

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

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AMENDED DRAFT

RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

AND OF THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENTS

OF THE MEMBER STATES MEETING WITHIN THE COUNCIL

on the continuation and implementation of a European Community

policy and action programme on the environment

(presented by the Commission to the Council pursuant to the

second paragraph of article 149 of the EEC Treaty and to the

second paragraph of article 119 of the EAEC Treaty)

COM(82) 616 final

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

On 16 June, the European Parliament discussed the draft action programme of the European Communities on the environment and adopted the ALBER report drawn up on behalf of the Committee of the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection. Certain amendments to its original text have been accepted by the Commission.

Concerning the draft Council resolution which precedes the text of the draft action programme, the Parliament asks the Council to commit itself to make available to the Commission the necessary resources for the implementation of the programme. Furthermore, the Parliament invited the Commission to draw up a list of priorities.

As far as the text of the draft action programme is concerned, amendments have been requested by the Parliament. They concern either drafting changes or clarifications made by the Parliament so that the original text of the draft programme takes more into account its preoccupations.

DRAFT

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The Council of the European Communities and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council note that the projects to which the appended programme will give rise should in some cases be carried out at Community level, and in others be carried out by the Member States.

With regard to the projects to be carried out by the Member States, the latter will supervise their proper execution, it being understood that for these projects the Council will exercise the co-ordinating powers laid down in the Treaties.

With regard to the projects in the programme to be carried out by the institutions of the European Communities,

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community,

Having regard to the draft from the Commission,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Parliament (1),

Having regard to the opinion of the Economic and Social Committee (2),

(1) OJ N° C

(2) OJ N° C

Whereas the Declaration of the Council of the European Communities and of the representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council of 22 November 1973 (1), calls for the implementation of a European Communities programme of action on the environment;

Whereas the Action Programme has been extended and amplified for the period 1977-1981 by the Resolution of the Council and the representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council of 17 May 1977 (2);

Whereas the tasks of the European Communities are laid down in the Treaties establishing the Communities;

Whereas in particular, in accordance with Article 2 of the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, part of the latter's task is to promote throughout the Community a harmonious development of economic activities and a continuous and balanced expansion, which cannot now be imagined without the efficient, long-term management of the environment's resources or of an improvement in the quality of life and the protection of the environment;

Whereas, consequently, the improvement of the quality of life and the efficient management of the natural environment's resources are among the fundamental tasks of the European Economic Community and whereas a Community environment policy would help accomplish this purpose;

Whereas the objectives and principles of this policy have already been approved by the Council;

Whereas the programme of action on the environment of 22 November 1973, which was extended and amplified on 17 May 1977, should be implemented in all its aspects and updated to ensure the continuity of the projects already undertaken and whereas new tasks should be undertaken in the period 1982 to 1986;

Whereas in particular, in addition to the projects already initiated (especially in the field of pollution reduction), the efficient management of all environmental resources requires the preventive side of the environment policy to be strengthened by the adoption and implementation of an overall strategy fully integrating environmental policy with socio-economic development;

APPROVES for this purpose the guidelines laid down in the Annex;

TAKES NOTE that the Commission will submit appropriate proposals for the implementation of this programme, notably in the fields in which an action at Community (or international) level is of particular importance such as :

(1) OJ N° C 112, 20.12.1973, p. 1

(2) OJ N° C 139, 13.06.1977, p. 1

- integration of environmental dimensions into other policies;
- development of a global approach concerning the reduction of pollution, in order to avoid the transfer of that pollution to the different areas of the environment;
- economic and social aspects of environment policy;
- dangerous substances introduced into the environment;
- reduction and indeed elimination of atmospheric, aquatic and acoustic pollution;
- better use of resources and waste management; development of clean technologies;
- conservation of certain endangered species and certain zones of community importance;

UNDERTAKES to act on these proposals within nine months of the date on which they were presented by the Commission or, as the case may be, of the date on which the opinions of the European Parliament and of the Economic and Social Committee were presented;

UNDERTAKES further to make available to the Commission the personnel and material resources necessary for the implementation of the third action programme, in particular through the funds for the community operations concerning the environment as requested by the European Parliament.

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ACTION PROGRAMME OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
ON THE ENVIRONMENT
(1982-1986)

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I INTRODUCTION

1. The declaration at the Paris Summit of Heads of State or Government of the Member States in October 1972 gave a decisive political impetus to the consideration given to the environment in planning the socio-economic development of the Community.

This impetus enabled the Council on 22 November 1973 (1) to adopt a Community Action Programme on the Environment which was updated on 17 May 1977 (2) in order to ensure the continuity of the projects already undertaken and to undertake new tasks for the period 1977 to 1981. The Community has therefore formulated an environment policy.

2. Originally the central concern was that, as a result of very divergent national policies, disparities would arise capable of affecting the proper functioning of the common market. That could happen with different product standards that lead to barriers to the free circulation of goods or with policies that imposed too different charges on firms and so created distortions of competition.
3. Now however, the common environmental policy is motivated equally by the observation that 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. It aims therefore not only to protect human health, nature and the environment but also to ensure that natural resources are well managed, in particular by introducing qualitative considerations into the planning and organisation of economic and social development. It cannot be dissociated, therefore, from measures designed to achieve the fundamental objectives of the Community.
4. The Community's environment policy, as indeed is true of the national policies as a whole, has brought substantial results in a relatively short period and despite growing economic problems.

The chief form which action has taken has been the preparation of legislation and other rules to reduce, and even eliminate, pollution and nuisances and to preserve the natural environment. Without doubt this has provided a basis and a Community frame of reference for the various sectors. There have been other forms of action in particular a review of new intervention instruments, the completion and co-ordination of research and measures to alert public opinion.

