Protection of the marine environment, Convention for the North-East Atlantic OSPAR: vinyl chloride

1999/0098(CNS) - 26/04/1999 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: approval on behalf of the Community of OSPAR Decision 98/4 and 98/5 on emission and discharge limit values for the manufacture of vinyl chloride monomer and on emission discharge limits in the vinyl chloride sector. CONTENT: Since 1997, the Community has been party to the Convention for the protection of the marine environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR Convention) and is represented within the decision-making organ of the Convention, the Ospar Commission, by the European Commission as regards matters of Community competence. On 22-23 July 1998, the first Ministerial meeting of the OSPAR Commission since the Convention entered into force was held in Sintra, Portugal. During this meeting many amendments to the Convention were agreed and decisions taken. Of these decisions, OSPAR Decisions 98/4 and 98/5 were taken. OSPAR Decision 98/4 on emission and discharge limit values for the manufacture of vinyl chloride monomer (VCM), including the manuufacture of 1.2-dichloroethane (EDC), is to protect the maritime area against the adverse effects of human activities due to the manufacture of VCM, including the manufacture of EDC. This Decision lays down limit values for the discharge and release of certain hazardous substances into water and air from the manufacturing process of VCM, including EDC from ethylene and chlorine and/or hydrochloric acid as feedstock. The discharge limit values apply to plants from which discharges may reach the maritime area of the OSPAR Convention by waterborne routes. The emission limit values apply to all VCM manufacturing plants on the territories of the Contracting Parties. OSPAR Decision 98/5 lays down the emission and discharge limit values into air and water from the manufacturing process of suspension-polyvinyl chloride (PVC) from vinyl chloride monomer, i.e. polyvinyl chloride produced from VCM by the suspension process. The discharge limit values apply to single or combined plants from which discharges may reach the maritime area of the OSPAR Convention by waterborne routes. The emission limit values for atmospheric pollutants apply to all single or combined plants. The annual averages of emissions and discharges from plants producing s-PVC may not exceed the discharge limits laid down by the Decision.