ALTENER II: multiannual programme for the promotion of renewable energy sources

1997/0106(SYN) - 24/09/1997

The Committee has adopted the report by Mrs Undine-Uta BLOCH VON BLOTTNITZ (D, Greens) on ALTENER II, the Commission's multiannual programme for the promotion of renewable energy sources in the Community. The Committee, however, shared the rapporteur's view that the 30 MECU budget for the first two-year period is inadequate for a programme with such ambitious goals. They also believed that the proposal is couched in too general terms, as no specific topics or projects which are to be carried out or promoted are mentioned. They consider that ALTENER II should contribute to the Community's priority objectives in those areas where renewable energy sources (RES) can play a decisive role, such as reducing CO2 emissions, increasing the share of RES in the energy balance, reducing energy import dependence, ensuring the security of energy supply and fostering economic development. Mrs BLOCH VON BLOTTNITZ considered that the recent climate conference in New York made it painfully clear that there is a wide gulf between talk and action on the urgent need to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases. This applies both to the EU and to its individual members. The ALTENER II programme must be seen as symptomatic of this trend. Neither the structure nor the funding of the proposal satisfy the current need for systematic promotion of renewable energy sources. As a result, she believes that the proposal also fails to meet the objective of significant progress on climate protection. She stated that "in view of the high expectations the Commission itself places on the implementation of the programme, the figure of ECU 30 million earmarked so far for the period 1998/1999 is no more than a drop in the ocean and should be increased as a matter of urgency". A great number of amendments were taken on board which seek to strengthen the ALTENER II programme. One amendment states that the level of funding should be based on the objective of reducing CO2 emissions by 15% by the year 2010 compared with 1990.