

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

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COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL

concerning the state of progress of the European Community's environment
programme as at 15 November 1976

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COMMUNICATION OF THE COMMISSION CONCERNING THE
STATE OF PROGRESS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY'S ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
AS AT 15 NOVEMBER 1976¹

As the Council is starting to discuss the draft resolution on the continuation and implementation of a European Community policy and action programme on the environment for the next five years², the Commission, in answer to the wish expressed by the Council Working Party on the Environment, will describe below the progress achieved in the work at Community level since 22 November 1973, both in the field of pollution control and in that of the improvement of the environment.

PART I: POLLUTION CONTROL

I. Objective assessment of the dangers to human health and the environment presented by pollution.

Annexed hereto is a detailed account of the work carried out with a view to assessing objectively the dangers to human health and the environment presented by pollution. The work related primarily to lead and its compounds organohalogen and organophosphorus compounds, hydrocarbons with probable carcinogenic effects, sulphur compounds associated with suspended particles, oxides of nitrogen and carbon, photochemical oxidants, asbestos, vanadium, inorganic micropollutants and noise. This work has led to the drafting of reports and, in some cases, of draft directives which are discussed in detail in the Annex hereto.

¹ see Council Declaration of 22 November 1973 (OJ No C 112, 20 December 1973).

² see OJ No C 115, 24 May 1976.

II. Prevention and Reduction of water pollution.

1. Fresh water

Some very important work has been undertaken at Community level in relation to combatting fresh water pollution and some striking results have been achieved. The work was especially concerned with :

- the definition of quality objectives;
- the reduction of pollution caused by certain dangerous substances discharged into the aquatic environment;
- the reduction of pollution caused by certain industrial activities;
- the participation by the Community in International Conventions.

A. Quality objectives

1. Directives adopted by the Council

On the Commission's proposal, the Council adopted two directives :

- a directive on the quality required of surface waters intended for the abstraction of drinking water, adopted on June 16, 1975⁽¹⁾;
- a directive concerning the pollution of fresh and sea bathing water, adopted on December 8, 1975⁽²⁾.

These two directives fix the parameters and values corresponding to the specific use and functions of these two types of water.

2. Proposals for directives and decisions forwarded to the Council by the Commission.

The Commission has forwarded to the Council on July 31, 1975 a draft directive relating to the quality of water for human consumption (3).

(1) O.J. L N° 194 of 25.7.1975
(2) O.J. L N° 31 of 5.2.2976
(3) O.J. L N° 214 of 18.9.1975.

On 2 August 1976 the Commission sent the Council a proposal for a directive on the quality requirements for waters capable of supporting freshwater fish¹.

Finally, on 30 April 1976 the Commission sent the Council a proposal for a Council Decision establishing a uniform procedure for the exchange of information on the quality of surface fresh water in the Community².

The latter proposal is aimed at organizing and developing exchanges of information between the pollution surveillance and monitoring networks so that a better insight can be gained into the fresh water pollution situation in the Community, comparisons can be made and the effects of the application of national and Community legislation on pollution levels can be monitored.

A. Proposals for directives being prepared and other work in progress within the Commission

With the help of a panel of national experts set up by the Commission in 1972 (the panel has met about ten times since then and has set up numerous ad hoc sub-groups), the departments of the Commission are currently drawing up proposals for directives relating to:

- the quality of water for agricultural use,
- the protection of aquatic life in general,
- the quality of water for use in industry,
- the methods of measurement and sampling frequencies in respect of surface waters for the human consumption.

Furthermore, in order to establish common methods of reaching and maintaining quality objectives, an analytical and critical study of experiments at national level in this field has been undertaken.

There was a preliminary exchange of views on the results of this study at the eight plenary meeting of the Working Party on Water Quality.

The results showed that the use of mathematical models as management aids should be encouraged and that an effort must be made to develop overall decision-making models, that is to say models concerning the qualitative and quantitative aspects of water management.

¹OJ No C 202, 28 August 1976.

²OJ No C 133, 14 June 1976.

Among the measures on which only a preliminary exchange of views has been held attention should be drawn to the joint investigation and determination of the minimum satisfactory long-term quality requirements to be met by the different components of the Community's environment. No consensus of opinion was reached on the direction and scope of such measures at this meeting. The Commission intends to draw up a basic document which will be submitted to the national experts at one of their next plenary meetings.

B. Reduction of pollution caused by certain dangerous substances discharged into the aquatic environment

1. Directive adopted by the Council

On 4 May 1976 the Council adopted a Directive on pollution caused by certain dangerous substances discharged into the aquatic environment¹.

This very important Directive:

introduces a system of prior authorizations for the discharge of a number of dangerous substances into the aquatic environment;

provides for the laying down of limit values and quality objectives for the substances on a "black list";

also provides for the establishment of programmes designed to reduce pollution caused by the discharge of substances on a "grey list".

2. Work in progress within the Commission

With the help of national experts who met for the first time on 15 and 16 July 1976, the Commission is currently drawing up a proposal for a directive on the protection of underground water against pollution caused by the discharge of dangerous substances.