(1) OJ N° C 112, 20.12.1973

(2) OJ N° C 139, 13.06.1977

Initially the essential aim of the Community environment policy was the control of pollution and of nuisances; it has gradually assumed an overall, preventive character. This development offers the two-fold advantage of environmental protection measures at the lowest possible cost and of positive measures which support and complement economic development. In this connection, the establishment in the Community of a system of prior inspection of new chemical substances was the first mile-stone in a wider-ranging policy which is intended to take in at a later stage, industrial activities of a dangerous kind or which are likely to affect the environment to a significant degree.

Overall, the policy now makes it possible to ensure that certain measures take place at the right geographical and political level, to avoid certain difficulties with regard to the proper functioning of the common market, to provide a frame of reference for national policies and, finally, to provide incentives, at the different levels of action, for conserving natural resources and improving the quality of life.

Finally, at international level, the Community plays an active role in international conventions to which it is a contracting party and co-operates closely with international organisations dealing with environmental problems and with the authorities in certain non-member countries faced with the same problems as the Community.

5. At a time when the economic situation of the Community and of the Member States continues to worsen, the question arises as to whether or not the Community environment policy should be modified. The Commission and the Council have already taken into account the new economic conditions in carrying-out the first and second action programmes, especially by developing preventive measures. However, environment policy is a structural policy which must be carried out without regard to the short-term fluctuations in cyclical conditions, in order to prevent natural resources from being seriously despoiled and to ensure that future development potential is not sacrificed. Furthermore, public opinion is still very concerned about environmental matters and, despite current economic difficulties, continues to support measures to protect the environment.

The tasks to be undertaken during the period 1982 to 1986 should therefore have the same objectives and priorities, and be based on the same principles as those which have governed Community action in the past so that action to protect the environment can be continued, and indeed strengthened, to guarantee the quality of life for present and future generations.

The first aim is to complete the many projects provided for in the 1977-1981 programme which have not been fulfilled for a variety of reasons - mainly because of the discrepancy between the scale of the projects and the means available for implementing them.

The Commission intends to pursue work in progress to monitor the application of laws and regulations already adopted, to increase the effectiveness of the existing body of Community legislation.

6. However, consolidation and the continuation of the measures laid down in the 1973 and 1977 programmes must take into account the socio-economic context of the 1980s and the new political and geographical dimensions of the Community of Ten; nor must pre-accession negotiations in progress with two other states be forgotten. Economic recovery based on the full and extensive use of every resource (both human and natural) is an aim of vital importance to the economy of the whole Community. Accordingly, the environment policy will define the limits and the actions required to attain more balanced development without wastage.

The socio-economic context of the 1980s will mean that environmental action must not only take account of the major problems confronting the Community (employment, inflation, energy, balance of payments and growing regional disparities) but must also contribute to the efforts made in other ways to find solutions. This will be conditional on the deteriorating economic situation not being used as an excuse for weakening the environmental policy that is now under way.

Accordingly, environmental policy must be concerned :

- to help in creating new jobs by the promotion and stimulation of the development of key industries with regard to products, equipment and processes that are either less polluting or use fewer non-renewable resources;
- to reduce any form of pollution or nuisance, or of interference with spatial features, the environment or resources which create waste or unacceptable cost for the Community;
- to economize certain raw materials that are non-renewable, or of which supplies can be obtained only with difficulty, and to encourage the recycling of waste and the search for less polluting alternatives;
- to prevent or reduce the possible negative effects of using energy resources other than oil, such as coal or nuclear power, and to promote energy saving and the use of less polluting energy resources;

- to reinforce the implementation of the Information Agreement of 5 March 1973 (1) to avoid individual national measures affecting the proper functioning of the internal market or making the adoption of appropriate Community measures more difficult.

7. The enlargement of the Community and its new Mediterranean dimension make it necessary for environmental protection measures to contribute more effectively and specifically to protecting the Mediterranean Sea within the limits of overall policy for that area. Active Community participation in the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against pollution, and the protocols thereto, will provide the best protection for the economic, social and cultural values of the Mediterranean basin, preserve its common heritage and help the improvement, the political climate and the search for lasting peace in this region.

In the case of the North Sea, the Community's second international waterway, a more co-ordinated policy should be pursued. In particular, attention must be paid to the adverse ecological impact on the North Sea of (often mutually incompatible) human activities such as oil and gas recovery, sand and gravel removal, shipping and pollution by land-based sources and atmosphere. One of the top priorities must be to reach some form of co-ordinated administrative and legal policy that will safeguard to the fullest extent the continued existence of the North Sea as an important and immensely valuable ecological unit.

8. To intensify the above measures and implement a preventive environmental protection policy in a full and effective manner, the Community should seek to integrate concern for the environment into the planning and development of certain economic activities as much as possible and thus promote the creation of an overall strategy making environmental policy a part of economic and social development. This should result in a greater awareness of the environmental dimension, notably in the fields of agriculture, (including forestry and fisheries) energy, industry, transport and tourism.

Moreover, as the gaps between the levels of development of the different regions in the Member States widen, the Community's environment policy should pay more attention to regional aspects.

(1) OJ N° C 9, 15.03.1973 and OJ N° C 86, 20.03.1973

The Community's environment policy is also an important element in the strategy for industrial innovation the Commission recently proposed to the budgetary authorities. In fact certain measures, in particular those for fighting pollution and exploiting waste, could stimulate technological innovations and so contribute to improving the competitiveness of the Community's economy. The Community will continue its efforts by suitable measures.

To support the attainment of these objectives, the Commission intends to make increased use of the possibilities offered by the existing Community financial instruments. The Community financial instruments for the environment proposed to the Council will make it possible to supplement these aids by promoting the development of techniques and pilot projects in fields which are not eligible for assistance under the existing financial instruments.

