Implementation of directive on packaging

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The committee adopted the own-initiative report by Dorette CORBEY (PES, B) on the implementation of the 1994 packaging directive. It sought to influence the Commission's forthcoming review of the directive with a set of recommendations calling for "a policy mix" of tough measures aimed at encouraging prevention, re-use and recycling of packaging materials. The committee said that higher recycling targets were needed and that it was still waiting for the Commission's proposal for such targets to cover the period 2001-2006, which had been due by the end of 2000. It wanted targets for prevention and re-use to be introduced per material and said the environmental cost of packaging must be internalised in its price. It also called for a binding general target for the reduction of the amount of packaging waste going to landfill. The report said producers should have to prove that they had chosen the most environmentally-friendly packaging for their product, although it acknowledged that the need to reduce the amount of packaging produced had to be balanced with the need to ensure the hygiene and safety of foodstuffs, for which two-thirds of packaging was used. While welcoming the fact that, in general, the Member States had met the recycling targets set in the 1994 directive, the committee pointed out that most of them were over 2 years late in doing so. Lastly, it regretted the lack of any clear evaluation of the 1994 directive's impact on the environment or on the internal market and urged the Commission to involve all stakeholders in developing norms for packaging.