

European Communities

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EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

# Working Documents

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15 December 1980

DOCUMENT 1-660/80

## Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection

**on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (Doc. 1-330/80) for a decision adopting a sectoral research and development programme in the field of environment (environmental protection and climatology) (indirect and concerted actions ) 1981 – 1985**

**Rapporteur: Mr S. ALBER**



By letter of 14 July 1980 the President of the Council of the European Communities requested the European Parliament to deliver an opinion on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a decision adopting a sectoral research and development programme in the field of environment (environmental protection and climatology) (indirect and concerted actions) 1981-1985.

The President of the European Parliament referred this proposal to the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection as the committee responsible and to the Committee on Budgets and the Committee on Energy and Research for an opinion.

At its meeting of 26 September 1980 the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection appointed Mr ALBER rapporteur. It considered the proposal for a decision at its meeting of 21 October 1980 and unanimously adopted the motion for a resolution at its meeting of 27 November 1980.

Present: Mr Collins, chairman; Mrs Weber, vice-chairman; Mr Alber, rapporteur; Mr Adam (deputizing for Mrs Fuillet), Mr Ceravolo (deputizing for Mr Segre), Mr Forth (deputizing for Mr Sherlock), Mr Ghergo, Miss Hooper, Mrs Krouwel-Vlam, Mrs Lentz-Cornette, Mr Mertens, Mr Muntingh, Mr O'Connell, Mrs Pruvot (deputizing for Mrs Scrivener), Mrs Roudy, Mrs Schleicher, Mrs Seibel-Emmerling, Mrs Squarcialupi, Sir Peter Vanneck, Mr Verroken.

The opinion of the Committee on Energy and Research is attached to this report. The committee responsible had not received the opinion of the Committee on Budgets at the time it adopted this report. It will be delivered orally pursuant to Rule 44(4) of the Rules of Procedure.

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The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution together with explanatory statement:

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

embodying the opinion of the European Parliament on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a decision adopting a sectoral research and development programme in the field of environment (environmental protection and climatology) (indirect and concerted actions) 1981-1985.

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council<sup>1</sup>,
  - having been consulted by the Council (Doc. 1-330/80),
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection and the opinion of the Committee on Energy and Research (Doc. 1-660/80),
1. Recognizes the importance of research in the fields of environmental protection and climatology as without the relevant knowledge pollution could not be prevented nor could harmless alternatives and 'clean' technologies be developed;
  2. Consequently stresses the need to pursue the existing research programmes (indirect and concerted actions);
  3. Approves of the extension of the objectives of environmental protection beyond the abatement of pollution to include the prevention of pollution and conservation of the natural environment of humans, fauna and flora;
  4. Endorses the main objectives of the programme, particularly the provision of scientific and technical data to help reduce environmental pollution and protect and judiciously use natural resources
  5. Welcomes the concentration, rationalization and re-organization of the programmes and research activities;
  6. Underlines the need for intensive coordination of national environmental research activities as a means of saving time and money;

<sup>1</sup> OJ No. C 228, 8.9.1980, p.1

7. Recommends that research be concentrated in areas of importance to the Community;
8. Stresses the need to speed up the tempo of the research programmes since otherwise subsequent direct actions may no longer be effective;
9. Lays stress therefore on the priority of direct actions over long-term research;
10. Approves the programme and supports the proposal of the Commission subject to the opinion of the Committee on Budgets and the following amendments pursuant to Article 149(2) of the EEC Treaty :

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Proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a decision adopting a sectoral research and development programme in the field of environment (environmental protection and climatology) (indirect and concerted actions) 1981-1985

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Preamble and Articles 1 and 2 unchanged

Article 3

The programme shall be reviewed at the end of the third year. This review, in accordance with the appropriate procedures, may lead to a Council decision for a new five-year programme which would supersede the current programme at the end of the fourth year.

Article 3

The programme shall be reviewed before the end of the second year. This review, in accordance with the appropriate procedures, may lead to the programme being revised after the Advisory Programme Committee and the European Parliament have been consulted. The European Parliament shall be informed immediately of the results of such a revision.

Articles 4-9 unchanged

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<sup>1</sup> OJ No. C 228, 8.9.1980, p.1

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1. At its meeting of 20 December 1979 the Council recommended that the Commission should concentrate the Community's research and development programme more and integrate the Community programmes for indirect and concerted actions in an appropriate multi-annual framework. The present proposal submitted by the Commission meets the wishes of the Council in respect of the numerous scattered sub-programmes in the field of environmental protection and climatology.
2. The committee warmly welcomes the grouping together of various sub-programmes as an appropriate means of simplifying and rationalizing the design, presentation, adoption, implementation and evaluation of these programmes.
3. In addition to grouping together existing sub-programmes the Commission proposal also makes provision for extending the 'environmental protection' sub-programme due to expire at the end of 1980. The intention is that this sub-programme should continue to provide scientific and technical support for the Community's environmental policy. In this context the committee wishes to stress the need for close links between research and action. It does not believe that research should be an end in itself but that it must be conceived and implemented in such a way as to support the Community's actions in the field of environmental protection.
4. The Commission has shifted the emphasis of the programme away from research into ways of combating environmental pollution towards research into means of prevention. The focus is now on finding new 'cleaner' technologies, i.e. ones which are pollutionless, produce less waste and consume less natural resources. It deals in addition with the management of waste and resource recovery from waste in order to effect savings in energy and raw materials as well as alleviate disposal problems.