II. DEVELOPING AN OVERALL STRATEGY

9. The ultimate objectives of environment policy are the protection of human health, the long-term availability of all the resources which determine the quality of life, of adequate quality and in sufficient quantity, namely, water, air, space - from both the land-use and landscape points of view - climate, raw materials, the built environment, and the natural and cultural heritage, as well as the maintenance and where possible, the restoration of the natural environment with suitable habitats for flora and fauna.

In view of their sometimes very close links, the sound management of these resources requires that an overall strategy should be conceived and put into practice. The need for such a strategy, recognized in principle in the First and Second Programmes, has gradually increased as the latter have been implemented. The policy now needs to be put in concrete form, and present and future measures arranged within an appropriate general framework, drawing inspiration especially from the World Conservation Strategy launched by UNEP, IUCN and WWF in March 1980.

Three principles are crucial, if that goal is to be achieved, and need to be restated; namely that each type of action must be applied at the most appropriate level and that prevention rather than cure should be the rule and that wherever possible attempts at restoration must be made.

It is necessary to seek the level of action - local, regional, national, Community or international - best suited to the problems in question; consequently, the Community level should be reserved for those measures which can be most effective there. This is particularly important, for instance, in spatial planning, where responsibilities are often very widely dispersed within the Community.

Conservation requirements, moreover, should be considered as early as possible in socio-economic development planning and decision-making processes.

This approach, which is also the most economic as far as the Community is concerned, will become an essential part of all socio-economic activity.

The following conditions must be met, if the principle of prevention is to have full effect :

- the requisite knowledge and information must be improved and made readily available to decision-makers and all interested parties, including the public;
- it is necessary to formulate and introduce procedures for judgment which will ensure that the appropriate facts are considered early in the decision-making processes relating to any activity likely to affect the environment significantly. Such procedures should be carried out in an ecological context, which will need to be gradually defined and will indicate the limits not to be exceeded to avoid jeopardizing the regenerative capacity of the ecosystem and the availability of natural resources;
- an effort must be made to achieve optimum distribution of resources;
- to monitor the implementation of adopted measures, to ensure their correct application and their adaptation if circumstances or new knowledge should so require;
- to strengthen the cohesion of Community and Member State environmental policies;
- training and public awareness with regard to the environment should be improved and intensified.

The Commission will elaborate ways and means of restoring the environment and submit proposals for their implementation on completion of its survey.

10. Dissemination of and access to research results

In implementing the various research programmes approved by the Council, the Commission will place greater stress on, in particular, those measures which are likely to sustain in the short, medium and long terms the present action programme. With this in view, it will also pursue its efforts to co-ordinate the Member States' environmental research programmes.

The Commission will continue its activities concerning the dissemination of scientific and technical data on the protection and improvement of the environment taking place simultaneously in the framework of the third IDST action plan and in the development of a European information market and a production market of its own.

The Commission will also continue to publish the results of pollution measurements compiled under the common information-exchange procedures approved by the Council in respect of surface water and air pollution.

The current "ecological mapping" project is a very relevant instance of efforts to make information on the state of the environment more accessible throughout the Community.

11. Procedures to ensure that environmental data are taken into account in planning and decision-making

Environmental impact assessment is the prime instrument for ensuring that environmental data is taken into account in the decision-making process. It should be gradually introduced into the planning and preparation of all forms of human activity likely to have a significant effect on the environment such as public and private development projects, physical planning schemes, economic and regional development programmes, new products, new technologies, and legislation.

Directive N° 79/831/EEC (sixth amendment to the Directive 67/548/EEC on dangerous substances) (1) was a first step in this direction at Community level.

The Commission has also sent the Council a proposal for a directive introducing environmental impact assessment into existing national procedures for the authorisation of new industrial developments and agricultural infrastructures (2).

If adopted, the directive will be an important step in achieving the effective integration of the environmental aspect into decision-making in respect of development.

Where appropriate, the Commission will, in the light of the experience acquired in these two areas, put forward proposals to the Council for the gradual extension of the field of application of environmental impact assessments.

The Commission will further take the necessary initiatives to see that all Community measures which are expected to affect the environment significantly are gradually subjected to prior assessment.

(1) OJ N° L 259, 15.10.1979

(2) OJ N° C 169, 09.07.1980

12. Optimal resource allocation

Care must be taken to ensure optimum use of resources. To this end it is necessary, before any new measures are actually taken, to analyse carefully their justification and their optimum effectiveness from the point of view of cost-benefit. The Commission will do everything necessary to strengthen this practice, which it has been applying in principle since it began its action.

The application of the polluter-pays principle (1) is of decisive importance in a strategy which is designed to make the best use of resources. Apportioning the costs of protecting the environment to polluters, as provided by this principle, constitutes an incentive to them to reduce pollution caused by their activities and to discover less polluting products or technologies. This principle is therefore the chief way of bringing market forces to bear so as to achieve optimum structuring within a market economy.

The polluter-pays principle is usually applied by subjecting polluters to standards and/or charges and it implies that, in conformity with the general principles of the EEC Treaty concerning State aids that public authorities do not finance investments required to reduce pollution.

However, in some cases the introduction of new obligations for this purpose could be delayed because the consequential financial burden can cause serious difficulties for older firms and thus for employment. Faced with this situation, the Commission, by two Decisions dating from 1974 and 1980, has accepted that Member States may grant aids, during a period ending in 1987 and under certain conditions, aimed at easing the introduction of new Regulations that could ensure adequate protection of the environment.

A particular area where State aids may be needed is in the protection of nature and of the landscape, aids which are usually given to local authorities or to voluntary organisations. Even if these aids do not contravene the provisions of the EEC Treaty concerning State aids, it is desirable to bring some of these aids into a Community context and so ensure their cohesion and thus increase their effectiveness.