Furthermore, the work begun pursuant to the Directive of 4 May 1976, principally with a view to drawing up proposals for directives laying down limit values and quality objectives for the substances on the

¹OJ No L 129, 18 May 1976.

"black list" has been started with the help of a panel of national experts. The principal result of the work has been to enable definitions to be drawn up of those substances which should be given priority treatment, i.e. mercury, cadmium, aldrin, dieldrin and endrin.

C. Action specific to certain industrial sectors

1. Directives adopted by the Council

The Council has not yet adopted any of the proposals for directives transmitted by the Commission and mentioned below concerning certain industrial sectors.

On 3 March 1975, however, it adopted a Resolution on energy and the environment¹.

2. Proposals for directives transmitted by the Commission to the Council

The Commission has transmitted two proposals for directives in this field to the Council:

the first, transmitted on 20 January 1975, concerns the reduction of water pollution caused by wood pulp mills²;

the second, transmitted on 18 July 1975, concerns waste from the titanium dioxide industry³.

The Commission attaches great importance to these two proposals for Directives concerning branches of industry producing waste which, because of its volume, quantity and the nature of the pollutants which it contains, has serious effects on water quality and its possible self-purification capacity.

3. Work in progress within the Commission

The Commission is studying pollution caused by the iron and steel industry, the petrochemical industry, the food industry and tanneries.

Furthermore, in accordance with the Council Resolution on energy and the environment, the Commission, with the help of a panel of national experts, has started studies of the biological effects of cooling water and of the cooling systems in power stations.

¹ OJ no C 168, 25 July 1975.

² OJ No C 99, 2 May 1975.

³ OJ No C 222, 29 September 1975.

D. Participation in international conventions

1. Draft convention on the protection of international watercourses against pollution

Negotiations on this draft have been in progress within the Council of Europe since 1967. The Permanent Representatives Committee agreed in principle to Community participation in this convention and on the texts of articles to be included in the draft convention to enable the Community to participate in it.

2. Convention for the protection of the Rhine against chemical pollution

On 20 September 1976 the Commission sent the Council a proposal for a decision on the conclusion by the Community of a Convention for the protection of the Rhine against chemical pollution, and an additional agreement to the Berne Agreement, allowing participation by the Community in the work of the International Rhine Commission. It must be pointed out that the Commission has already been participating in the work of the International Rhine Commission as an observer since 1973.

II. Sea water

1. Directives and Decisions adopted by the Council

The Directive of 4 May 1976 concerning pollution caused by certain dangerous substances discharged into the aquatic environment also concerns sea water.

Furthermore, in a Decision of 3 March 1975, the Council agreed that the Community should participate as such in the Paris Convention on the prevention of marine pollution from land-based sources, which is applicable to the North-East Atlantic. That Convention was signed

by all the States bordering on that area and by the Community on 23 June 1975.

Finally, on 19 July 1976 the Council authorized the Community to sign the so-called Barcelona Convention on the protection of the Mediterranean Sea against pollution and a Protocol on the prevention of the pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by dumping from ships and aircraft¹.

The Council has also named those authorized to sign the Convention on behalf of the Community. The Convention was signed on 13 September 1976.

2. Proposals for directives and decisions transmitted to the Council by the Commission.

On 6 May 1976 the Commission sent the Council a proposal for a decision on the conclusion of the Barcelona Convention and of a protocol referred to above.

On 12 January 1976¹⁾ the Commission sent the Council a proposal for a directive on the dumping of wastes at sea.

Mention must also be made of the proposal for a Commission directive transmitted to the Council on 18 July 1975 concerning waste from the titanium dioxide industry mentioned above.

Finally, on 3 November 1976 the Commission sent the Council a proposal for a directive on the quality requirements for waters capable of supporting freshwater fish.

3. Work in progress within the Commission.

The Commission is also participating in the work of various bodies responsible for administering international conventions :

- (a) In the case of pollution from land-based sources, the Commission is participating, on behalf of the Community, in all the committees and specialized working parties set up under the Paris Convention. Within this framework it has made a study, jointly with Belgium, designed to catalogue and analyse the control and monitoring systems used with regard to substances on the "black list".
- (b) In the case of marine pollution by the deliberate dumping of wastes, the Commission is participating as an observer in the work of the Commission responsible for implementing the Oslo Convention.

- (c) As regards marine pollution resulting from deep-sea prospecting and mining, the Community is participating in the work of a special working party, set up under the above-mentioned Paris Convention, which is working out measures to be taken on pollution caused by drilling rigs. The Commission is also participating as an observer in the work being carried out following the London Conference of 1973/75 on the problems of safety and protection against pollution during prospection for and the production of mineral resources in the sea in North-West Europe; one working party is dealing with civil liability arising from this type of pollution. Finally, the Commission is keeping a close watch on the work in this area carried out under the Third Conference on the Law of the Sea.

III. Atmospheric pollution

1. Directives and Decisions adopted by the Council

The Council adopted:

on 28 May 1974, a Directive relating to air pollution by exhaust gases from motor vehicle engines^{1 (*)}

on 24 November 1975, a Directive relating to the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the sulphur content of certain liquid fuels^{2 (*)}

on 24 June 1975, a Decision establishing a common procedure for the exchange of information collected by the surveillance networks which monitor atmospheric pollution caused by certain sulphur compounds and by dust³.

