Resolution on climate change: preparing for the implementation of the Kyoto protocol, December 1997

1999/2116(RSP) - 19/05/1999 - For information

PURPOSE : how to prepare for implementation of the obligations of the Kyoto Protocol in the EU. CONTENT : the EU should start considering what needs to be done in order for the Community and the Member States to be able to implement the Kyoto Protocol as soon as possible. Thus, the EU will enhance its credibility in the international negotiations and give a strong signal to other Parties to do the same. The conditions laid down in the Kyoto Protocol for its entry into force will ensure that the EU competitiveness is not unduly hampered. "Preparing for implementation" involves taking the necessary action for enabling the full applications of the Kyoto provisions. Key elements in such a preparation are compliance questions in a broad political and practical perspective. The political dimension deals with how the EC and its Member States can reach the 8% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the commitment period of 2008-2012 compared to 1990 levels and be on the track for further reductions after 2012. The practical dimension deals with how to establish a comprehensive monitoring system to accompany and follow up the implementation process. The implementation of policies and measures takes place primarily at the national level. For that purpose the Member States have developed and are revising in the view of implementation of the Kyoto Protocol their national climate change strategies, as described in their National Communications to the UNFCCC. Furthermore, additional action at Community level is vital for them not only to meet their Kyoto commitments but also to respect the EU burden-sharing agreement of June 1998. For that reason, the Council has requested the Commission on several occasions to report on progress on the common and co-ordinated policies and measures. Therefore, this Communication concentrates on proposals for policies and measures at a Community level, while national implementation measures will be the subject of an EEA report on the basis of Member States' national communications. In addition, more efforts must be made to develop the Monitoring Mechanism as an integral part of a Community compliance system. The Member States can take the opportunity of the implementation of the IPPC as of the 30/10/99 to develop the climate dimensions of their permitting policies. The rules and modalities for the Kyoto mechanisms are to be elaborated pursuant to the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. The EU has made submissions to the UNFCCC on each of the mechanisms. The Kyoto mechanisms are fundamentally different from the way the European Community and its Members have organised their environmental policy over the last decades. Therefore, the policy challenge ahead consists of developing new flexible instruments within the European environmental policy, without undermining the important achievements of the past. The Kyoto Protocol's International Emissions Trading (IET) will not come into operation before 2008. In the meantime, the best preparation for the Community and its Member States might be to develop their own emissions trading experiment. The Commission Communication of June 1998 already launched thetarget date of 2005. Moreover, the Commission could organise in the year 2000 a wide consultation with all stakeholders, Member States, businesses, and NGOs, on the basis of a Green Paper setting out different policy options. Financial institutions should play a more prominent role in getting projects and other initiatives off the ground. Active co-operation in this area should be set up in particular with international financial institutuions, such as the European Investment Bank (EIB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the World Bank. The Commission and the EIB should further develop their exchange of views in view of a timely conclusion about how to contribute to the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol. Developing countries : In order to convince developing countries to participate in an open and constructive debate, the EU and other industrialised countries will need to show demonstrable progress in 2005. Furthermore, the Community and its Member States should present an overview of all these areas where they already provide assistance to developing countries in relation to climate change. They should also analyse how to improve their effectiveness. The Buenos Aires Plan of Action is targeted towards COP6. Decisions on the different elements of the Plan

will therefore not be taken until the end of the Year 2000 at the earliest. However, a set of clear priorities has to be defined for COP5 in order for this meeting to produce substantial progress and results.