Renewable sources for energy: Community strategy. Green paper

1996/2260(COS) - 23/04/1997 - Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report

The Economic and Social Committee recommends support for renewable energies as a means of ensuring sustainable development. The Union needs a programme of research and marketing support comparable to the very significant programme of investment and market-oriented support for renewables exports in the USA. Financial incentives are needed to accelerate the penetration of renewables, with coordination within the Union so that stable and predictable market conditions are created for energy product and services companies, their investors and customers. Priority should be given to promoting the market for renewables in developing countries. In the short to medium term, a parallel aim should be to promote energy efficiency, which should be a priority for the 5th framework programme. There is a need for an R&D programme planned to improve the efficiency and price of renewable energy technology. Policy should recognize that public utilities have an important part to play both in encouraging rational energy use as well as developing and acquiring renewable energy supplies.