2. Proposals for directives transmitted to the Council by the Commission

The Commission transmitted to the Council:

on 25 April 1975, a Directive on biological standards for lead and a Directive on air quality for standards for lead⁴;

¹ OJ No L 159, 15 June 1974.

² OJ No L 307, 27 November 1975.

³ OJ No L 194, 25 July 1975.

⁴ OJ No C 151, 7 July 1975.

(*) within the framework of the general programme for the removal of technical barriers to trade.

on 25 February 1976, a proposal for a Resolution on the laying down of standards and a proposal for a Directive concerning health protection standards for sulphur dioxide and suspended particulate matter in urban atmospheres¹;

on 9 December 1975, a proposal for a Directive relating to the measures to be taken against the emission of pollutants from diesel engines for use in wheeled agricultural or forestry tractors²;

on 30 December 1975, a proposal for a Directive on the use of fuel-oils with the aim of decreasing sulphurous emissions³.

Once the European Parliament has delivered its opinion on the proposal for a directive, the Commission expects the Member States to make a special effort to reconcile their points of view on the question of the lead content of petrol, which was forwarded to the Council in December 1973, and anticipates that the Council will act rapidly on this proposal for a directive⁴.

3. Work in progress within the Commission

In addition to the work concerning the objective assessment of the risks referred to in the Annex, the Commission is also continuing with work, in accordance with the Council Resolution on energy and the environment, on the development of methods of measurement for nitrogen oxides, on the supply of low-pollution fuels, and on promoting the development of desulphurization processes and of any other process which would reduce atmospheric pollution by SO₂.

IV. Noise

1. Proposals for directives transmitted to the Council by the Commission

Within the framework of the general programme for the removal of technical barriers to trade, the Commission has sent the Council proposals for directives concerning the permissible noise level of :

motor vehicles⁵

pneumatic concrete-breakers and jackhammers⁶

¹ OJ No C 63, 19 March 1976

² OJ No C 10, 15 January 1976

³ OJ No C 54, 8 March 1976

⁴ OJ No C 8, 13 January 1974, and C 54, 8 March 1976.

⁵ OJ No C 113, 25 September 1974

⁶ OJ No C 82, 14 April 1975.

tower cranes¹;
certain types of current generators for welding and power supply
purposes¹;
motorcycles¹; and

The Commission has also proposed a method for the measurement of the sound level of constructional plant and equipment² which could serve as a basis for all Community rules in this field. A rapid decision by the Council on this proposal would therefore be an important step in the realization of a noise control policy.

Finally, a proposal for a Council directive concerning the permissible noise level of subsonic aircrafts³ has been transmitted to the Council on 26 April 1976.

2. Work in progress within the Commission

The Commission is continuing its work on the definition of criteria for measuring airborne noise emitted by domestic appliances, on permissible noise levels for lawn-mowers and on the limitation of noise nuisance caused by small propeller-driven aircraft. These drafts have been worked out following notification of draft legislation in the Member States, transmitted to the Commission in accordance with the information agreement on the environment of 5 March 1973.

Finally, in accordance with the Resolution on energy and the environment, studies are in progress on noise pollution caused by the cooling towers of power stations.

V. Waste

1. Directives adopted by the Council

Three Directives have been adopted by the Council

on 16 June 1975 a Directive on the disposal of waste oils⁴;

on 15 July 1975 a Directive on wastes⁵;

on 6 April 1976 a Directive on the disposal of polychlorinated biphenyls and polychlorinated terphenyls⁶.

1 OJ C 54, 8 March 1976

2 OJ C 82, 14 April 1975

3 OJ C 126, 9 June 1976

4 OJ L 194, 25 July 1975

5 OJ L 194, 25 July 1975

6 OJ L 108, 26 April 1986

Furthermore, on 26 June 1975 the Council adopted a programme on the management and storage of radioactive waste¹.

2. Proposal for a directive transmitted to the Council by the Commission

On 28 July 1976 the Commission sent the Council a proposal for a directive on toxic and dangerous waste. The draft provides for a system of prior authorization for the disposal of such waste and for measures to promote their recycling and processing.

3. Work in progress within the Commission

As part of the work being carried out by CREST, a panel of national experts has been set up to examine those areas where scientific and technical information about primary and secondary raw materials is lacking and to draw up a multiannual research programme in those two fields.

The Commission has carried out numerous studies on the problems of recycling and disposing of waste. With a view to forming a panel of persons under the aegis of the Commission who are competent in this particularly important field of the Community's economic activities and especially obtaining help in drawing up an overall policy in this field, the Commission set up a waste Management Committee on 21 April 1976², which will meet shortly. The Committee will examine the results of the studies referred to above, and in particular those concerning bundled waste paper, discarded vehicles and agricultural wastes.

The Commission also plans to hold a meeting between the directors of the waste exchange already formed in certain Member States with a view to exchanging information and comparing experience gained in this field.

Finally, the Commission is continuing to implement the programme on the management and storage of radioactive waste¹.

