Air quality: improvement of comparability and transparency at European level (reduction of emissions)

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PREVIOUS POSITION OF EP: The report on the state of the environment in the Euorpean Community (COM(92)23 final Vol. III) reveals numerous shortcomings in the quantity and quality of environmental information. Given the close link between the quality of the directives and that of the available information, the EP stresses the importance of improving comparability and transparency of information at European level. Accordingly, in 1985, the EP supported the launching of the CORINE Programme (Coordination of Information on the Environment - (EP resolution OJ C 337/421, 17 December 1984), an experimental project for gathering, coordinating and ensuring the consistency of information on the state of the environment. One of the priorities of the programme was the registration of discharges into the air, and it brought to light the need to improve comparability of information by means of common definitions and nomenclatures, harmonized measuring methods and exchanges of information. In the light of the conclusions of the CORINE Programme the EP decided to launch the European Environment Agency and the European Environment Monitoring and Information Network. Together with EUROSTAT (Statistical Office of the European Union), the task of the EEA is to supply environmental data with an eye to quality and comparability. On the basis of objective, reliable and comparable information it should be possible to assess more accurately the real impact of the measures taken, particularly those to reduce emissions, and adapt them where necessary so as to ensure that they are as effective as possible. SITUATION IN THE MEMBER STATES: The quality of the information provided by the Member States concerning discharges varies since it is collected by organizations using very different methods of measurement and interpretation.