Environment: implementation of the Community law, minimal criteria for inspections

1998/0358(COD) - 19/07/1999

With one abstention - the Committee followed rapporteur Caroline JACKSON (EPP, UK) in proposing to convert a commission proposal for a recommendation providing minimum criteria for environmental inspections in the member states into a directive. The Commission proposal is aimed at re-enforcing Community environmental legislation by establishing guidelines on environmental inspections carried out in the Member States. Such inspections should be applied to all industrial installations and other enterprises and facilities whose emissions or discharges into the environment are subject to authorisation under Community law. This legislation is required to harmonise as far as possible the procedures followed during Member States' environmental inspections. The Commission chose to issue a recommendation rather than proposing a directive because of differences in existing national inspection systems - one or two Member States do not have inspections at all. The Committee however, shared Mrs Jackson's view that only a directive could oblige Member States to set up such inspections systems. The Committee adopted 24 amendments that aimed at the establishment of minimum inspection standards.