Biotechnology and the White Paper (rev. Directive 90/220/EEC)

1996/2277(COS) - 15/07/1997 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mr David Robert BOWE (PSE, UK), the European Parliament expressed the view that a new provision should be inserted in the Directive in order to utilize experience gained to establish a classification commensurate with the identified risks involved for each release of genetically modified organisms. It called for the procedures for granting authorization for releases into the environment to be fully commensurate with the category of risk in order to minimize the risk to the environment and human health. Parliament considered that 'strengthened provisions' (including the establishment of a database) by the Commission were necessary to ensure the exchange of information between Member States and that this was a pre-requisite for any new directive. It called on the Commission to ensure that there was an obligation to gather data/information during experimental releases that would enable the proper evaluation of the risks of full-scale commercial release. The internal Commission decision-making procedures should be examined with a view to making them speedier, more transparent and more democratically accountable. In this spirit, the existing provisions should be strengthened by publicly accessible data bases or registers and citizens should have the right to be consulted. Parliament called on the Commission to examine ways in which an ethical, economic and social dimension could be introduced into the decision-making procedures associated with the Directive and for rules on liability to be incorporated in the Directive on release. It believed that there must be labelling provisions for all products containing genetically modified organisms placed on the market under the provisions of the Directive. Lastly, Parliament took the view that authorizations to place GMOs on the market should be for a limited period of time and that holders of authorizations should be required to draw up a report on their experience of introducing the GMO onto the market.