products (oils, bone, etc.) used for commercial purposes.

Protection of wildlife, like pollution control, is a field where wider international action can yield far more effective results than measures taken simply at national or even Community level.

Recognizing this, the EEC Council urged the European Commission from the outset of the environmental policy to work closely with international bodies such as the OECD, the Council of Europe and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in the search for international conservation agreements.

The Community has become party to a number of international conventions designed to protect wildlife and their natural habitats including the 1975 Washington Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES), which restricts or prohibits trade in species threatened with extinction that are very rare; the Council of Europe Convention on the Conservation of European wildlife and natural habitats and the International Convention on the conservation of marine flora and fauna in the Antarctic.

The Community has also taken part in negotiations on an international convention on the conservation of migratory species and is participating in efforts to find ways of protecting wetlands (marshes and bogland) throughout the world that are used by birds on their annual migration.

Protection and management of natural resources

The Community's environmental policy lays great stress on the need to protect natural resources, particularly fresh water, which accounts for only 1% of the Earth's surface, and to combat all forms of waste.

In addition to its anti-pollution measures, the European Commission has carried out a series of studies aimed at building up a clear picture of existing groundwater supplies and potential sources within the Community, which could help guarantee minimum supplies to regions where water is scarce.

It has also assessed the water resources of each Member State in an average year and the estimated increase in demand for fresh water from the population and for use in agriculture, industry and energy production up to the year 2000.

The Commission also carried out a study on ways and means of saving drinking water through reduced consumption and waste and has launched a publicity campaign alerting the

general public to the need to conserve water and showing how domestic consumption can be cut.

It has also taken steps to encourage re-use and recycling of water in industry.

In the wider field of waste management, the Community has aimed to avoid or at least reduce the production of waste, the pollution it causes and the wastage of energy and raw materials it involves, thereby cutting the EEC's heavy dependence on imported energy and raw materials.

The Commission recently estimated that the Community produces about 2 000 million tonnes of waste each year, or 5 million tonnes a day. Of this some 950 million tonnes is agricultural waste, 350 million tonnes industrial and 90 million municipal (largely household waste).

Measures have been taken to encourage re-use and recycling of waste in industry and, particularly of waste paper, in public administrations. The Commission has proposed, for example, that, as far as the drinks industry is concerned, steps be taken to encourage recycling or re-use of glass bottles.

It is also examining better ways of dealing with 'problem' wastes, such as toxic or dangerous wastes and waste oil, whose disposal presents particular pollution or health hazards.

The Council has already adopted a framework directive on waste and on toxic and dangerous wastes outlining the general principles governing disposal.

It has also adopted three specific directives on waste oils, PCBs and PCTs and waste produced by the titanium dioxide industry.

General action: environmental impact assessment

One way to ensure better protection of the environment and more rational use of natural resources would be to require all major planning decisions to be assessed in terms of their potential impact on the environment and natural resources.

EEC governments are currently studying a proposal drawn up by the European Commission that would introduce a common system of environmental impact assessment into Member States' national planning procedures.

Under this proposal, major public or private development projects in agriculture, industry or infrastructure (road or bridge-building for example) that are deemed likely to have serious effects on the environment would be subject to a form of environmental impact assessment, prior to the work beginning.

An applicant planning such a project would be required to produce details of its potential polluting or other impact on the various environments (air, water, soil, noise and so on), its

potential effects on wildlife and their habitats and its implications for the rational use of natural resources.

A decision whether to go ahead with the project and under what conditions approval may be granted, would then be taken, balancing these environmental considerations against the economic, social and other benefits of the project in question.

Public education in environmental problems

Public concern about the state of the environmental was one of the stimuli that led the European Community to establish its environmental policy.

The need to keep the public, and especially the young, informed about the environment and constantly aware of the need to protect it has always formed part of the Community's environmental policy.

In February 1977, the Commission set up a network of pilot primary schools teaching the environment as a subject. The aim of the pilot project, now covering secondary schools, is to extend the number of schools teaching the topic and to improve methods and aids to teaching. To this end the Community has produced a number of brochures to assist teachers.

Training schemes have also been introduced for professional people, such as university staff, engineers and scientists and conferences, seminars and scholarships on all aspects of environmental protection have been organized. In addition, there is now a wide range of Community-published information available on the state of Europe's environment and efforts to improve it.

On a broader front, the Commission has given financial and technical assistance to the European Environmental Bureau, the Brussels-based environmental lobby group linking over 50 environmental organizations in the 10 Member States. EEC officials regularly meet Bureau members and participate in conferences and seminars organized by the EEB.