Charges constitute one of the instruments for the application of the polluter-pays principle and they can provide an incentive to the introduction of anti-pollution measures to reinforce the application of standards and stimulate innovation, especially if residual pollution is also covered by the charge. It is necessary therefore to study carefully the fields where charging systems would allow the achievement of the objectives of environment policy more efficiently. However, care must be taken to ensure that any such charges do not, in their practical application, amount to a licence to pollute.

(1) The first Community action programme on the environment, title II, 5 (OJ No C 112, 20.12.1973) and the Council Recommendation of 3 March 1975 concerning cost allocation and action by public authorities on environmental matters (OJ No L 194, 25.7.75).

An environmental strategy at Community level should also be funded by financial resources specifically set aside for environmental purposes. Such instruments, which by their very existence would have a snowball effect and tend to stimulate the required "osmosis" between national and Community environmental policies, would put the Community in a better position to help implement a balanced environmental policy in all its regions.

The Commission has proposed the inclusion in its preliminary draft budget for 1982 of (admittedly symbolic) amounts for these purposes. An optimum form for Community financial intervention concerning the environment will have to be thought out on the basis of the experience which would be gained from using these appropriations.

Finally, the Commission is drawing attention to the need to deploy greater efforts on integrating environmental data more fully into national accounts. National accounts in their traditional form do not take account of most environmental costs nor the benefits of improving the environment because they are difficult to measure. Consequently it is important to improve indicators of environmental quality to supplement traditional national accounts that take inadequate account of the costs and benefits of improving the environment. Improvements should be achieved by promoting and harmonizing environmental statistics and introducing a common nomenclature of environmental parameters. Moreover, the inclusion of environment costs in GNP would be facilitated by the application of the polluter-pays principle and the use of charges to internalise external costs.

13. Applying Council decisions and the Information Agreement

The Commission will continue to examine very closely the incorporation of Community texts into national law, in particular :

- the forms of national legislation used to incorporate the Community texts, and
- the complete incorporation thereof in all regions of each Member State , especially those where environmental protection is not the sole responsibility of the central government;
- the publication of legal and administrative provisions intended to give effect to Community text.

The Commission will also continue to examine very closely the actual implementation at national level of Community regulations, directives and recommendations and will ensure that appropriate action is taken. This examination will also include a study of the sanctions available in the Member States in case of infractions.

At its meeting on 29 and 30 June 1981 the European Council "agreed that a concerted effort must be made to strengthen and develop the internal market". The Information Agreement on the environment of 5 March 1973 provides one important means for achieving progress in this field. The number of measures notified to the Commission pursuant to the Agreement fell from 41 in 1974 to 2 in the first half of 1981. The Commission will make a thorough examination of the way in which the Agreement has been applied in the nine years of its existence. This will include notably a comparison of the measures notified to the Commission by the Member States and all the measures adopted by them, and will bring out the different national interpretations of the provisions in the Agreement. After the review, the Commission will put forward appropriate proposals for strengthening the application of the Agreement. Following this review, the Commission will make whatever proposals may be necessary to strengthen the application of the Agreement.

14. Improvement and reinforcement of education in and public awareness of the environment

Consciousness of the importance of protecting and improving the environment is a necessary condition for more responsible behaviour towards it at individual level.

Beyond the individual level, it is of first importance that public opinion, informed mainly by socio-economic undertakings, should support the efforts made at national and Community levels in favour of the adoption and application of laws required to protect the environment. For this reason the Commission will continue its action to spread information and to promote awareness in this field. It will continue its support, where necessary and at the appropriate levels, of non-governmental organisations working in the environment field.

Particular attention will be given to the education of young people of school-going age. The network of pilot schools in the environmental field will be extended to the secondary education level and similar action for professional education will be considered.

III. PREVENTION AND REDUCTION OF POLLUTION AND NUISANCES IN THE DIFFERENT ENVIRONMENTS

15. It is first of all essential to combat the deterioration of the environment by reducing pollution and nuisances, in order to develop sound management of natural resources and to protect human beings.

For practical reasons, the Community and the Member States have most often carried out specific measures of this type in each environmental sphere separately. Although it will continue with this approach, the Commission will also pay great attention to co-ordinating

those measures. With this in mind, it will review in particular how different discharges of wastes which can affect many environments can be regulated as a whole, so as to avoid any transfer of pollution that might arise from only partial measures.

To contribute effectively to the conservation of the natural environment, the Commission will ensure that the application of Council directives and decisions does not result, directly or indirectly, in a reduction of environmental quality. It will also study how the total discharges of certain substances could gradually be reduced, with a view to submitting proposals to the Council.

The monitoring of pollution in the different environments also needs to be improved, especially in the context of UNEP's Global Environmental Monitoring System.

Sectoral studies conducted in various Member States have shown that some forms of pollution and nuisance help to bring about an irreversible deterioration of the Community's natural heritage. A joint effort must be made to ensure that the latter is protected. To start with, the Commission will draw up an inventory of those sites which are particularly threatened and will continue studies to determine the criteria for establishing the cause-effect relationship in respect of different types of pollution and nuisance.

In carrying out this Programme, the Commission will pay special attention to pollution which affects more than one Member State at once. The Community will also have to increase its contribution to international efforts to combat transboundary pollution affecting Member States and non-member countries.

In particular, in order to overcome certain difficulties caused by the application of Council directives and decisions in the environmental field which may affect the economies of certain regions in the Community, the Commission has proposed that a financial instrument for the environment should be set up to act as an incentive and a catalyst.

16. Fresh water and sea water

The Commission will continue with the measures begun under the first two programmes and will implement the directives and decisions adopted by the Council with a view to preventing and reducing water pollution. The following are the main areas concerned :

- the control of pollution by dangerous substances;
- the control of pollution from oil spills;
- monitoring and control with a view to improving water quality and reducing pollution.

