

# Packaging and packaging waste: recovery and recycling of waste

2001/0291(COD) - 22/05/2003

The committee adopted the report by Dorette CORBEY (PES, NL) amending the Council's common position under the 2nd reading of the codecision procedure. It reinstated a number of key amendments, sometimes in modified form, adopted by Parliament at 1st reading: - on recovery and recycling targets, it proposed to maintain the overall minimum recycling targets of the common position. However, it wanted to delete the maximum overall target the Council was proposing for recycling (80%) and proposed bringing forward the time frame, thus: overall target for recovery of packaging waste: 60% as a minimum by weight no later than 31 December 2006, overall target for recycling of packaging waste: 55% as a minimum by weight no later than 31 December 2006, material-specific targets for recycling of packaging waste no later than 31 December 2006 (by weight): glass - 60%; paper and board - 60%; metals - 50%; plastics - 22.5%; wood - 15%. The amendment stipulated that recycling of biodegradable plastics by composting may be counted towards achieving the plastics recycling target. Moreover, Member States shall ensure that these targets reflect the differing environmental costs and benefits and may also set targets for other materials; - the Commission's original proposal to give Greece, Ireland and Portugal an extension of the deadline only until 30 June 2009 (rather than until 31 December 2012) should be reinstated; - the directive should be implemented by the future Member States. The deadline for achieving the recovery and recycling targets for these States would have to be dealt with at a later stage, preferably with the involvement of the representatives of these Member States and their members in the European Parliament; - with effect from 1 January 2004 new packaging may only be put on the market if the producer has sought to minimise its environmental impact as far as possible without compromising the essential functions of the packaging. This applies to new packaging for both new and existing products. Member States must also ensure that other preventive measures are put into effect, such as national programmes; - packaging waste exported from the Community may only count towards targets if the exporter can prove the recovery or recycling operation met the same conditions as those laid down by Community law; - as regards exemptions to the directive, such items as flower pots and CD and video cases should be classified as packaging unless they are an integral part of a "durable product that is necessary to contain, support or preserve that product". For example, CD and video cases for short-term use will be regarded as packaging but flower pots will not, unless they are added just to assist sales. Wrapping and gift paper sold as a separate product should also be exempt. The Commission should, as soon as practicable, examine and where necessary review the illustrative examples on the definition of packaging set out in the Annex.