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COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
GENERAL SECRETARIAT

[REDACTED]

PRESS RELEASE

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5310/85 (Presse 26)

990th meeting of the Council

- Environment -

Brussels, 7/8 March 1985

President: Mr Alfredo BIONDI
Minister for Ecology
of the Italian Republic

The Governments of the Member States and the Commission of the European Communities were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Firmin AERTS
State Secretary for
Public Health and the Environment

Denmark:

Mr Mogens BUNGAARD-NIELSEN
State Secretary,
Ministry of the Environment

Germany:

Mr Friedrich ZIMMERMANN
Federal Minister for the
Interior

Greece:

Mr Evangelos KOULOUMBIS
Minister for the Environment

Mr Martin BANGEMANN
Federal Minister for
Economic Affairs

Mr Carl-Dieter SPRANGER
State Secretary,
Federal Ministry of the Interior

France:

Mrs Huguette BOUCHARDEAU
Minister for the Environment

Ireland:

Mr Liam KAVANAGH
Minister for the Environment

Italy:

Mr Alfredo BIONDI
Minister for Ecology

Luxembourg:

Mr Jean FEYDER
Deputy Permanent Representative

Netherlands:

Mr P. WINSEMIUS
Minister for Housing, Regional
Planning and the Environment

United Kingdom:

Mr William WALDEGRAVE
Parliamentary Under-Secretary
of State,
Department of the Environment
Mr John BUTCHER
Parliamentary Under-Secretary
of State,
Department of Trade and Industry

Commission:

Lord COCKFIELD - Vice-President
Mr Karl-Heinz NARJES - Vice-President
Mr Stanley CLINTON-DAVIS - Member

AIR POLLUTION BY GASES FROM ENGINES OF MOTOR VEHICLES

The Council continued its examination of the proposal for a Directive on measures to be taken against air pollution by gases from engines of motor vehicles.

The Council confirmed its desire to reach a Community solution and the discussion enabled delegations' positions to be brought considerably closer.

It was recognized, however, that a brief period for reflection on the outline of the proposed solution would be appropriate and the Council accordingly decided to postpone the final phase of its discussions until a special meeting on 20 March.

AIR POLLUTION CAUSED BY LARGE COMBUSTION PLANTS

The Council discussed the progress of work on the proposal for a Directive on the limitation of the emissions of pollutants into the air from large combustion plants.

The Council took note in particular of the request by the Commission representative to have as soon as possible the information necessary for a more detailed study of the technical and economic questions raised by this proposal.

At the close of the discussion the Council asked the Permanent Representatives Committee to make every effort to find possible ways of reaching agreement in this area, the importance of which was stressed in the framework of a balanced policy for combating air pollution.

CONTAINERS OF LIQUIDS FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION

The Council had a further exchange of views on the Directive on containers of liquids for human consumption and agreed to include this item of the agenda for its next meeting.

TITANIUM DIOXIDE

The Council continued its examination of the proposal for a Directive on procedures for harmonizing the programmes for the reduction and eventual elimination of pollution caused by waste from the titanium dioxide industry.

The Council asked the Permanent Representatives Committee to examine this dossier in greater detail, on the basis in particular of a compromise solution providing for the application, on certain conditions, of quality objectives, to enable it to reach agreement, if possible at its next meeting.

IMPACT STUDIES

The Council recorded its agreement on the Directive concerning the assessment of the environmental effects of certain public and private projects.

This Directive was a basic text for a preventive policy for the protection of the environment.

Under the Directive Member States are obliged to submit the following projects to an environmental impact assessment:

1. Crude-oil refineries
2. Thermal power stations and certain other combustion installations
3. Installations solely designed for the permanent storage or final disposal of radioactive waste
4. Integrated works for the initial melting of cast-iron and steel
5. Installations for the extraction of asbestos
6. Integrated chemical installations
7. Construction of motorways, express roads and lines for long-distance railway traffic and of airports with a basic runway length of 2 100 m or more
8. Trading ports and inland waterways and ports for inland-waterway traffic which permit the passage of vessels of over 1 350 tonnes
9. Waste-disposal installations for the incineration, chemical treatment or land storage of toxic and dangerous wastes

The Directive does, however, provide for a certain number of derogations in specific cases.