¹ CJ No L 178, 9 July 1975.

² CJ No L 115, 1 May 1976.

VI. Chemicals in the environment

1. Directives adopted by the Council

Several Directives have been adopted by the Council within the framework of the general programme for the removal of technical barriers to trade :

- on 22 November 1973, on detergents¹
- on 22 November 1973, on methods of testing the biodegradability of anionic surfactants¹
- on 27 July 1976, on the marketing and use of certain dangerous substances and preparations.

Furthermore, on 14 July 1976 the Commission adopted, by the procedure for adaptation to technical progress, an amendment to the Directive of 27 June 1967 concerning the classification, packaging and labelling of dangerous substances.

2. Proposals for directives transmitted to the Council by the Commission

The Commission has sent the Council several proposals for directives concerning

- ceramic articles intended to come into contact with food²;
- the classification, packaging and labelling of paints, varnishes, adhesives and similar products³;
- the classification, packaging and labelling of pesticides⁴;
- the placing of EEC-accepted plant protection products on the market⁵;
- the prohibition of the marketing and use of certain pesticides⁶;
- and amendment to the Directive of 27 June 1967 concerning the classification, packaging and labelling of dangerous substances⁷.

¹ OJ No L 347, 17 December 1973.

² OJ No C 46, 27 February 1975.

³ OJ No C 166, 23 July 1975.

⁴ OJ No C 40, 20 February 1975.

⁵ COM(76)427, 29 July 1976.

⁶ OJ No C 200, 26 August 1976.

⁷ COM(76)433, 8 September 1976.

The last proposal requires that a study be made of every new substance before it is marketed in order to assess its effects on man and the environment. A file giving the results of this study would be compiled by the manufacturer of the new substance or by whoever markets it, and a copy would be given to the Member State concerned and to the Commission. This proposal, which also lays down conditions for the examination of the file, is an important step in the prevention of pollution from chemical products.

3. Work in progress within the Commission

Following the Seveso accident, the Commission is currently studying the measures which should be taken in future to prevent such accidents from recurring, with a view to drawing up suitable proposals.

VII. Scientific aspects

A. Research

1. Decisions adopted by the Council

In Decisions of 5 February and 14 May 1973¹ the Council adopted a number of Community research projects to be carried out at the JRC's Ispra establishment. This programme, involving the sum of 15.85 m u.a., covers the period from 1 January 1973 to 31 December 1976.

In a Decision of 18 June 1973², the Council adopted a first research programme for the protection of the environment (indirect project). This programme, involving the sum of 6.3 m u.a., covered the period from 1 January 1973 to 31 December 1975.

In a Decision of 15 March 1976³, the Council adopted a new multiannual research and development programme in the environmental field (indirect action). The "radioactive contamination" aspects of the environment fall within the multiannual programme on radiation protection adopted by the council on the same date.

¹ OJ No L 153, 9 June 1973.

² OJ No L 189, 4 July 1973.

³ OJ No L 74, 20 March 1976.

This programme covers the period from 1 January 1976 to 31 December 1980. A maximum of 16 m.u.s. and of ten officials have been allocated to this project.

2. Proposal transmitted to the Council by the Commission

In May 1976 the Commission sent the Council a proposal for a multiannual research programme to be implemented by the JRC (1977-80), providing for a project in the field of the environment and resources. The Council will shortly be asked to take a decision on this proposal.

3. Work in progress within the Commission

The Member States are informed regularly of the results of the work carried out under the research programmes on environmental protection conducted at both the JRC establishment in Ispra and under contracts concluded with research organizations in the Member States. The Advisory Committee on Programme Management (ACPM) meets regularly to direct these two programmes. As regards research contracted out, the ACPM has begun an evaluation of the preliminary results obtained under the 1973-75 programme. It has also begun discussion of research projects submitted by research organizations in the Community in response to the call for tenders which appeared in OJ No C 78 on 3 April 1976.

As indicated above, two multiannual research programmes are being drawn up as part of the work carried out by CREST, one concerning raw materials, the other the development of large urban agglomerations.

B. Dissemination of information

1. Decision adopted by the Council

In a Decision of 8 December 1975¹, the Council established a common procedure for the setting up and constant updating of an inventory of sources of information on the environment in the Community.

¹OJ No L 31, 5 February 1976.

2. Work in progress within the Commission

The setting up of this inventory is proceeding satisfactorily. The practical work is being carried out in close collaboration with the Member States and with representatives working on the International Referral System (IRS) which is being developed by UNEP. According to current expectations, this inventory should be available at the end of the year. The Commission will shortly forward to the Council a proposal concerning participation by the Community as a regional focal point in the operation of the IRS.

The forthcoming completion of the European network, EURONET, will necessitate the creation of a coherent set of information services. Consequently the Commission, with the help of two panels of experts provided for in the action programme, is studying data banks specializing in environmental matters (legislation, analysis of pollution control technology, information from conferences).

VIII. Economic aspects

1. Recommendation adopted by the Council

On 3 March 1975¹ the Council adopted a recommendation regarding cost allocation and action by public authorities on environmental matters.

