Implementation of directive 96/59/EC on PCB /PCT

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The committee adopted the own-initiative report by David BOWE (PES, UK) on implementation of the 1996 directive on the disposal of PCB/PCT. The first point made by the committee was that the immediate priority should be to implement the existing legislation rather than to redraft and reform the directive. It was critical of the Member States, with the exception of Finland and the Netherlands, for the extremely unsatisfactory implementation of the directive hitherto, pointing out that they had failed to achieve the stated aim of reducing PCB pollution and preventing danger to public health and the environment. It particularly deplored the failure by many Member States to complete the inventories of equipment containing PCBs as required by the directive, and stressed that the accuracy and completeness of such inventories were essential for monitoring and controlling the disposal of PCB-containing equipment. The Member States were urged to notify the Commission of the size of the stocks of PCBs and to make this information public. The committee also called on the Member States to develop collection systems for equipment containing PCBs which was not subject to inventories under the directive. Member States should introduce financial incentives in particular for individuals and SMEs to dispose of stocks of PCBs or equipment containing PCBs. The report pointed out that the Commission had been slow to censure Member States for non-compliance and called for better monitoring procedures, a clear deadline for full implementation of the directive, and a review aimed at developing further measures. It suggested that Member States should face financial penalties for non-compliance. It also wanted the Commission to bring forward a proposal to amend the 1975 directive on the disposal of waste oils. Lastly, the committee stressed that the implementation of the PCB directive should be a test case for how the EU could develop efficient policies which could more effectively tackle other highly toxic substances.