17. As regards the pollution of the aquatic environment by the dangerous substances covered by Directive 76/464/EEC (1), it is essential to adopt the first implementing measures as soon as possible. Future action will involve the careful selection of priorities and the use of simplified procedures, especially with regard to the substances in List I. Particular attention will be paid to harmonizing programmes for reducing pollution by the substances recorded in List II of the same Directive.

To make this action more effective, the Commission will review measures for reducing indirect or dispersed discharges of certain substances and, if necessary, will send the appropriate proposals to the Council.

18. As regards marine pollution by hydrocarbons, the serious consequences of illegal deballasting and repeated accidents - including some fairly recent ones - highlighted the inadequacy of attempts in the last decade to reduce this form of pollution and the urgent need for effective action at all levels.

To combat hydrocarbon pollution effectively, it is first of all essential to accelerate the implementation of a preventive policy. The Commission will therefore take steps to ensure that the international conventions concluded under the auspices of IMCO and the ILO are quickly applied, and that the opportunities afforded by these conventions are properly used.

In the event of an accident, the authorities in the Member States concerned must be able to intervene quickly in a co-ordinated manner and with sufficient means. It is the Commission's wish to contribute effectively to such action and it will therefore act to bring into service the information system adopted by the Council while completing the study of the problems mentioned in its Communication to the Council of 26 June 1980 and will make the relevant proposals. The Commission will co-ordinate its work with that carried out under the Barcelona Convention on the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution and the Bonn Agreement on Pollution of the North Sea (2). During this preparatory work, the Commission will regularly consult the Advisory Committee on the control and reduction of pollution caused by hydrocarbons discharged at sea which it set up on 25 June 1980 (3).

19. The Commission will supervise the technical application of the Council directives and decisions, especially with regard to the common information-exchange procedure approved on 12 December 1977 (4) as well as to the regular reports and the programme laid down in

(1) OJ No L 129, 18.05.1976

(2) The Conventions are mentioned in Council Recommendations 78/584/EEC and 79/114/EEC (OJ No L 194, 19.07.1978 and OJ No L 33, 08.02.1979)

(3) OJ No L 188 of 22.07.1980

(4) OJ No L 334, 24.12.1977

the Council directives. As regards fresh water, studies will be carried out by the Commission to prevent the dumping of organic and certain inorganic substances that accelerate the process of eutrophication as well as to reduce thermal pollution which is caused by production processes and which, in addition to interacting with other forms of pollution, represents a senseless waste of energy.

20. Finally, the Commission will continue to take part in the international conventions on the protection of fresh and sea water to which the Community is a Contracting Party and will negotiate the Community's accession, as and when the Council decides, to the other conventions which have the same objective. A particular effort will be made to clean up the Rhine under the aegis of the International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine against Pollution. The Community itself shall be prepared to make an appropriate contribution to the solution of the pollution of the Rhine, especially by salt, as called for in the European Parliament's resolution of 20 November 1981. The problem of pollution of the river Meuse, which flows through three Member States, will also be carefully considered by the Commission in the coming period. The Commission will also extend its measures aimed at the protection of the North Sea.

Efforts to protect the Mediterranean will likewise be stepped up. The Commission has already entered in its draft budget for 1982 appropriations which will help to give the Community a more vigorous and effective presence in this region.

21. Atmospheric Pollution

As regards the control of atmospheric pollution, the Commission will continue its efforts to establish air-quality standards. As to pollutants which are produced by a large number of scattered sources - i.e. ubiquitous pollutants such as nitrogen oxides and hydrocarbons - the Commission will continue to study the possibility of drawing up Community standards, notably in respect of photochemical oxidants. As regards the pollutants produced by a limited number of sources with a small radius of effect such as fluorine, cadmium, mercury and carbon monoxide, the Commission will study the effectiveness of regionally applied standards.

For some ubiquitous pollutants, a policy will have to be devised which initially will stabilize, and thereafter gradually reduce total emissions by establishing emission standards, where necessary, for certain sources. This would apply notably to large, fixed sources with high stacks which distribute pollutants over a wide radius. This action will form part of the Commission's contribution to the effort to resolve the acid-rain and trans-boundary pollution problem being organised under the Geneva Convention on Long-Distance Trans-Boundary Atmospheric Pollution, under the auspices of the Economic Commission for Europe.

Coal is another case where emissions can be restricted. Energy supply problems will make it necessary to resort to other sources, notably coal, but will create further, particularly serious pollution problems in certain regions. Specific measures will have to be taken to reduce the discharges of pollutants produced by burning this fuel especially SO₂, nitrogen oxides and suspended particulates.

They should be accompanied by the development and promotion of new less-polluting technologies.

The Commission will study how to strengthen the measures to control pollution from motor vehicles. It will in particular study, together with interested parties, the possibility that all new cars put on the market after a certain date be required to use anti-pollution devices or fuels which considerably reduce the present level of exhaust pollution, and make appropriate proposals. It will draw up long-term guidelines for the motor vehicle sector in general, and in so doing take account, inter alia, of the need for the European motor vehicle industry to meet the strict environment protection norms laid down by its major competitors such as the USA and Japan.

The Commission will also tackle the problems connected with the environmental impact of municipal waste, incinerating plants and of sludge from municipal sewage treatment plants.

Certain technical support measures will have to be taken, such as the more widespread use of emission inventories and the development and application of mathematical models representing the distribution of pollutants. Even closer attention should be paid to the economic consequences of all the proposed measures.

Work on the harmonization of measuring methods will be continued and developed more systematically.

