Environment and sustainable development: Johannesburg World Summit 2002, 10 years after Rio

2001/2142(COS) - 12/12/2001

As part of the follow-up to the Goteborg European Council, the Council adopted the following conclusions setting out how the Council intends to implement the environmental aspects of the sustainable development strategy. The Council stresses that the environmental dimension of sustainable development includes both the EU environment policies and the integration of environmental objectives into the Union's other internal and external policies. It underlines the importance of the development, in due time before the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), of the external and global EU sustainable development policies to complete the agreed EU Sustainable Development strategy. The Council also recognises the importance of giving practical and early effect to the Strategy, through the adoption of concrete policies and measures at Community level based upon pending and forthcoming proposals and related to the abovementioned priorities of the SDS: - combating climate change and promoting use of clean energy: early submission of further Common and Coordinated Policies and Measures (CCPMs) complementary to domestic actions in the Member States, which have a significant impact on greenhouse gas emissions; finalisation of Directives on energy-efficiency in buildings and energy-efficiency of electrical appliances; careful examination of the Commission proposal for a Directive establishing a scheme for greenhouse gas emission allowance trading within the Community and timely ratification of the Kyoto Protocol with a view to its entry into force by the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002; - ensure a high-level of protection for environment-related aspects of public health: reduction of the impact of pesticides and chemicals on human health and the environment; development of a new pesticides policy in line with the relevant aspects of the forthcoming EU Chemicals Policy; achievement of air quality improvement; supplementing measures on noise emissions; - ensure the sustainable management of natural resources: by continuing to improve the integration of biodiversity into the implementation and the future development of the Common Agriculture Policy; - foster sustainable mobility: encouraging the switch to more efficient and cleaner forms of transport, by giving priority to policies and measures respecting the environment; reducing the environmental impact of transport, in particular by reducing the risk of marine pollution through proposed measures in the two Erika packages on maritime safety, as well as by reducing gaseous and noise emissions; promoting development of environmentally-friendly alternative fuels, respecting the other relevant headline objectives of the SDS. The Council underlines the need to finalise a general framework on GMOs by adopting a Regulation on the traceability and labelling of GMOs, food and feed. The conclusions from the Council also stress the need to: - elaborate on possible further goals, long-term and intermediate environmental objectives and targets for the Strategy, which should be pursued through maximising positive synergies between environmental, economic and social policies, - get prices right with a view to internalising environmental and social costs: notes that the Commission will propose a frameworkto ensure that by 2004 the price of using different modes of transport better reflects costs to society; that this framework will set out the principles and structure of an infrastructure-charging system and a common methodology for setting charging levels; - improve policy coherence with a view to a more consistent approach to policy-making across the whole range of Community activities by ensuring that the economic, social and environmental impacts of all policies are properly taken into account; - improving communication and education of citizens and business through new patterns of governance and through a wide and open consultation; - use environmentally-friendly technologies in key areas such as energy and transport, in light of the future Commission report requested by the European Council; - promote innovation and research by the forthcoming adoption of the Framework programme on Research which pays particular attention to sustainable Development.