

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES  
GENERAL SECRETARIAT

PRESS RELEASE

6572/87 (Presse 77)

1165th meeting of the Council

- Environment -

Brussels, 21/22 May 1987

President:

Mrs Miet SMET

State Secretary for the Environment  
of the Kingdom of Belgium

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

Belgium:

Mrs Miet SMET State Secretary for the Environment

Denmark:

Mr Christian CHRISTENSEN Minister for the Environment and  
Minister for Nordic Affairs

Mr BUNGAARD-NIELSEN State Secretary,  
Ministry of the Environment

Germany:

Mr Klaus TOEPFER Federal Minister for the Environment,  
Nature Conservation and Reactor  
Safety

Greece :

Mr Evangelos KOULOUMBIS Minister of Public Works, Regional  
Planning and the Environment

Spain :

Mr Javier SAENZ COSCULLUELA Minister for Public Works and  
Town Planning

France :

Mr Jean CADET Deputy Permanent Representative

Ireland:

Mr Padraig FLYNN Minister for the Environment

Italy :

Mr Georgio POSTAL State Secretary for the Environment

Luxembourg:

Mr Robert KRIEPS Minister for the Environment

Netherlands:

Mr E.H.T.M. NIJPELS Minister for Housing,  
Planning and the Environment

Portugal:

Mr VALENTE de OLIVEIRA Minister for Planning and  
Territorial Environment  
Administration

United Kingdom:

Mr William WALDEGRAVE Minister for Environment,  
Countryside and Planning

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Commission:

Mr Stanley CLINTON-DAVIS Member

DISCHARGES OF ALDRIN, DIELDRIN AND ENDRIN INTO THE AQUATIC ENVIRONMENT

As part of the measures to combat the pollution of water by dangerous substances, and pending the Opinions of the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee, the Council reached a common position on the amended proposal for a Directive concerning limit values for discharges of aldrin, dieldrin and endrin into the aquatic environment and quality objectives for these products in the aquatic environment.

WATER QUALITY OBJECTIVES FOR CHROMIUM

The Council held an initial discussion on the basis of a progress report on the proposal for a Directive, which is aimed at harmonizing national programmes to reduce water pollution by chromium. This proposal provides, in particular, for Community quality objectives for this substance, and a common reference method for measurement. It is in fact the first proposal for a Directive submitted for List II of the basic Directive (76/464/EEC) on pollution caused by certain dangerous substances discharged into the aquatic environment.

At the close of this discussion, the Council invited the Permanent Representatives Committee to continue its work on this proposal in order to find solutions to the questions still outstanding.

ACTION BY THE COMMUNITY RELATING TO THE ENVIRONMENT (ACE)

The Council agreed to the Regulation, the aim of which is to extend the existing Regulation, No 1872/84, which provides for Community financing of certain measures on the environment.

The main features of this agreement are as follows:

1. The Regulation will be of four years' duration.
2. The Regulation will provide that the amount considered necessary for this period will be 24 MECU. That amount could be reviewed after one year on a Commission proposal and on the basis of a report on the experience gained.

The appropriations will be entered in the general budget of the European Communities.

3. In the third year, the Council, acting unanimously on a Commission proposal, will decide whether to extend and adapt the Regulation.

4. The scope of the Regulation will cover:

- (a) demonstration projects aimed at developing new clean technologies, i.e. technologies which cause little or no pollution and which may also be more economical in the use of natural resources;
- (b) demonstration projects aimed at developing techniques for recycling and re-using waste, including waste water;

- (c) demonstration projects aimed at developing techniques for locating and restoring sites contaminated by hazardous wastes or hazardous substances;
- (d) demonstration projects aimed at developing new techniques and methods for measuring and monitoring the quality of the natural environment;
- (e) projects providing an incentive and aimed at contributing towards the maintenance of re-establishment of seriously threatened biotopes which are the habitat of endangered species and are of particular importance to the Community, under Directive 79/409/EEC;
- (f) projects providing an incentive and aimed at contributing towards the protection or re-establishment of land threatened or damaged by fire, erosion and desertification.

5. The rate of the Community's contribution to the measures financed under this Regulation will not exceed:

- 30% for projects covered by Article 1(1)(a), (b) and (c) (clean technologies, waste recycling/re-use techniques, locating and restoring contaminated sites);
- 50% for other projects;
- 75%, exceptionally, in the case of projects covered by Article 1(1)(e) provided they are related to species in danger of extinction in the Community.

6. The management arrangements will be in accordance with those provided for in the existing Regulation.

LEAD IN PETROL

Pending receipt of the Opinion of the European Parliament, and in order to reduce the harm caused to the environment and public health by lead, the Council confirmed its common position with regard to the Directive which lays down the conditions under which a Member State may prohibit the marketing of regular leaded petrol.

