Groundwater protection and management: Community action programme

1996/0181(COD) - 10/07/1996 - Legislative proposal

OBJECTIVE: the objective of the European Parliament and Council Decision is to establish an action programme for the protection and integrated management of groundwater, aiming at preventing further pollution, maintaining the quality of unpolluted groundwater, restoring, where appropriate, polluted groundwater, as well as preventing the over-exploitation of groundwater resources. SUBSTANCE: the programme should function as a frame of reference for the focusing of action, and as a forum for exchange of information which should facilitate concerted action by Member States and the Community. The four main lines of the programme are as follows: 1) - development of Community principles for integrated planning and management of water protection and use for application on a national level with respect to a long-term view of applying a river basin management approach to groundwater management in order to ensure the quality and quantity of groundwater; 2) - ensuring rules for quantitative maintenance of fresh water resources, including a rational regulatory framework for fresh water abstraction; 3) - development of instruments for control of groundwater pollution from diffuse sources, including codes of good practice, and consideration of longer term measures for further integration of sustainable water protection and management and agricultural policy; 4) - development of instruments for control of point source emissions and discharges, including a rational regulatory framework and incentives for development of environmentally friendly production processes and procedures. These four lines of action should be supported by research and development programmes at the level of the Community as well as appropriate national initiatives. In order to ensure common water management principles the Commission intends, at the end of 1996, to present a proposal for a Framework Directive on water resources in which basic provisions for management of groundwater will be included.