The Commission will continue to study the effects of certain chemicals, such as chlorofluorocarbons, on the ozone layer in the stratosphere and on the climate. It will also continue its measures to restrict the utilisation of emission of these products by monitoring the marketing of existing chemical products. To this end it will draw up new forms of agreement with the economic interests concerned and take part in the negotiations for a framework agreement on the protection of the ozone layer which are being prepared under the UNEP.

22. Chemicals

The Member States have joined with industry in applying Community measures for the prohibition of substances dangerous to the environment as well as for the preventive testing of new and existing chemicals. However, the measures will need to be supplemented or improved.

The Commission and the Member States must set up proper procedures for consultation and co-operation. This is particularly true of the Sixth Amendment to the 1967 Directive on dangerous substances, the application of which requires a very considerable effort by the competent national authorities and the Commission. To facilitate the implementation of the Directive, close co-operation between the competent national authorities should be encouraged. The Commission will therefore set up a co-ordinating committee, consisting of representatives of the Member States, to supervise the monitoring of chemical substances.

In addition the Commission will continue its work on updating the directives already adopted on dangerous substances and preparations.

Further, the assessment of the impact of chemicals on man and the environment will have to be harmonized to avoid differing assessments in the various Member States, which would be detrimental to the proper functioning of the common market. The methods should be applied systematically to both new and existing substances. Accordingly, the Commission will draw up at regular intervals lists of existing dangerous substances which require priority assessment. It will be assisted in this task by the Scientific Advisory Committee to examine the toxicity and ecotoxicity of chemical compounds, which was set up in 1979.

Measures which can lead to international agreements on toxic substances should also be intensified. More specifically, it is necessary to determine how the mutual recognition of specific test data, assessment data and, if possible, assessment procedures, can be achieved and to create the appropriate conditions. This could be done either bilaterally with certain non-member countries or internationally through, say, the OECD.

23. Noise

In view of the Community's economic situation, future noise-abatement measures, while still aimed at the promotion of quieter products, will give much great consideration to their socio-economic consequences.

Particular attention will be paid to the connection between noise reduction and possible energy savings.

Further, to give more consideration to the environmental impact of different types of noise and to avoid devising solutions that are too partial, a greater effort will be made :

- to determine simple physical indicators with a view to evaluating the quality of a particular acoustic environment;
- to explore the links between these indicators and the reactions of the populations subjected to different types of noise source, whether isolated or combined;

- to harmonize methods of forecasting levels of exposure to noise.

These different items are also studied and discussed at international level.

Standards for combining sound and heat insulation properties will be studied.

Particular interest will be paid to the problems of mechanical vibrations, especially as regards the protection of the Community's cultural heritage.

More generally, the Commission will seek to speed up the work being done on standardisation by various competent bodies.

To accomplish these objectives, the Commission will continue to take an active part in the standardisation work being done by organisations such as ISO, CEI and IUR, and in the special field of aircraft noise by ICAO and the ECAC (1).

24. Waste

Whereas waste production gives rise to problems of resource management, especially on account of the volume and nature of the wastes, treatment and disposal often create pollution and nuisance problems.

With regard to the second aspect, the Commission will see to it that the provisions regarding the treatment and inoffensive disposal of waste contained in the relevant Directives (2) already adopted by the Council are applied and will take the supplementary measures necessary, particularly for dangerous and toxic wastes.

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- (1) ISO = International Standards Organisation
CEI = International Electrotechnical Committee
IUR = International Union of Railways
ICAO = International Civil Aviation Organisation
ECAC = European Civil Aviation Conference

- (2) OJ N° L 194, 25.07.1975
OJ N° L 108, 26.04.1976
OJ N° L 54, 25.02.1978
OJ N° L 84, 31.03.1978

25. Technology and pollution

Preventive action designed to reduce pollution at source will, wherever possible, gradually replace attempts to control the effects of pollution and nuisances. The development of new production technologies and the design of new products will not only help make the management of natural resources more efficient but will also form a major element in the prevention of pollution.

IV THE PROTECTION AND RATIONAL MANAGEMENT OF LAND, THE ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

26. The rational management of land

Land in the Community is a very limited and much sought-after natural resource. The way it is used very largely conditions the quality of the environment. Physical planning is therefore one of the areas where a preventive environment policy is very necessary and very beneficial.

For this reason, policy efforts need to be reinforced, at both national and Community levels in order :

- to protect and conserve more successfully those zones which fulfil important ecological or cultural functions (natural or semi-natural ecosystems, countryside, grade 1 agricultural land, ground water protection areas);
- to ensure the integrated management of regions which are particularly sensitive because of their environmental importance and their attraction to economic developers, e.g. coastal regions or certain mountainous areas;
- to enhance the positive and reduce the negative effects on the environment of agriculture, which together with forestry covers more than 80% of all Community territory. In this respect, the guidelines on rural land set down in the Programme of 17 May 1977 remain valid. Within these limits, the Commission will place special emphasis on the prior evaluation of the environmental effects of the major programmes and technical projects.

Since land usage can be significantly affected, most often irreversibly, by certain Community sectoral policies (e.g. in agriculture, regional development, energy and transport) the Community must help achieve these objectives.

Work will continue therefore along two main lines :

- the search for solutions to the problems shared by the different Member States and the widest possible distribution of the common stock of knowledge (through manuals of integrated management, guides, information schemes, etc.);

- the incorporation of these objectives into Community policies, especially by the development of suitable procedures as well as by the use of comparable information on the state of the environment at Community level ("ecological mapping").

27. The conservation of fauna and flora

Genetic variety which is part of common heritage, constitutes an important economic resource and is an essential factor in providing ecological balance.

As a general rule, the measures taken to protect the environment have also had a beneficial effect on the fauna and flora. The protection of the latter, however, also requires specific measures and, to make these effective, the Community provides an important stage between the national level (often too narrow a base) and the world level (where the institutional framework for binding action is entirely lacking). The specific measures needed are :

- the conservation of habitats;
- monitoring the collection of wild fauna and flora;
- monitoring or banning of trade in endangered species and in goods or products derived from these species.