Moreover, the Member States must submit for evaluation the environmental effects of other projects where they consider that their characteristics so demand. These are projects relating, for example, to agriculture, the mining industry, the energy industry, the metal-working industry, etc.

The purpose of the assessment is to identify, describe and assess the direct and indirect effects of a project on the following factors:

- human beings, fauna and flora;
- soil, water, air, climatic factors and the landscape;
- the inter-relationship between the above factors;
- material assets and the cultural heritage.

Member States must ensure that any request for development consent and information concerning the description of the project are made available to the public and that the public concerned is given the opportunity to express an opinion before the project is initiated.

Member States must comply with this Directive within three years.

2nd PCB/PCT DIRECTIVE

Pending receipt of the Opinions of the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee, the Council expressed a favourable opinion on the proposal for a Directive relating to restrictions on the marketing and use of certain dangerous substances and preparations (2nd PCB/PCT Directive).

The proposal seeks to strengthen the Community rules which have already existed in this area since 1976 by placing an almost complete ban on the marketing and use of PCBs and PCTs, with a view to the greater protection of human health and the environment.

At the close of its discussion, the Council asked the Permanent Representatives Committee to continue its work, once the Opinions of the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee were known, to allow the Directive to be adopted as soon as possible.

LIMIT VALUES AND QUALITY OBJECTIVES FOR DISCHARGES OF CERTAIN DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES

The Council was favourably disposed towards the proposal for a Directive on limit values and quality objectives for discharges of certain dangerous substances in List I in the Annex to Directive 76/464/EEC.

The Council asked the Permanent Representatives Committee to continue its work in the light of the Opinions of the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee, to allow the Directive to be adopted rapidly.

MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONS

Other environmental decision

The Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Directive on air quality standards for nitrogen dioxide. (See press release 8129/84 (Presse 114) of 28/29 June 1984).

Customs co-operation

The Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Decision accepting on behalf of the Community the Recommendation of 15 June 1983 of the Customs Co-operation Council concerning action against customs fraud relating to containers.

The Council also adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Decision accepting on behalf of the Community three Annexes to the International Convention on the Simplification and harmonization of Customs procedures.

Appointment

On a proposal from the Unione Italiana Lavoratori, the Council appointed Mr Piero IMBERTI a member of the ECSC Consultative Committee in place of Mr Agostino CONTE, member, who has resigned, for the remainder of the latter's term of office, i.e. until 17 February 1987.



COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
GENERAL SECRETARIAT

PRESS RELEASE

5606/85 (Presse 36)
(OR.f)

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continuation of the 990th meeting of the Council

- Environment -

Brussels, 20/21 March 1985

President: Mr Alfredo BIONDI
Minister for Ecology
of the Italian Republic

The Governments of the Member States and the Commission of the European Communities were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Firmin AERTS
State Secretary for
Public Health and the Environment

Denmark:

Mr Christian CHRISTENSEN
Minister for the Environment
and for Nordic Affairs

Mr Mogens BUNDGAARD-NIELSEN
State Secretary,
Ministry of the Environment

Germany:

Mr Friedrich ZIMMERMANN
Federal Minister for the
Interior

Greece:

Mr Alexandros PANTAZIS
Secretary-General of the Ministry
of Regional Planning

Mr Martin BANGEMANN
Federal Minister for
Economic Affairs

Mr Carl-Dieter SPRANGER
State Secretary,
Federal Ministry of the Interior

France:

Mrs Huguette BOUCHARDEAU
Minister for the Environment

Ireland:

Mr Liam KAVANAGH
Minister for the Environment

Italy:

