

# **Tropical forests, developing countries: conservation and sustainable management**

1999/0015(COD) - 05/05/1999 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

In adopting without debate its report, drafted by Mr. José Javier POMES RUIZ (EPP, Spain), on the conservation and sustainable management of tropical forests and other forests in developing countries, the Parliament stresses the role and the impact of the destruction of forests on indigenous populations. In particular, it considers that the financial sum mentioned in the proposal is an absolute minimum for the protection of tropical and other forests in developing countries (this sum includes the necessary technical assistance for the implementation of the programme). In the framework of this programme, it wants the Community not only to provide financial assistance but also technical and economic competences to the developing countries. It also strengthens the measures by adding to the list drawn up by the Commission the following : - the improvement of sustainable management of forests, - the improvement of the co-ordination and the flow of information between Community and national projects in order to ensure coherence between actions undertaken in these regions, - the intention of active participation of the forest communities and the local communities in the drawing up of forestry policies and in planning for development. Furthermore, it seeks specific assistance for the creation of new forests and the protection of forested areas in regions other than those in which there are deteriorating forests. The EP emphasises strongly that forest populations should be consulted and fully involved in the decisions relating to and the implementation of actions (including the evaluation tasks) and that these should take into account their priorities. It stresses in particular the social, economic and environmental sustainability of actions and adds that no finance will be available if there are any serious doubts with respect to the sustainability of actions. With respect to comitology, the Parliament is fully in favour of a consultative procedure. In addition, it calls for the minutes of the Commission's meetings regarding the selection of projects should be transmitted to the European Parliament. It also calls on the Commission should consult an external expert before selecting projects. Lastly, the Parliament wishes to be kept regularly informed regarding approved projects.