The last point impinges directly on Community responsibilities and therefore requires rules established at Community level because the unity of the market and the freedom of trade may be affected.

As to the collection of wild fauna and flora, national rules would have to be harmonized to an adequate extent, while respecting the variety of national situations.

The main problem is the conservation of habitats where their gradual, irreversible disappearance in many cases constitutes the chief threat to the survival of species. While it is recognised that local, regional and national responsibilities are decisive in this case, a Community framework is becoming essential if greater cohesion is to be given to such efforts. Such a framework would ensure that a network of properly protected biotopes, sufficient in both extent and number, and inter-linked in a rational fashion, was set up and maintained. The network should be designed in such a way as to guarantee - as far as the habitat is concerned - the survival of all species native to the Community. This would be made much easier if it were possible to use Community financial resources, and in particular those destined for the protection of the environment. One cost-effective use of these resources may be to grant support to voluntary organisations, within a framework of appropriate rules, to manage nature reserves.

The Commission will also see to it that the policies pursued at Community level do not have an unacceptable effect on important existing biotopes. The environmental impact of grants made or proposed within the framework of the regional, industrial energy, transport, tourism and agricultural policies should be scrutinized so that they make a greater contribution to the achievement of these conservation goals. In the context of CAP, the EEC directive relating to less-favoured areas should also be examined to ascertain if these objectives could be achieved.

In particular the Commission will give consideration to the needs of nature conservation over trade requirements where the protection of endangered plant and animal species and the survival of rare ecosystems are at stake.

Finally the Community will have to play an important role in the international conventions for the conservation of species e.g. those of Washington, Berne and Bonn. Similarly, the Community should also examine the possibility of acceding to the Antarctic Treaty with a view to doing everything possible to protect the marine ecosystems from the adverse effects of indiscriminate oil and mineral exploitation of the Antarctic.

28. The rational management of water resources

The Commission's role in this sphere consists primarily in promoting their rational use and in improving methods for evaluating their availability.

So far, information has not always been distributed in a satisfactory way, and the vulnerability of bodies of water has not always been fully appreciated. The situation with regard to the Community's water resources is thus beginning to cause some anxiety and, in consequence, the conservation of these resources is a factor which must be included in all decision-making.

The first steps are:

- to carry out the objectives laid down in the 1977-81 programme;
- to update and complete the data on the availability of the Community's water resources;
- to complete the study for the overall report on ground water resources by a further study of their quality and vulnerability.

The resulting information will contribute to the better management of these resources and especially of ground water. It could also improve the use of existing resources in the face of increasing consumer demand.

Finally, particular attention will be paid to supply problems in regions of shortage and areas where over-exploitation of resources is endangering the quality of the environment. Here the Commission will conduct a survey of areas where the diversion of fresh water is having detrimental effects on the natural environment. It will submit proposals aimed at restoring the status quo, in particular proposals allowing restrictions to be placed on the consumption of fresh water for industrial purposes. Special attention will be paid to the impact of ground water diversion on vulnerable environments like heathland, woodland and dunes.

All these measures will form the Community's contribution to the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade declared by the United Nations for the period 1980-1990.

29. The management of waste

The Community will continue its action described in the Resolution of 17 May 1977, bearing in mind the following three main objectives of waste management policy in all areas of activity:

- to reduce the quantity of non-recoverable waste, and ultimately to abolish it;
- to recover, recycle and re-use waste for raw materials and energy;
- to manage non-recoverable waste properly and dispose of it in a harmless manner.

Greater emphasis will be placed on the recovery, recycling and re-use of waste, and on the prevention of waste and on product design which facilitates recycling.

In accordance with the guidelines laid down by the Committee on Waste Management (1) this action should concentrate mainly on the agricultural and energy uses of waste.

Generally speaking, one of the Community's principal tasks here will be the more extensive recovery of secondary raw materials from waste in order to save resources; the intention here is to contribute to the solution of problems of supply difficulties, high raw materials costs and the currency problems associated therewith.

(1) OJ N° L 115, 1.05.1976, p. 73

The whole problem of treating household waste (machinery, separate collections, cost of discharge, etc.) and its close links with recycling will receive particular attention.

As far as waste disposal is concerned, Community rules on the management of toxic and dangerous wastes in particular should be supplemented and reinforced, by progressively substituting re-use for disposal of this waste.

As to the prevention of waste, the development of new technology which facilitates waste recycling or which removes the production of waste should be encouraged. Given the importance of waste management for the Community's economy, the Community must be able to provide proper incentives and have suitable financial instruments at its disposal.

It will in particular examine whether differences in legislation on chemical wastes (or in the application of legislation) is creating an extra-Community traffic in dangerous wastes with implications not only for competition but also for the protection of the environment.

In order to promote the above-mentioned objectives, the Commission will :

- publish regularly the balance sheet of available raw materials and available secondary raw materials;
- start an incentive scheme for the recovery of secondary raw materials;
- start an incentive scheme for the extended use of products.

30. Technology and resources

Clean technologies have different purposes but these are complementary: reduced pollution, reduced arisings of waste, the most rational husbanding of natural resources - energy and raw materials.

Clearly, a balance must be found, case by case, between these three objectives, since, even though they may not be mutually exclusive, they cannot always be achieved at the same time. Such a compromise can sometimes be found by modifying the production technology or by altering the design of the particular product. A practical, sectoral approach is therefore needed. On 9 April 1979, the Commission was invited by the Council of Environment Ministers :

- to analyse and compare the policies of the various Member States for encouraging the development of clean technologies and to prepare recommendations on the most effective ways of supporting the authorities in that development;

- to identify, from work being done by the UN Economic Commission for Europe at Geneva, the main industries concerned and the best technologies developed in the Member States;
- to promote the exchange of knowledge on these technologies between the Member States;
- to put forward within the framework of the Community's environmental research programme, proposals for stepping up efforts on clean technology.