The Council undertook to take a final decision on this Directive once the Opinion of the European Parliament is delivered.

LARGE COMBUSTION PLANTS

The Council resumed its discussions on the proposal for a Directive on the limitation of pollutant emissions into the air from large combustion plants.

It noted with satisfaction that significant progress had been made in the area of checks to be made on new installations and that all delegations had acknowledged the reduction levels of SO<sub>2</sub> emissions to be achieved by each one with regard to existing installations, although the dates to be set for the various reduction stages had still to be agreed on. It invited the Permanent Representatives Committee to continue work on this dossier, on the assumption that there would be a Directive covering these two aspects.

PARTICULATE EMISSIONS FROM DIESEL ENGINES FITTED TO PRIVATE CARS

The Council again discussed in detail the main problems arising in connection with the proposed Directive, in particular the problem of the standards to be established for the first stage.

This examination indicated that testing methods and their manner of application could differ somewhat from one Member State to another; this would explain the divergent assessments of the level of particulate emissions from cars currently available on the market - these being the emission levels which constitute for each Member State the point of reference for standards to be envisaged for the future.

In these circumstances it was thought desirable that, before continuing the political discussion on this problem, precise information should be obtained on the testing methods applied in the different Member States and the degree to which these methods were comparable; to this end it was agreed that the Commission would call a meeting of the heads of the laboratories directly involved in this type of testing.

CHLOROFLUOROCARBONS

The Council considered the various issues outstanding in connection with the negotiations for a Protocol on Chlorofluorocarbons (CFC) to the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Environment.



At the close of the discussion, the President:

- noted the Council's satisfaction at the progress of negotiations in Geneva and confirmed that the ensuing texts constituted a sound basis for further discussion;
- noted that the position expressed by the Community in Geneva continued to provide a good starting point, but that certain aspects could be reconsidered in the light of the positions adopted by the partners in the negotiations; here the Community should in particular give further thought to the problem of the scope and the third control measure;
- invited the Commission to continue negotiations in close consultation with the Member States and to report back to the Council on results in order for the Council to take a final decision.

EXPORT FROM AND IMPORT INTO THE COMMUNITY OF CERTAIN DANGEROUS CHEMICALS

The Council held a constructive discussion on the proposal concerning Community exports and imports of certain dangerous chemicals, during which considerable progress was made.

At the close of discussion, the Council requested the Permanent Representatives Committee actively to pursue its proceedings in this area in order that the Council might reach final agreement at its next meeting.

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Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"The Council notes that the World Commission on Environment and Development presented its report to the Member States and the Commission and to the member countries of EFTA on 5 May 1987.

The Council congratulates the World Commission for its comprehensive and in-depth study of sustainable development, and notes with appreciation the attention given to the mutual interdependence of economic development and environmental protection.

The Council refers to the Single European Act, which stipulates that action by the Community relating to the environment shall be based on the principles that preventive action should be taken, environmental damage should as a priority be rectified at source, and the polluter should pay, and that environmental protection requirements shall be a component of the Community's other policies.

The Council also refers to the commitments made, inter alia, in the framework of the Third Lomé Convention "to protect the environment and restore natural balances" and to the results obtained in this field and recalls its resolution of 17 April 1986 on a European plan for the protection of natural resources - fight against desertification in Africa.

The Council calls on the Commission and the Member States to think constructively about the conclusions of the Report by the World Commission, in the light of the results obtained in the United Nations, taking account of the multisector approach in the Report."

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The Council also heard the following statements:

- Proposal concerning the long-term minimum quality of Community waters  
= oral progress report by the Commission
  
- Nuclear safety: environmental aspects  
= oral report by the Commission on the action taken in response to the conclusions of the Council meeting (Environment) on 19 November 1986
  
- Proposal for the extension of the Council Directive amending Directive 82/501/EEC on the major-accident hazards of certain industrial activities  
= oral progress report by the Commission
  
- Possible informal meeting of EEC/EFTA Ministers  
= oral communication from the Presidency
  
- National plan of action as part of the campaign to combat pollution of the aquatic environment  
= memorandum from the Danish delegation
  
- Elimination of pollution caused by waste from the titanium dioxide industry  
= memorandum from the Belgian delegation

- Road and rail transport
  - = statement by the Luxembourg delegation on a new national draft law
  
- 4th action programme on the environment
  - = statement by the Presidency
  
- Environmental consequences of the disaster which overtook the Herald of Free Enterprise
  - = statement by the Belgian delegation
  
- Speed limits
  - = Commission statement
  
- European Year of the Environment
  - = Commission statement

MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONS

Other decision on the environment

The Council adopted in the official languages of the Communities the Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 3626/82 on the implementation in the Community of the Convention on international trade in endangered species of wild fauna and flora.

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