2002 Discharge: European Environment Agency

2003/2245(DEC) - 09/03/2004 - Supplementary non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE : Council Recommendation on the implementation of the EU's budget for the European Environment Agency covering the financial year 2002. CONTENT : Taking into account the positive Report from the Court of Auditors concerning the Environment Agency's annual accounts the Council recommends that the European Parliament should give a discharge to the Executive Director of the Agency for the implementation of the budget covering the financial year 2002. The Council does, however, have some comments to make. They concern, in particular, the fact that for the financial year 2001-2002 only EUR 6.8 million, or 84%, of the EUR 8.1 million has been carried forward in appropriations. Similarly, for the financial year 2002-2003 only EUR 7.6 million has been carried forward in appropriations with EUR 1 million having to be cancelled. In respect to this situation the Council notes that there are still slight setbacks regarding the establishment of a real sound and efficient financial management. The total carry-over remains high ad the Council recommends that the Agency improve its performance to evaluate more rigorously the justification for carry-overs. The Council also recommends that the Agency limit the amount of advance payments for grant agreement with international bodies. Concerning the decentralisation of financial matters to the Agency's operating services the Council asks that the Agency establish a new working programme and related budget structure, in order to focus on clearer objectives and the linking of these objectives to Activity Based Budgeting. Lastly, in order to achieve a more cost efficient financial management of its resources, the Council invites the Agency to directly recruit the experts that it needs on an almost permanent basis.