Public health: endocrine disrupters, consequences on human and animal health

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The committee adopted a report by Torben LUND (PES, DK) on a Commission paper for an EU strategy on endocrine disruptors. A major challenge to the Commission's stance was that whereas the latter would first like to draw up a list of substances suspected of being endocrine disruptors and subject them to further testing, the committee wanted immediate action. It said a list of substances should be identified, against which immediate steps should be taken under the precautionary principle. Measures should include banning, phasing out and/or limiting the use of these substances and the measures should be decided upon before mid-2001. The committee stressed that it was almost impossible to set limit values for hormone-mimicking substances. The Commission and Member States were also urged to establish a European screening and testing strategy. The report said a European scientific research programme should be drawn up, aimed at gathering information and scientific knowledge and encouraging the exchange of information on endocrine disruptors. The committee called on the Commission, which was proposing to analyse existing legal instruments only in the long run, to complete its study by mid-2001.