Mr Alfredo BIONDI
Minister for Ecology

Luxembourg:

Mr Jacques F. POOS
Vice-President of the Government,
Minister for Foreign Affairs

Netherlands:

Mr P. WINSEMIUS
Minister for Housing, Regional
Planning and the Environment

United Kingdom:

Mr William WALDEGRAVE
Parliamentary Under-Secretary
of State,
Department of the Environment

Commission:

Lord COCKFIELD - Vice-President
Mr Karl-Heinz NARJES - Vice-President
Mr Stanley CLINTON-DAVIS - Member

AIR POLLUTION BY GASES FROM ENGINES OF MOTOR VEHICLES

The Council reached agreement on the question of air pollution by exhaust gases from motor vehicles.

However, one delegation was only able to agree subject to confirmation. Another delegation had to enter a more general reservation but promised to inform its Government of the result that had been achieved.

The result represents a political agreement establishing a balance between, on the one hand, the demands of environmental protection and, on the other hand, a concern to allow European industry the time needed to adjust to emission values considerably more stringent than the limits currently in force.

It was agreed that the discussions necessary to translate this political agreement into a Directive would go ahead as speedily as possible to enable the Directive to be adopted in June.

LEAD CONTENT OF PETROL

In the light of the European Parliament's Opinion, the Council adopted a Directive on the approximation of the laws of the Member States on the lead content of petrol.

The Directive provides for the compulsory introduction of unleaded petrol as from October 1989. This date gives the petroleum and automobile industries time to make the necessary investments.

The Directive does not rule out the possibility of measures being taken to introduce unleaded petrol at an earlier date.

It also provides that, as soon as they see fit, Member States will reduce in parallel the lead content of leaded petrol from 0,4 g/l to 0,15 g/l.

CONTAINERS OF LIQUIDS FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION

The Council agreed (¹) to a Directive on containers of liquids for human consumption.

This Directive forms part of the attempt to establish a better policy on the management of waste. It concerns environmental protection, while seeking to reduce the consumption of energy and raw materials. Against this background, the Directive provides for a package of measures to be carried out regarding the production, marketing, use, recycling and refilling of containers of liquids for human consumption and the disposal of used containers.

To achieve these objectives, Member States will draw up programmes for reducing the tonnage or volume of containers of liquids for human consumption in household waste to be finally disposed of.

These programmes will be revised at least every four years to take account, in particular, of technical progress and changing economic circumstances.

Not only by legislative or administrative means, but also by voluntary agreements of national or sectoral scope, Member States will be able to take measures designed inter alia:

- (a) to develop consumer education;
- (b) to facilitate the refilling or recycling of containers;

(¹) The United Kingdom delegation entered a reservation on this Directive pending further examination.

(c) as regards non-refillable containers:

- to promote the selective collection of containers,
- to develop effective processes for retrieving containers from household waste,
- to extend the outlets for materials recovered from containers.

insofar as this is economically feasible;

(d) to encourage the technical development and placing on the market of new types of container;

