Resolution on the Commission's communication: partnership for integration

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OBJECTIVE: this communication is the Commission's response to the call by the Luxembourg European Council for a strategy for integrating environmental protection into the definition and implementation of all Community policies and activities. CONTENT: article 6 of the consolidated EC Treaty provides for environmental protection to be integrated into all Community policies. In order to put flesh on the bones of this legal obligation, the Commission proposes in this document to outline the principle of integration. The main element of this strategy is the presentation of guidelines on which the principle of integration can be based. Under these guidelines: - the Commission will systematically include the environmental factor in all key policy initiatives, including a detailed evaluation of the environmental impact of the initiatives undertaken; - the Commission will take stock of existing policies and draw up action strategies in key sectors (defining political indicators, performance indicators and indicative targets); - the Council will draft a report for the attention of the Vienna Council on best practices in the Member States in this area which could be used at Community level; - priority actions for integrating environmental requirements will be defined and the Council will make a firm commitment to ensure that express account is taken of environmental requirements in its decisions; - a periodic report on integration will be drawn up for each European Council; - the organisational methods of the European Parliament will be reviewed in order to highlight the environmental factor in all its political decisions. Finally, the Commission called on the European Council in Cardiff (June 1998) to declare its determination to ensure that the principle of article 6 of the Treaty on European Union was applied and to agree that this was a joint responsibility (Community-Member States). It also hoped that a partnership would be established between the Council, the Commission and the European Parliament with a view to integrating the environment into other Community policies using the procedure set out in guidelines. At the same time, the Commission called on the European Council to recognise the importance of the environmental impact of decisions when examining Agenda 2000 and the Community strategy to implement the Kyoto Protocol (reduction of greenhouse gases by 2008-2012). Finally, it called for this strategy to be completed by monitoring and evaluation measures (December 1998 for Agenda 2000 and 1999 for post-Kyoto monitoring) and for an interinstitutional procedure to be implemented between Parliament, the Commission and the Council to ensure that integration is monitored.