Air pollution : national emission ceilings for pollutant gas (SO2, NOx, NH3, VOCs)

1999/0067(COD) - 07/11/2000 - Council position

The Council's common position, whilst maintaining the approach proposed by the Commission moves, in line with one of the European Parliament's amendments, the proposed interim environmental objectives from an Annex into Article 5 of the proposal. In total, the Council has adopted the 8 European Parliament amendments accepted, fully or in part, by the Commission. The major difference between the Commission's proposal and the common position of the Council is in the numerical values of the national emissions ceilings. Council has accepted the interim environmental objectives for 2010 which the emission ceilings proposed by the Commission were designed to meet. However, as far as emission ceilings were concerned Council felt it was necessary to take a stepwise approach; committing now only to emission reductions which they felt certain of achieving, and making clear that the aim of review in 2004 would be to try and bridge the gap in the light of further information available by then. In line with Parliament's opinion, the common position incorporates an amendment which refers to the need to take account of the effects of any new Community legislation relating to relevant sources of emissions when implementation of the Directive is reviewed. Furthermore, it is indicated that the Commission will examine further the need for harmonised Community measures for the most relevant economic sectors and products contributing to acidification, eutrophication and ground level ozone. Furthermore, the common position incorporates an amendment proposed by the Parliament which relates to the need to take into account the progress in the accession candidate countries. On the other hand, the common position did not accept amendments relating in particular to the dates for meeting the long term objectives for no exceedance of critical loads for acidification and of critical levels for ozone; including emissions from international maritime traffic and from aircraft beyond the landing and take-off cycle in national emission ceilings; the revision of the definition of "volatile organic compound" to be in line with that in the Solvents Directive and bring forward the dates of interim reviews and the final report.