

Incineration of waste

1998/0289(COD) - 29/10/1998 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: the proposed directive seeks to integrate the technical progress that has been made in the control of incineration processes and to extend the scope of existing Community measures to combat the pollution of air, water and land caused by the incineration of municipal and other non-hazardous wastes.

CONTENT: the proposal's key objectives are to: - reduce substantially emissions of several key pollutants to air and control releases to water and land; - provide a major contribution to the achievement of the target contained in the Fifth Environment Action Programme to reduce emissions of dioxins and furans from known sources by 90% between 1985 and 2005 with a specific objective to introduce standards for dioxin and furan emissions for municipal waste incineration; - contribute to a reduction in releases of heavy metals; - provide a coherent methodology for the regulation and operation of non-hazardous waste incineration and co-incineration (the incineration of wastes in industrial plants, whose main purpose is to generate energy or produce material products and which incinerate waste as regular or additional fuel).

The main elements of the proposed Directive include: - the extension of the scope of the existing legislation to cover the incineration of non-hazardous non-municipal wastes as well as hazardous wastes excluded from the Directive on hazardous waste incineration (94/67/EC); - the introduction of emission limits for plants that co-incinerate waste; - the updating of emission limits applicable to municipal waste incineration plants and the addition of limits on releases to water in order to reduce substantially the environmental impact of incineration and contribute to emission reductions and air quality targets, while preventing a transfer of pollutants to water; - the requirement that, as far as possible, heat generated in the incineration process shall be recovered and residues shall be prevented, reduced or recycled.