The Commission will continue these measures in co-operation with the industries concerned. Moreover particular attention will be paid to methods of analysing new technologies so that their costs and benefits can be objectively assessed.

The Commission will suggest suitable measures on the basis of the results obtained. The creation of suitable financial instruments would make it possible to promote the development of clean technologies.

V ACTION AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

31. Action within international organisations and agencies, and co-operation with non-member countries

The number of environment problems of world-wide dimensions today is continually increasing. This is due either to their very nature, which may require a global solution, or to the trans-boundary effects of certain forms of pollution, or to the repercussions which some national measures can have on the international economy and on trade flows.

The Community has therefore an obligation to continue and intensify its international commitment by playing an active role in the various organisations responsible for the general content and policy of international action on the environment, in order to help produce joint solutions and to see that due attention is paid to the Community measures in respect of the environment.

The Community will continue to speak in these bodies with a single voice, using to advantage the influence it has acquired in other areas of international co-operation.

More specifically, it will use this influence to ensure that plans drawn up at the international level - such as those of the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Conservation Strategy of the IUCN - are actually implemented and that the Community plays its part in this process. In particular the Commission will initiate meetings of experts from the Member States to go through the WCS so as to identify areas, e.g. the protection of the tropical rain-forest, Antarctica, endangered species etc., where further

international action by the Community is possible and desirable. In addition it will promote the development of international legislation on the environment. As far as the Law of the Sea is concerned, the Commission will continue to press for environmental considerations to be taken fully into account. The Commission will examine the legislation already introduced by several Member States regarding deep-seabed mining and will if necessary make proposals for a Community deep-seabed mining regime which gives proper weight to environmental considerations and to the need to safeguard the marine wilderness.

As regards relations in respect of the environment with non-member countries, the Commission will continue and develop the bilateral co-operation which it has begun with several countries, intensifying the exchange of information and experience in areas of common interest; it will take pains to ensure, in particular, that the application of environmental legislation in those countries does not create any non-tariff barriers to trade, or through the granting of aid, give rise to any distortion of competition.

Furthermore, for geopolitical, economic and cultural reasons, the Community is directly affected by pollution and development problems in the Mediterranean region. It is imperative, therefore, that it should make a more effective and specific contribution to the sound management of resources in that region and, to solving such problems by introducing any steps which it feels are appropriate under the Action Plan for the Mediterranean to which it is a signatory. It will also take steps to improve co-ordination on approaching the problems concerning the North Sea.

The Community will also ensure that practical use is made of the opportunities for action concerning the environment which spring from the co-operation agreements with Mediterranean countries and from the Euro-Arab Dialogue.

32. Co-operation with the developing countries on environmental matters

The second energy crisis as well as the deteriorating situation of the poorest countries have re-focussed international attention on relations between industrialised and developing countries. This was a prominent topic at the Ottawa summit and will be the main focus at a series of major international conferences on development: Ottawa summit, Nairobi conference on new energy sources, Paris meeting on the least developed countries, Cancun summit on the North-South dialogue.

At the same time, it has become clear that environmental protection is not the preserve of industrialised countries but an essential component of development. Awareness of the close link between development and protection of the environment is growing: highlighted by the Interfutures Report and the work of UN agencies,

it has been restated in the recent report of the Independent Commission on International Development, among others. Moreover, more and more governments and lending institutions are gradually integrating the environmental dimension with their aid programmes.

The Community, which has already taken account of the environment/development relationship in its present environment action programme and also in the second Lomé Convention and in the agreements with the Mediterranean countries, should henceforth regard environmental protection as an integral part of its aid to development policy. Moreover, by signing on 1 February 1980, together with eight multilateral development institutions, the declaration of environmental policies and procedures relating to economic development, the Community recognised the importance of environmental protection to the success of development policies and undertook to make it an objective of the co-operation programmes and projects carried out under its co-operation agreements with developing countries. For its part, the European Parliament has adopted a resolution concerning compliance by the Community with the aims of the World Conservation Strategy by giving effect to them within all its policies (1).

The seriousness of the environmental position in developing countries stems from the pressure of population, often increasing, on the surroundings in the poorest countries as well as from unwise use of resources. In addition the creation of modern industries or agricultural developments can result in new threats to the environment resembling those found in industrialised countries.

To contribute to resolving these problems, the Community, in co-operating with developing countries should promote conditions for lasting economic development which respects the interdependence of development, environment, population and resources. The Community will have regard to environmental problems both in drawing up its development policies and in implementing the Lomé Convention and other co-operation agreements. Under the provisions of these agreements, the Community will help these countries to tackle the environmental problems with which they are faced and to rectify existing damage, as well as to manage efficiently the resources they possess. It will be specially receptive to requests for technical assistance in training environmental specialists.

The priority aims will be conservation of tropical forests, desertification, water management, introduction of agricultural systems and forms of energy-use which are compatible with the environment. In order to identify as accurately as possible these problems in the areas particularly affected, thereby helping to realise the objectives of the World Conservation Strategy, the Commission will actively support the development of national conservation strategies in the developing countries. It will pay constant attention to this aspect in its activities under the

(1) Resolution of 20 May 1980, OJ N° C 47 of 16.06.1980, p. 27

Convention of Lomé and provide appropriate financial and technical support to this end. Particular attention will be given to education and information activities so that the developing countries will become able to undertake these tasks by themselves in future.

The Community will continue its action to encourage environmental protection within international organisations and negotiations concerning development.