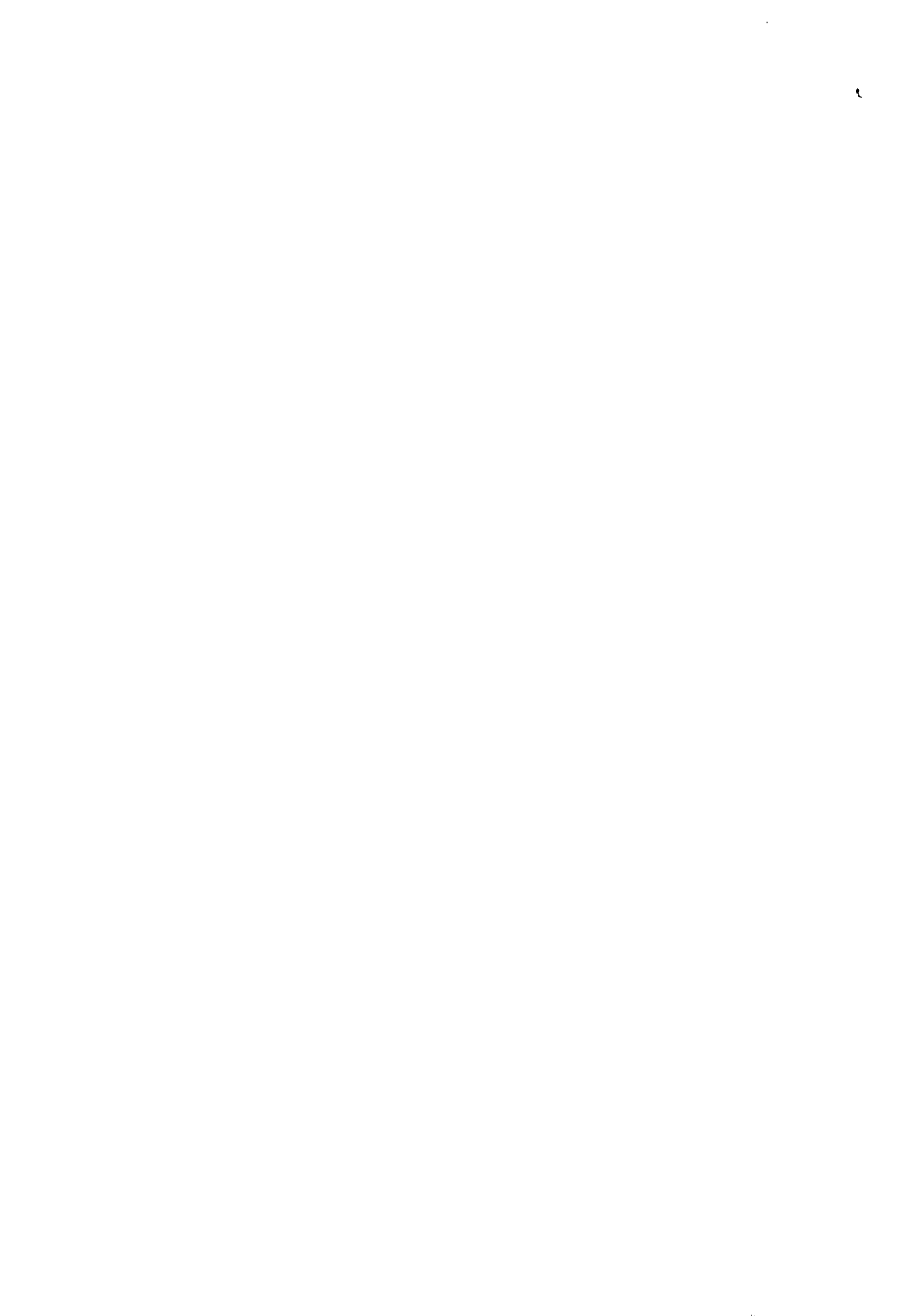
(e) to maintain, and where possible increase, the proportion of refilled or recycled containers,

The Member States have two years to comply with this Directive.

GLOBAL FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE OZONE LAYER

The Council adopted a Decision concerning the signature of a global framework Convention for the protection of the ozone layer.

The Convention provides inter alia that the contracting parties must take all appropriate steps to protect human health and the environment against any damaging effects that may alter the ozone layer. To that end, the contracting parties will co-operate - through monitoring, research and the exchange of information - to achieve a better understanding and evaluation of the effect which human activities have on the ozone layer. The Convention also provides for certain legislative or administrative measures to curb or even reduce those activities which may have a damaging effect on the ozone layer.



MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONS

Agriculture

The Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities a Regulation amending Annex IV to Regulation (EEC) No 516/77 on the common organization of the market in products processed from fruit and vegetables. Under this amendment, cherries in syrup are now covered by the system of import certificates which already exists for other particularly sensitive products.



