

European research area: activities within the scope of the EC framework programme 2002-2006

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The committee adopted the report by Gérard CAUDRON (PES, F) tabling a large number of amendments to the Council's common position under the second reading of the codecision procedure. Many of these were amendments that had been adopted by Parliament at first reading but had not been taken up by the Council, including calls for: - endorsement of the "stairway to excellence" concept; - health research to be extended beyond the field of genomics; - an explicit reference to Article 6 of the Treaty of Amsterdam and to the conclusions of the Göteborg European Council; - the integration of sustainable development and the reduction of external environmental costs; - the promotion of basic research and space research; - in the food sector, the inclusion of research into health risks and health improvements; - increased participation of SMEs in all areas of the framework programme; - research into the preservation of the cultural heritage. The committee also decided to retable first reading amendments on ethical issues, which said that research activity into human cloning for reproductive purposes, the creation of embryos for research purposes including somatic cell nuclear transfer, and research activity which would lead to the modification of the genetic heritage of human beings should not be financed under the 6th framework programme.