Water policy: list of priority substances, protection of the ecosystem and human health COMMPS

2000/0035(COD) - 07/02/2000 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: the adoption of a European Parliament and Council Decision establishing the list of priority - highest risk - substances as a basis for proposals for emission controls and standards in the field of water policy. CONTENT: with the likely adoption in the near future of a framework for Community action in the field of water policy, a scientifically based methodology for identifying priority substances on the basis of their risk to aquatic ecosystems is to be introduced. The methodology enables, as a most practical option, the application of a simplified risk-based assessment procedure based on scientific principles taking particular account of: - evidence regarding the intrinsic hazard of the substance concerned and, in particular, its aquatic ecotoxicity and human toxicity via aquatic exposure routes, - evidence from monitoring of widespread environmental contamination, and - other proven factors which may indicate the possibility of widespread environmental contamination, such as production, ude volume and use pattern of the substance concerned. The Commission has, on this basis, developed a combined monitoring-based and modelling-based priority setting (COMMPS) scheme, in collaboration with experts of interested parties, involving the Scientific Committee for Toxicity, Ecotoxicity and the Environment, Member States, EFTA countries, the European Environment Agency, European business associations, including those representing SMEs and European environmental organisations. A first list of 32 priority substances has been identified on the basis of the COMMPS procedure, followed by a publicly open and transparent discussion with the interested parties. The expeditious adoption of this list is desirable in order to allow for the timely and continuing implementation of Community controls of dangerous substances pursuant to the strategy set out in Article 16 of the forthcoming European Parliament and Council Directive establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy. The list of priority substances adopted under this Decision shall replace the list of substances in the 1982 Communication from the Commission to the Council on dangerous substances which might be included in List I of Council Directive 76/464 /EEC.