Bruxelles, le 7 mars 1985

NOTE BIO (85) 89 AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX
c.c. AUX MEMBRES DU GROUPE DU PORTE-PAROLE

433

CONSEIL ENVIRONNEMENT (M. BEHRENDT)

Le Conseil a commence ses travaux par les mesures s'inscrivant dans le cadre de la lutte contre la pollution automobile. Ce sujet dominera la journee.

Les delegations ont de facon generale souligne la necessite de trouver rapidement une solution a ce probleme. On a pu constater une unite de vues sur un certain nombre de principes, notamment la desirabilite d'eviter le recours a des actions unilaterales, l'importance d'eviter de cloisonner le marche interieur des automobiles, le souhait de voir adopter des normes "europeennes" plutot que de proceder a une transposition simple des normes americaines.

Les mesures fiscales projetees par la RFA, en vue d'encourager le consommateur a acquerir des automobiles non polluantes, soulevent des difficultes fondamentales.

Parmi les Dix, la position allemande au sujet des emissions est la plus exigeante du point de vue reduction de la pollution. La position britannique est moins exigeante, car elle est preoccupee par le cout economique de l'introduction de normes d'emission d'un niveau comparable aux normes en vigueur aux USA et au Japon et par les problemes que cette introduction pose dans le court terme pour l'industrie automobile de la Communaute.

A SUIVRE

Amitie,
H. PAEMEN COMEUR 17.10

Bruxelles, le 8 mars 1985

Note Bio (85) 89 (suite 1 et fin) aux bureaux nationaux
cc. aux membres du Groupe du Porte-Parole

Environmental Council of 7.3.85 (M. Berendt)

The Council broke up shortly after five o'clock this morning, having failed to reach agreement on the question of vehicle exhaust emissions despite substantial movement by several delegations. The Council did, however, reach an important agreement on a directive providing for a system of Environmental Impact Assessment throughout the Community.

Vehicle exhaust emissions

After a marathon negotiation, much of it in restricted or bilateral session, ministers came to the brink of agreement. Towards the end of the night's talks the Commission submitted proposals which set out dates for the implementation of 'European Standard' emission norms for three different categories of motor vehicle (over 2 000 cc: 1988 for new models, 1989 for new cars; 1 400 - 2 000 cc: 1990 and 1992; below 1 400 cc: 1990 and 1991 for first stage standards, not later than 1993 and 1994 for European standards).

These proposals set out the basis on which standards should be adopted, the need to achieve them by varying technical means, the need to ensure coherence between the Community regime for emissions and financial incentives and a commitment by the Commission to bring forward proposals on emissions from heavy vehicles, diesel emissions and speed limits.

Ministers were also asked by Commission to accept a draft declaration on fiscal incentives (the German tax concessions of low-pollution cars) jointly with the proposal on emission standards.

All delegations made important concessions in the search for agreement, with the French minister, Mme Huguette Bouchardeau, playing a particularly constructive role, but, in the final analysis British Minister was unable to accept the formula required by the German government for medium sized cars and the negotiations were suspended. The issue will be taken again at a Council meeting on March 20.

Environmental impact assessment

This proposal, first submitted by the Commission to the Council in 1980, was adopted following agreement on an addendum which allowed Denmark to lift its reserve. The directive will lay down that in all Member States there should be regular procedures for the advance assessment of environmental effects so as to ensure, before decisions are taken, that new developments are environmentally acceptable.

The Commission regards the adoption of this directive as an important milestone in the development of the Community environmental policy and the decision was warmly welcomed by Commissioner Clinton Davis.

Other issues

Other issues on the agenda were referred back for further work. The next Environment Council will be held on March 20.