2. Work in progress within the Commission

With the help of a panel of national experts set up by the Commission in 1972, the Commission is currently drawing up a draft Council recommendation to the Member States concerning the assessment of pollution control costs in industry. This proposal for a recommendation will shortly be transmitted to the Council.

The panel has begun to discuss a Commission working document aimed at laying down conditions for the grant of state aids to industry in the environment field when the present aid arrangements end in 1980.

¹ OJ No L 194, 25 July 1975.

The panel has also discussed the operation of systems of charges imposed by some Member States to discharges of effluent into watercourses.

Some aspects of the application of the "polluter pays" principle have also been discussed, and in particular the incorporation of ecological considerations in other policies and the problem of pollution chains.

IX. Information agreement

The Commission regularly receives notification from the Member States of proposed laws, regulations and administrative provisions, under the Information Agreement on the environment of 5 March 1973.

As at 1 July 1976 the Commission had received 147 notifications, broken down as follows:

Member State	Planned measures	Measures in force	International Agreements	Miscellaneous	Total
Belgium	1	3	1	-	5
Denmark	1	24	4	-	29
Germany	28	2	2	2	34
France	26	6	3	6	41
Ireland	2	-	-	-	2
Italy	4	-	2	-	6
Netherlands	6	17	-	-	23
Luxembourg	1	-	-	-	1
United Kingdom	6	-	-	-	6
TOTAL	75	52	12	8	147

The measures notified concern water pollution (44), atmospheric pollution (24), waste (14), noise (18), international agreements (12), and 35 concern plans for general or miscellaneous measures.

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PART II - IMPROVEMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

I. Protection of natural spaces

1. Directive adopted by the Council

On 28 April 1975 the Council adopted the Directive on mountain and hill farming and farming in certain less-favoured areas¹.

At its meeting of 7 November 1974, the Council asked the Commission to begin work on the classification of Community territory on the basis of its environmental characteristics, in order to enable the objectives to be identified and defined.

2. Proposal for a directive transmitted to the Council by the Commission

On 21 February 1974 the Commission sent the Council a proposal for a directive on the encouragement of forestry measures to improve agricultural structures².

3. Work in progress within the Commission

The work involves:

- the development of a mapping system to present consolidated data on the natural environment as an aid to planning the use of space;
- rural areas;
- urban spaces and coastal areas.

(a) At the request of the Council, the Commission immediately began work on the classification of Community territory on the basis of its environmental characteristics. This work is intended to follow a programme spread over several years, and will involve close collaboration between the Commission and the Member States.

¹OJ No L 128, 19 May 1975.

²OJ No C 44, 19 April 1974.

The first stage of the work will involve the drawing up of an inventory of the Member States' activities with regard to:

- (i) the availability of data on environmental characteristics suitable for use in a method for classifying territory;
- (ii) methods, processes and models so far tried out, whose objectives are in line with those of the Community programme.

This work is contracted out by the Commission and the results are discussed by a panel of national experts.

(b) As regards measures relating to rural spaces, the Commission has drawn up an inventory of the knowledge obtained concerning the ecological effects of modern agricultural production methods with a view to ascertaining those aspects on which insufficient knowledge has been obtained and to deciding on the measures which should be implemented at Community level. The measures to be implemented relate to:

- the misuse of pesticides;
- the intensive use of certain fertilizers;
- intensive livestock farming;
- modern agricultural methods;
- the effects of land improvement.

As regards pesticides, the results of the study show that the use of persistent organochlorine insecticides and of organo-mercury fungicides should be forbidden, and that the use of the most dangerous pesticides should be subject to an approval system. This work has led to two draft directives being drawn up, which were presented to the Council in July and August.

As to the use of fertilizers, it has been found that the information available is incomplete and that supplementary studies will be necessary.

Several studies on intensive livestock farming are under way. They concern maximum environmentally permissible numbers per hectare, comparison of the laws of the Member States and health protection requirements for organic wastes returned to the soil.

Furthermore, a major research programme was adopted by the Council on 27 July 1975.

Two studies on modern agricultural methods are in progress: the first relates to the ecological implications of land improvement, the second to the consequences in terms of production of special constraints aimed at protecting the environment.

The Commission is also carrying out a study of the ecological consequences of the abandonment of cultivated land, which also includes an inventory and classification by type of such land.

In the field of quality foodstuffs, a study has been carried out on the feasibility of developing typical high-quality agricultural products. It has been backed up by a study on the development of a system of fruit-growing which meets the taste quality criteria. Studies of the same type are in preparation for poultrymeat and pigmeat.

In the field of the development of production techniques to replace certain modern techniques and ensure better environmental protection, a preliminary study has been carried out on the feasibility of developing biological and integrated control methods of protecting crops to replace conventional control methods involving the massive use of pesticides. This work has been backed up by a study on the development of a fruit-growing system under the heading of "integrated pest control".

(c) The study of the environmental problems of city centres is complete. The conclusions will shortly be submitted to a panel of national experts, so that possible Community measures can be worked out.

The results of the study of national urban development policies are expected by the end of the year. Following the work carried out by CREST in this field, the Commission will shortly present the Council with a proposal for a decision on a research programme on the growth of large conurbations. The two-year programme will probably be implemented in

the form of concerted action, with the projects being financed and carried out in the Member States and coordinated at Community level.

