Protection of natural resources: promotion of tropical forests, Community action

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Amending the Council's common position, the European Parliament called for the adoption of measures to support the conservation of tropical forests and trade rules and controls on Community imports of wood and wood-based products. The European Parliament called for aid totaling ECU 250 million for an initial five-year period (1995-1999), with the possibility of an extension following an overall assessment of the results. At least 60% of the appropriations would be earmarked for projects to conserve tropical forests supported by the local populace or geared to sustainable forest management with assistance from the local authorities. Community aid should be allocated primarily to: - conserving primary tropical forests and their biodiversity and renewing damaged tropical forests, the objective being to provide full protection for at least 10% of ecologically representative primary forest in each country and for compensation to be paid to these countries in order to protect these regions; - sustainable management of forests designated for the production of timber; - the implementation, by 1997, of an independent assessment system which guarantees the reliability of the procedures and the quality of the criteria underlying certificates issued on the market and the introduction of a monitoring system which guarantees the authenticity of certificates issued during transportation and marketing within the Union; - the provision of prior information to forest peoples, followed by their support in identifying, planning and implementing projects; - the development and implementation of forest management plans which also promote other wood products, mainly from forests other than primary forests; - aid for projects to promote a world convention on forest conservation; Annual reports summarizing the quality and quantity of projects funded should be submitted to the European Parliament committees. The European Parliament also called for: - a uniform position to be maintained during when discussing and planning forest conservation policy at international level; - the Commission to quickly present proposals to promote a coherent policy with a worldwide outlook; - a "forests" unit to be set up within the Commission.