

Reduction in the sulphur content of certain liquid fuels

1997/0105(SYN) - 08/07/1998 - Modified legislative proposal

The amended proposal takes over totally or partially 16 of the 28 amendments adopted by the European Parliament at first reading. The main changes made to the initial proposal seek in particular to: - introduce a reference, on the basis of cost effectiveness studies, to setting appropriate limits for the sulphur content of fuels other than those covered by Directive 93/12/EEC; - introduce a reference to sulphur emissions caused by the combustion of bunker fuels in the shipping sector and the continuation of Community actions to reduce sulphur dioxide emissions; - introduce a specific reference to more profound research on the effects of acidification; - introduce a reference to monitoring respect for the provisions of the directive and the submission of appropriate reports; - define marine gas oils; - specify the fuels to which the monitoring requirements apply; - give details on the test method for sampling and analysis; - indicate the European Parliament as a recipient for the reports to be submitted; - provide for an undertaking by the Commission to propose, if appropriate, measures concerning marine fuel other than marine gas oils by the end of 2000; - make the use of certain liquid fuels subject to the condition that their sulphur content does not exceed the limits defined in the directive; - introduce a reference to the use of economic instruments to facilitate the achievement of the overall objective of the directive; - introduce a specific reference to the framework directive on air quality (96/62/EEC). With reference in particular to the use of heavy bunker fuels by vessels, the Commission intends to take steps to guarantee that a coordinated position of the Community and its Member States can be put forward at the 43rd meeting of the Marine Environment Protection Committee of the International Maritime Organisation in June 1999 with a view to ensuring the designation of the North Sea and the Channel as well as of any other European seas in such need as areas sensitive to air pollution.