Amities,
H. PAEMEN - *comeur*

Bruxelles, le 19 mars 1985
Note BIO(85)109 aux Bureaux Nationaux
c.c. aux membres du Service du Porte-Parole

433

PREPARATION CONSEIL ENVIRONNEMENT (M. Berendt)

Le Conseil Environnement commencera ses travaux ce mercredi 20 mars a 15H00, avec trois points a l'ordre du jour :

- émissions de véhicules a moteur;
- essence sans plomb;
- emballages pour liquides alimentaires.

Le Conseil aura un document de travail, déjà présente par M. Clinton Davis au Conseil du 7 mars, qui propose les dates d'introduction des normes pour les émissions différenciées par catégories de voiture. Le document donne aussi les critères par lesquels les normes peuvent être déterminées. Les chiffres doivent être fixés par des négociations techniques et ce, avant le 30 juin 1985.

La déclaration proposée pourrait offrir un cadre pour les mesures fiscales allemandes afin que les Etats membres puissent accepter ces mesures.

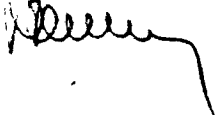
La Commission a l'intention d'introduire des propositions avant la fin de cette année sur la limitation de vitesse, les émissions de véhicules de plus de 3,5 tonnes et les émissions de véhicules a moteur diesel.

Une décision sur l'essence sans plomb est liée aux décisions sur les émissions, en particulier en ce qui concerne la date d'introduction des mesures que le Conseil a adoptée de principe en décembre.

Il y a bon espoir que le Conseil adopte une directive sur les emballages pour liquides alimentaires par laquelle les Etats membres devraient introduire un programme pour encourager l'utilisation des emballages recyclables ou réutilisables.

Amitiés,

H. PAEMEN - COMEUR////



Brussels, 20 March 1985

Note BIO(85)109 (suite 1) aux Bureaux Nationaux
c.c. aux membres du Service du Porte-Parole

ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL MARCH 20 (M. Berendt)

As anticipated, Ministers began their deliberations by resuming discussion of the proposed Community policy on vehicle emissions. Both the Commission and the Member States stressed that this Council was a continuation of the Council of March 7 and seemed not to retreat from positions taken then.


The main protagonists in the negotiations all showed some flexibility, while stressing their particular problems. Thus Waldegrave for the United Kingdom asked whether standards for medium sized cars should necessarily be the same as for large cars, but thought a suitably tailored solution would be possible. German minister Zimmerman said that the Federal Republic had already made considerable concessions, but he was confident that a compromise could be found. He accepted the importance of allowing for technologies other than the catalyst in any solution.

