

# Reduction in the sulphur content of certain liquid fuels

1997/0105(SYN) - 13/05/1998 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

In adopting the report by Mrs Heidi HAUTALA (Greens, FIN) Parliament considered that the directive should also cover bunker fuel oils and marine diesel oils (used by ships and vessels). It called for the entry into force of the authorized ceiling (maximum sulphur content of 1% by weight) for heavy fuel oils to be brought forward to 1 January 1999 (instead of 1 January 2000 as proposed by the Commission). It reduced by half limit value for sulphur in gas oils (with effect from 1 January 1999): from the 0.2% by weight proposed by the Commission, this limit value would be reduced to 0.1%. It called for the limit value for bunker fuel oils and marine diesel oils to be set at 1.5% by weight from 1 January 2000. Parliament hoped that, pursuant to Article 100a(4) of the Treaty the directive would not prevent the Member States from implementing more stringent environmental protection measures than those set. In order to facilitate the achievement of the objectives of the directive it called on the Union and/or the Member States to make use if required of economic instruments such as a tax on sulphur and a system of harbour charges differentiated according to the sulphur content of the fuels used by visiting ships. Lastly, Parliament hoped that Community initiatives would be continued with a view to having the North Sea/Channel declared a special low SO<sub>x</sub> emission control area.