Finally, studies on the planning and ecological management of coastal areas and on the protection of natural spaces and the countryside are almost complete.

II. Protection of animal life

Work in progress within the Commission

Over the last two years the Commission has investigated a number of questions concerning the protection of migratory birds and of some endangered or disappearing species of animals.

Interpretation of the results of this study, which took longer than was expected, prevented the Commission from submitting proposals to the Council as it had undertaken to do. However, the preparation of these proposals has reached an advanced stage and it should be possible to transmit them to the Council by the end of the year.

The Washington Convention on international trade in endangered species of wild flora and fauna came into force on 1 July 1975. By 1 July 1976 twenty-six states had ratified it, including one Member State of the EEC. Ratification by the other Member States is expected in the coming months. The Commission has participated as an observer at the meeting of the parties who have ratified the Convention, which was held in Berne on November 2 - 6.

This Convention is largely concerned with trade, and as a result falls partly within Community competence. Therefore the Community should itself adhere to the Convention. While awaiting this adhesion, the Commission will propose the appropriate measures to ensure, in particular that certain provisions of the Convention, when applied by the Member States, will not create obstacles to trade within the Community.

As regards harmonization at Community level of measures taken to apply the Convention, discussions with national experts have made it possible to decide which areas should receive priority treatment; these are the identification and possible marking of specimens, import and export permits, the bringing in of marine species and the registration of permits issued.

III. Natural resources

Work in progress within the Commission

The Commission has received the final report of the study on the availability of Community water resources. The conclusions of the report which will be submitted to a panel of national experts for their opinion in October, show that generally speaking sufficient water is available in the Community, except in drought years such as 1976, but that it is unevenly distributed between the different geographical regions of the Community.

On 4 November 1974 the Council asked the Commission to begin work on the identification of a minimum of water resources and on the classification of territory on this basis. This is being done with the aid of national experts. The Commission will inform the Council at the appropriate moment of the results of this work.

A study of world resources, geochemistry and environmental pollution from mercury, and of production, consumption and future world and Community needs, is now being published.

Studies of global resources of metals in the platinum group, chromium, fluorine, phosphorus, tin and lead have been completed, as have those on ores containing fluorine and phosphates.

The results of these studies, after examination and evaluation, will be published in the "Environment and Quality of Life" series.

IV. European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

1. Decisions adopted by the Council

On a proposal from the Commission, the Council has adopted three Regulations:

on 26 May 1975, on the creation of a European Foundation for the improvement of living and working conditions¹;

¹ OJ No L 139, 30 May 1975.

on 1 June 1976, on the financial provisions applying to the Foundation¹;
on 29 June 1976, laying down the conditions of employment of staff of
the Foundation²;

The Council has entered 2.6 m u.a. in the draft budget for 1977.

The Commission has appointed the Director and Deputy Director of the
Foundation; these appointments took effect on 1 September.

On 20 September 1976 the Council has adopted a decision concerning the
appointment of the members of the Committee of Experts of the Foundation.

2. Proposals transmitted to the Council by the Commission

The Commission has sent the Council for approval a proposal for a
regulation on the rules of procedure of the Administrative Board of
the Foundation.

Furthermore, to maintain a balance between the two aspects of the
Foundation's work, i.e. working and living conditions, the Commission has
sent the Council a proposal for an amendment to the Regulation of
26 May 1975 on the creation of the Foundation, providing for the
creation of a second post of Deputy Director.

3. Work in progress within the Commission

The Administrative Board of the Foundation met for the first time in
Dublin on 6 and 7 May.

The first meeting enabled a discussion to be held on the direction which
the Foundation's work should take and on the programme for 1977.

The work of the Foundation will concentrate on the following three topics:

¹ OJ No L 164, 24 June 1976.

² OJ No L 214, 6 August 1976.

the organization of work, and in particular measures relating to the humanization of working conditions;

problems peculiar to certain categories of workers, especially young school or university leavers, people of retiring age, and immigrants;

certain subjects common to both living and working, in particular the problem of time: the relation between work and leisure time.

In accordance with the wishes of the Council, the Foundation's work will be to keep abreast of and promote experiments in the field, rather than to carry out studies of a general nature.

The Commission believes that these arrangements should enable the Foundation to become operational by the end of 1976.

4. Public awareness and education

Work in progress within the Commission

The Commission has continued its efforts to bring about more active interest on the part of the population in environmental problems, adding its contribution to the efforts undertaken in the Member States.

It has also continued its cooperation with non-governmental organizations, in particular with the European Environmental Bureau.

As regards education, the Commission will shortly be meeting representatives of primary schools in the Member States with a view to setting up a network for the exchange of experience acquired by the schools in environmental education (9 to 14 year-olds). This network would make it possible to test the first information booklets for teachers which are currently being prepared for some specific fields of environmental protection. The Commission has also contributed financially to the organization of summer schools running courses on basic environmental problems. Finally, the Commission is drawing up an initial statement on the environmental situation in the Community.