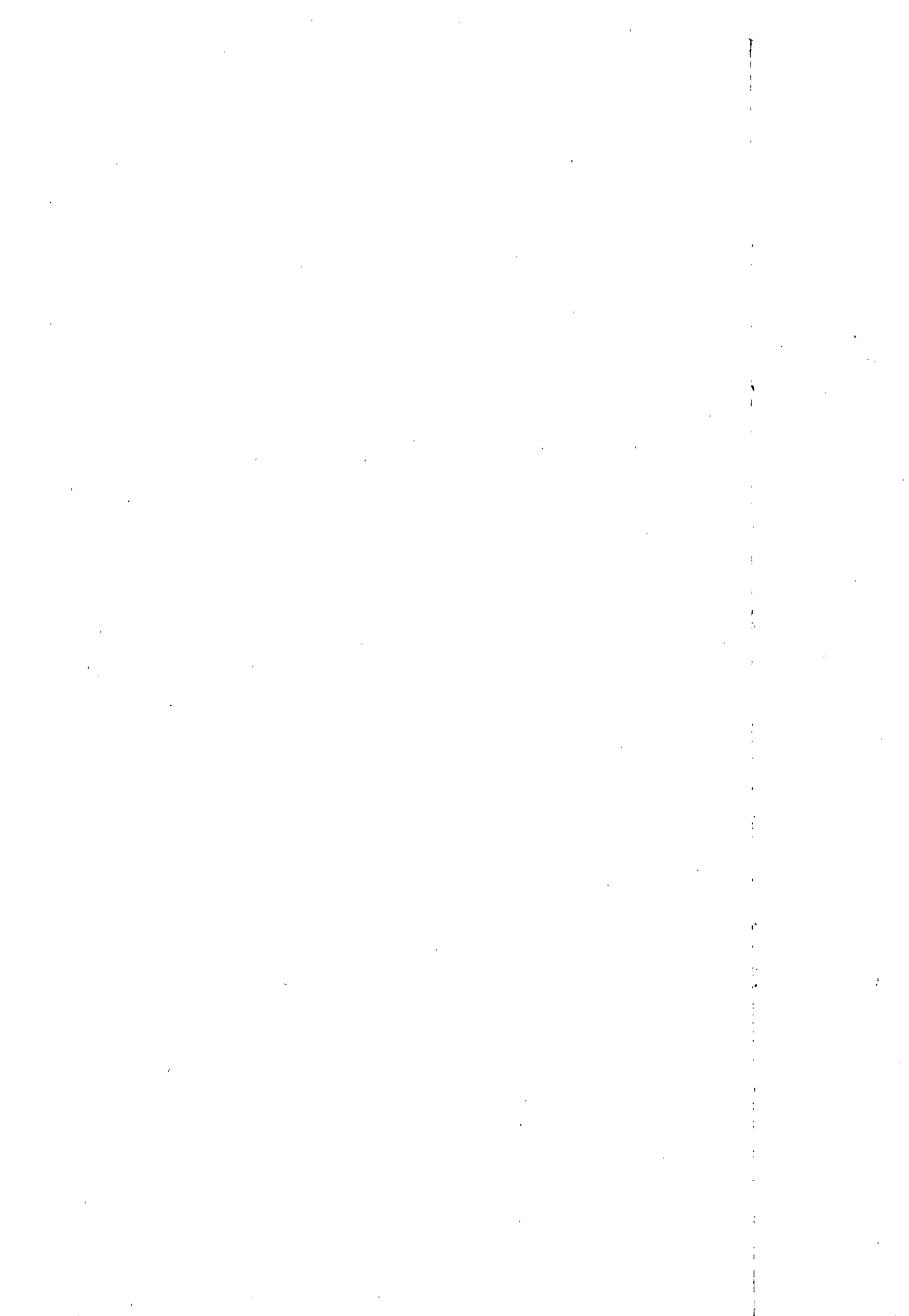
The French minister, Mme Bouchardeau, emphasised the need to have a European response to the issue and European (rather than US) standards. She was concerned that German financial incentives should not be introduced before 1987. Of the other delegations, the one with a special problem is Denmark, whose Folketing has demanded a strict negotiating position. The Minister noted his reservations but said he was willing to talk further.

Plenary session has not been suspended for bilateral talks between each Member State and the Commissioner/President. They will meet together again later this evening.

Amities,

H. PAEMEN - COMEUR////

n.o. 



Bruxelles, le 21 mars 1985
Note BIO(85)109 (suite 2 et fin) aux Bureaux Nationaux
c.c. aux membres du Groupe du Porte-Parole

ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL MARCH 20-21 (M. Berendt)

After a long, slow journey, the Environment Council ended its deliberations at about eight o'clock this morning with agreement between nine member States on exhaust emissions from motor vehicles. The Danish minister had a reserve which it is hoped can be lifted in a few days. Ministers adopted the directive on lead-free petrol and agreed, subject to a British parliamentary procedure, to a directive on liquid containers.

Speaking on behalf of the Commission, Mr Stanley Clinton Davis said that the Council had made an important agreement that would bring about a substantial reduction in atmospheric pollution from motor vehicle. It would safeguard the integral nature of the common market for motor cars and would not inhibit the development of different technologies for reducing vehicle emissions.

