Energy sector: multiannual framework programme 1998-2002

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OBJECTIVE: to adopt a multiannual framework programme for actions in the energy sector (1998-2002).
SUBSTANCE: the Commission proposes to bring together in a single framework programme all the Union's energy policy measures in order to make them more transparent and effective and to coordinate them better. The framework programme, for which the Commission proposes a budget of ECU 200.4 m for 1998-2002, provides a general legal basis for specific projects and measures, to be formulated and adopted by the Council. It will be implemented by means of six specific programmes, of a horizontal or thematic nature, corresponding to the following measures: 1) development of a regular programme to monitor markets and energy trends; 2) stepping-up of international cooperation in the field of energy, with a view to encouraging greater diversification of energy sources and greater stability in international markets, particularly in gas and oil; 3) promoting new and renewable energy sources and implementation of a strategy and Community action plan in this area up to 2010; 4) encouraging rational and efficient use of energy resources; 5) contributing to the revitalization of the coal industry by using cleaner technologies; 6) improving nuclear energy safety. The aim of all these measures is to attain the Union's priority objectives for energy policy, namely to guarantee security of energy supply, maintain competitiveness and promote compatibility between the development of the energy market and the objectives of environmental protection. In order to ensure that the decision-making process is effective, the Commission proposes to set up a single committee, consultative in nature, for the whole of the framework programme, to manage the specific measures; it will coordinate the energy measures undertaken under the various Community policies.