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PART III

ACTION BY THE COMMUNITY AND THE MEMBER STATES IN INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS, CONFERENCES AND CONVENTIONS

1. International organizations

The Member States and the Commission collaborate regularly on the preparation of various meetings planned by those international organizations dealing with environmental problems (UNEP, OECD, Council of Europe, ECE, WHO, UNESCO, IMCO, FAO). The Commission works in close collaboration with the secretariats of those organizations.

2. International conventions

As mentioned in the first part of this document, the joint action by the Community and its Member States in certain international conferences and conventions dealing with water pollution has been successful. The Council's adoption of the Directive of 4 May 1976, concerning pollution caused by certain dangerous substances discharged into the aquatic environment of the Community, enabled decisive progress to be made in the formulation of a draft Convention for the protection of the Rhine against chemical pollution. Represented by the Commission, the Community participated in this work, which culminated in the Ministerial Conference of 1 and 2 April 1976 in Paris and on 25 May 1976 in Berne, and in the fortieth Plenary Session of the International Rhine Commission on 6 and 7 July in Luxembourg. During these negotiations it became clear that Community participation in the management body of the Convention, the International Commission, was indispensable. As mentioned in Part I, the Commission has sent the Council a draft decision on the conclusion by the Community of the Convention on the protection of the Rhine against chemical pollution, and on a draft Additional Agreement to the Berne Agreement providing for participation by the Community in the work of the International Rhine Commission.

The Commission took part in the negotiations at the Barcelona intergovernmental meeting, which was held from 2 to 16 February 1976, and which adopted a Convention on the protection of the Mediterranean Sea against pollution and a Protocol on the prevention of pollution of the Mediterranean Sea by dumping from ships and aircraft. The Council agreed to the conclusion of this Convention, which was signed on 13 September 1976.

As regards the implementation of the Helsinki Final Act, the Commission contributed to the formulation of the Community position at the final session of the Economic Commission for Europe.

The Commission took part as an observer at the conference on human settlements organized by the United Nations in Vancouver. It also participated in the preparatory work for the United Nations Conference on water which will be held in Argentina in March 1977.

3. Relations with non-member countries

Relations with non-member countries have developed significantly during the last few months. Apart from the technical cooperation which has existed between the Commission and the US Government since July 1974, similar cooperation was begun with the Canadian Government on 6 November 1975 and with the Swiss Government on 12 December 1975. The Permanent Representatives Committee has been kept informed of the various forms taken by this cooperation. The principle of such a similar cooperation arrangement has recently been accepted by the Japanese Government. An exchange of letters setting out the form of such cooperation will take place before the end of the year.

In the context of the Euro-Arab dialogue, the Commission is chairing a specialized group from the European side on the marine environment and the development of coastal areas. The work of this group should in principle lead to the formulation of cooperation projects for implementation in the Arab countries.

Finally, under the information agreement on the environment of 5 March 1973, the Commission has been notified of agreements reached between certain Member States and non-member countries (see Part I, Chapter IX).

PART IV

CONCLUSIONS

It can be seen from what has gone before that a large amount of work has been carried out in the field of environmental protection at both national and Community level: some 130 laws have been drawn up in the Member States, fifty of which are already in force.

At Community level, the Council has already taken favourable decisions on some twenty texts, whilst approximately twenty are still being discussed within the Council.

Apart from their political and legal value, the preparatory work carried out in collaboration with the national governments, the thinking and discussions to which they lead and the implementing measures which follow them mean that these texts form a basis for a Community-wide programme of promotion and education, the importance of which is only now being realized.

The fact of becoming accustomed to working together, particularly within international organizations or conventions, also plays an important role in producing a consensus of opinion in favour of paying more attention to the environment when implementing economic development programmes. A "European awareness" of the environment is developing gradually in this way.

There is no doubt that the forthcoming adoption by the Council of the programme of action for the period 1977-81 will enable the work undertaken during the past three years to be continued and stepped up for the benefit of present and future generations.

**OBJECTIVE EVALUATION OF THE RISKS TO HUMAN HEALTH
AND THE ENVIRONMENT FROM POLLUTION**

Work carried out since 1973 under Chapters 1 and 2 (Part II, Title I) of the Action Programme has produced the following results in respect of the various first category pollutants:

Lead and lead compounds

The dose/effect relationship of these pollutants in respect of human health has been evaluated.

As indicated in Chapter 3 of Part I, two proposals for Directives were submitted to the Council in 1975, one on biological standards for lead and the screening of the population for lead, the other on air quality standards for lead. These proposals, on which the European Parliament and the ESC expressed a favourable opinion, are now being discussed by the COREPER Working Party on the Environment.

The Directive on biological standards proposes maximum blood lead levels for each individual and for a statistical distribution of population groups.

Work to improve the comparability of the results of blood lead level analysis has been continued.

The Directive on air quality standards sets mean annual levels which are not to be exceeded in residential areas, and monthly median levels for rush-hours which are not to be exceeded in roads with heavy traffic.

Organochalogen compounds

A report has been prepared on organochlorine compounds, i.e. pesticides and their metabolites, in particular the following compounds: DDT and its metabolites, aldrin, dieldrin and endrin, heptachlor and heptachlor epoxide, chlordane, HCH (hexachlorocyclohexane) and lindane.