"We are delighted to have achieved this agreement this morning. This negotiation has been a long one but in the last two Council sessions Member States showed a willingness to reach an agreement which represents a vital step for the Community's environment policy. The decision will bring up a considerable reduction in atmospheric pollution that is causing such damage to our forests and our natural environment.

The agreement has other positive features :

- it has safeguarded the common market for motor cars;
- it will bring certainty to the Community motor vehicle industry;
- it is framed in such a way that it will stimulate technological development.

Not least, it has averted a very serious crisis which has cast its shadow over the European Council"

The shape of the agreement was much as envisaged, based on a Commission proposal which set dates for implementing emission norms for three different size capacities of car and criteria which will be used for determining the detailed technical standards. These standards will be fixed in further technical discussions between now and the end of June 1985.

The timetable agreed is as follows :

Category of vehicle	Date of introduction (x) (new models/new cars)		Emission norms (gramme/test)
	1988	1989	
More than 2 litres	1988	1989	European standard
1.4 - 2 litres	1991	1993	European standard
Less than 1.4 litres	1) 1990	1991	At least : CO 45 HC + NOx 15 NOx 6
	2) To be decided in 1987, for implementation by 1993/1994		European standard

(x) October 1

The European standards to be fixed in the technical discussions will be adapted "so the effect on the European environment will be equivalent to that produced by US standards, taking into account differing patterns of use for each category". As far as possible, the new European standards should be attainable at reasonable cost and by different technical means, some of which could offer a more stable performance than the catalytic converter, as well as allowing energy saving. The Council agreed that for medium sized cars the European standards can be achieved by 'lean burn' techniques or comparable cost-effective methods.

It was agreed that coherence must be ensured between the Community regime for vehicle emissions and "possible compensation offered by the member States to encourage the sale and use of less-polluting cars during the period before the new European standards enter into force". (For "compensation" read "financial incentives").

The Declaration agreed by ministers provides a framework for the operation of the compensation. It sets out that financial compensation should relate to European standards, may not start earlier than July 1, 1985, and must be significantly less than the additional costs involved in equipping a car to meet the new European standards. In the period before the adoption of these standards, small cars which achieve emission levels at least 15 per cent higher than the first stage requirements "may be granted a compensation equivalent to 750 DM. Such a compensation could be distributed over a period of three years". This clause effectively allows the German Federal Republic to exempt such vehicles from car tax for that period.

The negotiation within the Council concluded with a decision to adopt the proposals on the provision of lead-free petrol as from 1989 and a decision in principle on the beverage containers directive which provides for a series of measures designed to encourage producers and consumers to cut waste and save energy in the manufacture and use of bottles, cans and other drinks containers.

RENDEZ-VOUS DE MIDI DU 21.3.1985 (M. Berendt)

NB. : La reunion de la Commission prevue pour cet apres-midi est annulee.

Materiel diffuse :

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- IP(85)86 : Bulletin petrolier
 - Fiches : Declaration de M. Stanley Clinton Davis suite au Conseil Environnement.

Amities
H. PAEMEN  COMEUR///

Bruxelles, le 5 mars 1985
Note BIO(85) 87 aux Bureaux Nationaux
c.c. aux membres du Service du Porte-Parole

RENDEZ-VOUS DE MIDI DU 5.3.1985 (M. Berendt)

433

Sujet traite :

Reunion informelle des Ministres des Transports a Taranto

La Commission espere que la session informelle des Ministres des Transports tenue ce jour a Taranto puisse pousser en avant trois aspects de la politique des transports de la Communaute :

- securite routiere et l'annee de la securite routiere (1986)
- infrastructure des transports
- harmonisation et integration des systemes de transport.

Materiel diffuse :

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- IP 54 : Visite du Chancelier d'Autriche a la Commission
 - IP 53 : Reunion du Comite Consultatif des Consommateurs
 - MEMO 26 : Reunion informelle des Ministres du Transport a Taranto
 - Discours de M. De Clercq devant le groupe liberal du PE Amities,
C. STATHOPOULOS COMEUR////
- B

