

Atmospheric pollution: large combustion plants, limitation of emissions (amend. direct. 88/609/EEC)

1998/0225(COD) - 04/07/2001

The Conciliation Committee reached a final agreement by an exchange of letters on the text of the proposal for a directive. Under the compromise reached, Parliament succeeded in particular in tightening the proposed limit values for sulphur dioxide (SO₂) and nitrogen oxide (NO_x). The Council agreed to considerably reduce the SO₂ emission limit values in particular for medium-sized and large plants. This reduction would be crucial in limiting emissions from larger coal-fired power plants. Parliament also managed to secure a stringent limit value (of 200 mg/Nm³) for nitrogen oxide emissions from large solid fuel plants, to apply from 2016. This limit would be a crucial benchmark in negotiations with the Eastern European candidate countries. Parliament was instrumental in ensuring that existing plants, as well as new ones, would be covered by the new legislation. It also fought hard to ensure that the exemptions demanded by Council for older, dirtier plants were not too generous. The compromise deal provided that the exemption demanded by the Council for older plants should be limited in time and that large power stations operating at peak times for a maximum of two to three months a year would also be subject to nitrogen oxide limit values.