Annex 1 (continued)

The results of this study show that it is impossible at present to lay down health protection criteria for the following reasons:

- lack of knowledge,
- human exposure levels,
- difficulties in interpreting data obtained from experiments on animals, and
- lack of precise information on long-term effects.

The information obtained from the Member States shows that the use of persistent organochlorine pesticides is diminishing.

On 24 June 1976, the Commission forwarded a communication on this subject to the Council.

The ecological consequences of the presence of persistent organohalogen compounds are being studied.

Organophosphorus compounds

A report showing the available information on the environmental contamination levels of these compounds, as measured in the Member States, is now being published.

The Commission will shortly be sending the Council a communication on the dose/effect relationships of organophosphorus compounds.

Hydrocarbons with known or probable carcinogenic effects

A qualitative inventory has been produced on the pollutants with known carcinogenic effects present in the environment.

A quantitative study setting out the available information on the presence of phenols, hydrocarbons, detergents, nitrosamines, plasticizers and aromatic amines has been carried out. It became clear that there are numerous gaps in knowledge of this field, which makes any evaluation of the risks involved extremely difficult.

Annex 1 (continued)

A programme for comparing systems of measuring cyanides, phenols and hydrocarbons in water has been carried out; the results of this study have been published.

A study of the dose/effect relationship of carcinogenic polycyclic hydrocarbons is being prepared.

Sulphur compounds and suspended particles

A report on levels of these pollutants measured in the atmosphere of the Member States is being published.

A preliminary programme for comparing methods of measuring sulphur dioxide contained in standard samples, simulating a sample of polluted air, produced satisfactory results using manual analytical techniques.

The less satisfactory results which were obtained with mobile laboratories have made it necessary to repeat the experiment; the results are being analysed.

A critical examination of available data made it possible to draft specific proposals which have been submitted to the Council. As indicated in Chapter 3 of Part I, these concern a resolution on criteria for sulphur dioxide and suspended particles in urban atmospheres, and a draft directive on health protection standards for sulphur dioxide and suspended particles in the urban atmosphere.

Oxides of nitrogen

A critical examination of the available data is in progress and should enable firm proposals to be drawn up and forwarded to the Council concerning health protection criteria for nitrogen oxides.

Carbon monoxide

A critical examination of the available data is in progress and should enable firm proposals to be drawn up and forwarded to the Council concerning health protection criteria for carbon monoxide.

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A programme for comparing methods of measurement for carboxyhaemoglobin has been carried out, involving thirty-six laboratories, with a view to improving the comparability of these measurement results.

Photochemical oxidants

A study is being made of the effects of photochemical oxidants on health and the environment.

Asbestos

A study of health protection criteria has been carried out.

It became clear that there are still relatively few data on asbestos levels measured in the environment. More information is currently being sought on dose/effect relationships and on exposure levels in the population.

A statement on this subject together with firm proposals will shortly be submitted to the Council in due course.

Vanadium

A study of health protection criteria has been carried out. In view of the lack of sufficient data on dose/effect relationships, it proved impossible to work out criteria for vanadium. Existing data and experiments on animals show that levels at present measured in the air, water and foodstuffs represent no risk to the population of the Community.

A statement on this subject will shortly be submitted to the Council.

Noise

A report has been published on dose/effect relationships. A communication on the criteria will be presented to the Council in due course.

Inorganic micropollutants

A study of the levels of environmental pollution caused by these pollutants has been published.

Mercury and cadmium

Studies to establish health protection criteria for mercury and cadmium are at present being prepared.

4. Quality of water for human consumption

A draft directive has been forwarded by the Commission to the Council and is currently under discussion. (see Ch. 2 of Part I).

During the preparation of this Directive, problems raised by the effect of the hardness of drinking water on public health were discussed at a specialized European symposium in Luxembourg in 1975. It was found that in certain regions of the world an increase in the frequency of heart disease could be linked to the consumption of soft water and to the excessive and uncontrolled use of water softeners. The Commission has consequently proposed a cautious policy on minimum concentrations required for water hardness and certain minerals in the Community quality standards for water intended for human consumption.

The chemical and microbiological analytical techniques for the various pollutants in drinking water were the subject of intra-laboratory comparison programmes at European level, aimed at harmonizing methods of analysis.

This scientific comparison enabled a significant step to be made regarding the comparability of results of chemical and microbiological methods of measurement for drinking water.

Ecological criteria

A scientific symposium was held in 1975 on the principles and methods governing the drawing up of ecological criteria for hydrobiocenoses. The main objectives were the establishment of principles and methods for the evaluation of criteria for hydrobiocenosis, i.e., the scientific bases for evaluating the effects of surface water pollution. There was also a proposal to define the biological methods to be used to evaluate the extent of such pollution.

The discussions revealed the complexity of the matters in question, in view of the number of types of pollutants to be considered, the diversity of water ecosystems in the Community, and the problem of biotope accessibility. Proposals were put forward concerning the principles to be established and the methods to be followed and a large amount of information on dose/effect relationships was obtained.