

Reduction in the sulphur content of certain liquid fuels

1997/0105(SYN) - 06/10/1998 - Council position

The Council's common position takes over entirely or in part 13 of the 16 amendments adopted by Parliament at first reading and accepted by the Commission in its amended proposal. The Council also included new provisions. The common position thus: - excludes from the scope the petroleum derived fuels used by the seagoing ships (the marine gas oils included in the scope are those having a specific range of density and viscosity as defined in table I of ISO 8217); - clarifies that fuels for non-road mobile machinery and agricultural tractors should be excluded from the scope; - postpones the date of entry into force for a maximum sulphur content of 1% for heavy fuel oils to 2003 (instead of 2000); - makes the conditions for granting derogations on the use of heavy fuels more stringent, and modifies the text to allow heavy fuel oils with a sulphur content of up to 3% to be used (instead of a maximum of 2.5%); - clarifies the sectors and categories of combustion plants for which the maximum sulphur content of 1% in heavy fuel oils is not applicable; the common position creates an 'emission bubble' with a limit value to be applied to all plants in refineries while giving the refineries flexibility to apportion emissions between individual plants; - makes the date of implementation variable for limit values for gasoils, but sets the time frame of 1 January 2000 for the first stage, with the second stage due to start on 1 January 2008 (with a reduction of 0.1% in sulphur content); - extends the geographical derogation for the use of marine gasoil with a higher sulphur content than that set for the French Overseas Departments and the Archipelagoes of Madeira and Azores; - provides that a future proposal could deal with the question of bunker fuels, excluded from this directive; - postpones until 2006 the date on which the report is to be submitted; - introduces an advisory committee to assist the Commission on the draft of the measures to be taken; - sets the deadline for transposition at 1 January 2000.