The international dimension

An increasing number of environmental problems, by their very nature, require international solutions. The Community's action programmes have called on the Commission, when drawing up EEC environmental legislation to cooperate closely with other international bodies, such as the OECD, the Council of Europe and the United Nations to ensure both that Community legislation keeps pace with wider international thinking and that the Community's voice is heard when agreements are being negotiated in international fora.

The Community has played a significant role in helping to find international solutions to environmental problems, particularly in the Mediterranean region, where it has a special interest.

In addition to the major wildlife conservation conventions listed above (under Protection of flora and fauna) the Community is a party to the following conventions:

(i) the 1979 Geneva Convention on the prevention of long-distance transboundary air pollution in Europe;

(ii) the 1976 Bonn Convention on the protection of the Rhine against pollution by chemicals;

(iii) the 1976 Barcelona Convention on the protection of the Mediterranean against pollution;

(iv) three protocols to the Barcelona Convention, concerning pollution from aircraft and ships, cooperation in cases of serious pollution by oil or other harmful substances and on pollution from land-based sources;

(v) the 1974 Paris Convention on the prevention of pollution from land-based sources;

(vi) the 1963 Berne Agreement setting up a commission for the prevention of Rhine pollution.

Given the transboundary nature of many environmental problems and the impact that certain national measures can have on the economies and trading relations with other nations, the environment has become a regular topic for discussion at bilateral level between the Commu-

nity and a number of countries, as the United States, Canada, Japan, Switzerland, Austria, Sweden, Norway and Finland. It has also become a feature of the Community's relations with the developing world. The recently-signed Lomé II agreement, under which the Community provides development aid and preferential trading relations to some 60 Third World countries, included a specific clause committing the partners to doing all in their power to prevent the agreement harming the environment.

Furthermore, the Commission of the European Communities is one of 10 signatories to the 'Declaration of Environmental Policies and Procedures relating to Economic Development', adopted at New York on 1 February 1980. The CIDIE was established with the objective of reviewing on an annual basis the implementation of this declaration.

VI — The future: the European Community's new environmental action programme — A shift in emphasis

The new Community environmental programme — the third, scheduled to run from 1982-86 — seeks to complete the shift in emphasis away from efforts simply to contain environmental damage to action to prevent it occurring in the first place.

Some movement towards a preventive environmental policy has taken place gradually in the course of the first and second action programmes.

To complete this shift, the programme says that the Community should seek to integrate concern for the environment into the planning and development of certain economic activities, through wider use of the environmental impact assessment, described above, particularly in agriculture, industry, transport, energy and tourism.

Such a move is justified, the programme says, because 'the resources of the environment are the basis of — but also constitute the limits to — further economic and social development and the improvement of living conditions'.

Environmental policy should therefore in future be designed to support the EEC's fundamental economic objectives and especially in the short term, that of economic recovery.

Environmental policy can play its part by helping create jobs in the environmental protection industry (design and production of pollution abatement equipment, such as filters and purifiers, etc.), by reducing pollution and nuisances, by economizing certain non-renewable raw materials and encouraging recycling of waste and the search for less-polluting alternatives and by preventing or reducing the possible negative effects of using energy sources other than oil, such as coal and nuclear power.

Although under the new programme, the first priority will remain to continue and expand work begun under the first two programmes on pollution prevention, wildlife conservation and rational management of resources, special attention will be paid to helping solve the problems of the 1980s — unemployment, the economic recession, lack of competitiveness in industry, energy and raw materials shortages.

For example, in the field of pollution control, measures agreed under the first two programmes will be followed up, particularly those dealing with:

(i) Pollution of water by oil and dangerous substances, where the Community will expand its efforts to protect the Rhine, the North Sea and the Mediterranean.

(ii) Transboundary air pollution, where the Community will seek to reduce further total emissions of SO_2 and other pollutants and will continue studies into the effects of certain chemicals, such as chlorofluorocarbons on the ozone layer and on climate.

Specific measures will also need to be taken to counter the increase in air pollution by SO_2, nitrogen oxides and other gases caused by the switch from oil to coal as energy supply shortages worsen.

Further action is envisaged to cut down pollution from motor vehicles (exhaust fumes, lead from petrol, etc.), although this will have to take greater account of the depressed state of the Community motor industry.

(iii) Chemicals, where controls on dangerous substances and preventive testing of new and existing chemicals will need to be supplemented and tightened up. The assessment of the dangers of chemicals to man and his environment will need to be harmonized to prevent differing assessments of the degree of risk in different Member States, which could lead to distortions of trade within the common market.