The committee strongly approves the extension of the programme to these fields and the switch of emphasis.

5. To accompany the extension of the programme the Commission is proposing a substantial increase in funding and staff. The committee would have liked to have seen the opinion of the Committee on Budgets on this point. As this was not available in time it has had to adopt its report subject to receiving the opinion of the Committee on Budgets.



6. The Commission has proposed that the programme be reviewed at the end of the third year. The committee believes that it would be useful and necessary to carry out such a review after two years since on-going research programmes which may be extended are involved. An amendment to the review clause along these lines would, in the committee's opinion, obviate the need for the amendment to Article 4 of the proposal for a decision recommended by the Committee on Energy and Research.

## OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND RESEARCH

Letter from the chairman of the committee to the chairman of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection

At its meeting of 23/24 September 1980 the Committee on Energy and Research examined the abovementioned document.

In view of its previously delivered opinions on research and development programmes falling within the specific terms of reference of your committee, it is satisfied as to the suitability of the planned organizational measures. In principle, it approves the research and development programmes for environmental protection and climatology contained in the motions for resolutions tabled by this committee concerning energy and research policy.

In this respect the Committee on Energy and Research has consistently recommended the following principles:

- It must be possible to review a programme during its period of operation;
- It is advisable to ensure that any subsequent programme commences in the final year of the corresponding initial programme;
- In the course of the programme Parliament must be kept informed of the steps taken and the results obtained;
- The Community should, where possible, support efforts to coordinate research activities currently under way in the Member States;
- The Community should only participate in research programmes where necessary to complement national research, or where additional research is not possible at national level;
- In this connection, indirect research activities by the Community are, in principle, considered preferable;
- Administrative machinery should be kept to a minimum;
- The funds necessary for Community action should be entered sufficiently early in the Community's budgetary estimates and should be approved by the Council, insofar as it has agreed to multiannual programmes; no token entries should be made under the budget headings concerned.

In the light of these principles, progressively drawn up in the past, the organizational measures proposed for this programme appear suitable and are recommended for approval by the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection, subject to the following comments:

- While Article 235 EEC appears to provide an adequate legal basis, it should not lead to the Council reserving the right to carry out further examination in each individual case, which would pre-empt the Commission's ~~power~~ as laid down in the Treaty. Moreover, since Member States have the right to appoint the members of the advisory programme committees, they are already involved in the implementation of the programmes. The Committee on Energy and Research may decide to produce a general report on the influence of the Council and Member States on research management, which is exercised at more than one level.
- The review of the programme after the third year, i.e. in its fourth year of operation, provided for in Article 3 of the Council decision, should lead to a Council decision for a further programme, commencing at the beginning of the fifth year.

Such programme linkage corresponds to the principle recommended by the committee that, if research appears necessary, programmes should continue uninterrupted. However, we cannot unconditionally approve continuation of the programme after its third year. The committee responsible is requested, therefore, to assess, on the basis of its specialized knowledge, the suitability of such a long period in this instance, and, in particular, the preferability for certain individual projects of a shorter interval, e.g. 18 months.

If such a modification proved to be necessary, no amendments to the present text could be made without further reference to the Council, in accordance with Article 235 EEC. The committee responsible should therefore decide whether the following third paragraph should be added to Article 4 of the Council decision:

'The Commission shall keep continuous watch on the implementation of the programme to check the effectiveness of the coordination and to record changing circumstances or unexpected research results which may require adaptation of the programme. It shall submit a report to this effect to the Council and Parliament by 30 June 1982 in which it shall propose any adaptations to be made to the programme.'

Finally, the committee points out that such a requirement is not new. It is to be found in the opinion of this committee drafted by Mr LAUTENSCHLAGER contained in the report drawn up by Mr MEINTZ on

behalf of your committee on the multiannual Community research programme on biology and health protection for the period 1976-1980 (Doc. 336/75).

There is no apparent reason to withdraw this requirement.

Yours sincerely,

(sgd) Hanna WALZ

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Adopted unanimously with one abstention on 24 September 1980.  
Present: Mrs WALZ, chairman; Mr IPPOLITO, vice-chairman;  
Mr BEAZLEY, Mr COPPIETERS (deputizing for Mr CAPANNA),  
Mrs DEKKER (deputizing for Mrs BONINO), Mr CROUX, Mr HOFFMANN  
(deputizing for Mr MÜLLER-HERMANN), Mr LINDE, Mr LINKOHR, Mr PAISLEY,  
Mr PURVIS, Mr SALZER, Mr SASSANO and Mr VERONESI