(iv) Noise, where, given the Community's difficult economic situation, the programme proposes to take greater account of the economic and social consequences of noise abatement measures, while still seeking to promote quieter products.

Particular attention will be paid to the link between noise reduction and energy savings and the possibility of developing standards that combine sound and heat insulation.

The introduction of a preventive environmental policy will have special importance for the rational use of land and natural resources.

The Community will continue work begun under the first and second action programmes with particular emphasis on environmental impact assessment and ecological mapping, to include resource considerations into physical planning.

The recovery, recycling and re-use of waste will become increasingly important and a major effort will be made to increase the amount of secondary raw materials recovered from waste. The potential for wider use of waste in agriculture and for energy production will also be a topic for particularly close study.

The development of new technologies which facilitate waste recovery or cut back on its production should also be encouraged.

The Community will continue to seek solutions to major environmental problems at international level. Special attention will be paid to the environmental difficulties of the Mediterranean region, since the enlargement of the Community southwards to include Spain and Portugal is scheduled to take place during the life of the third action programme.

Environmental protection should now also be regarded as an integral part of the Community's aid to Third World countries, both to prevent the export of pollution and other environmental problems to developing countries (for example, the sale to these countries of pesticides and other chemicals that are banned on environmental grounds from use in the Community) and to ensure that the development promoted by EEC aid does not result in irreversible environmental damage (like for example the destruction of tropical forests) to the detriment of both developing and industrialized nations.

Conclusion

By pursuing an environmental policy that forms an integral part of an overall strategy for achieving sound and lasting economic growth, the European Community is seeking to settle the growth versus environmental protection debate for once and for all.

The future of the environment in Europe will depend largely on the degree to which environmental considerations are genuinely integrated in future decisions on the planning and development of all aspects of the Community's economic and social life.

At present however, there are obstacles to securing this objective.

(i) Environmental policy is still regarded in some quarters as a 'marginal' policy, that can be pursued cyclically, that is allowed to develop in times of economic prospertiy but a prime target during recession when resources become limited.

(ii) Partly as a result of this attitude, the policy suffers from a shortage of financial resources and manpower, which has led to strict limitations being placed on its scope, This is reflected in the fact that while the action programmes outline an ambitious and far-reaching range of measures, staff and financial shortages have allowed only a narrow selection of areas to be dealt with.

(iii) Like other EEC policies, environmental policy has to work with the need to find compromise between 10 Member States, whose priorities and depth of commitment often vary widely. This tends to lead to a lowest common denominator approach, with legislation moving at the pace of the 'slowest' member government.

(iv) A similar compromise has to be found within the Commission itself, where different departments also have different priorities. Officials responsible for Community agriculture or industry policies may see efforts to protect the countryside and wildlife habitats or to impose stricter pollution requirements as a threat to the success of their own policies.

The water we drink and bathe in, the air we breathe, the countryside and wildlife are facts of life that we all take for granted and therefore often people remain unaware of the extent to which they are threatened.

There are already signs that some of these attitudes are changing. The adoption by EEC governments of the new action programme shows that there is an appreciation of the need for a preventive environmental policy. But the process will be a lengthy one and the political will to succeed, which it must be acknowledged has so far remained strong and resilient despite the recession, will be tested with each new concrete measure proposed.

Protecting the environment, preserving natural resources and curbing waste make sound economic sense — the Community has to import 56% of its energy (90% of its oil), 50% of its paper and wood pulp and 80-90% of its metals. The Commission estimates that the total value of 'wasted' waste each year in the Community is 10 000 million ECU. If this waste were recycled, between 5 000 and 7 000 million ECU could be saved every year.

But more important than the economic argument is the duty that each of us has to ensure that we pass on to our children an environment that is fit to live in and fit to enjoy.

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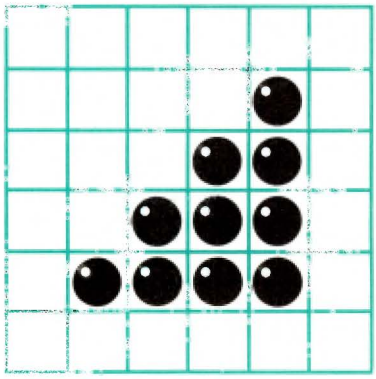
EN

Salmon and other fish have reappeared in the Thames. In the Federal Republic of Germany dust emissions from industrial plants have been cut by 65% in 10 years. Historic monuments which once seemed doomed have been restored to pristine whiteness.

Where there is a will and a way, the fight to protect and safeguard our environment can be effective.

For too long we believed that the water we drink and the air we breathe would effortlessly be ours forever.



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