Agricultural production compatible with environmental requirements and countryside (implem. Regul. 2078/92/EEC)

1997/2296(COS) - 23/10/1998 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Adopting the report by Mr John Iversen (PES, DK) on the environment and agricultural production, Parliament considers that the Commission report on the application of regulation (EEC) 2078/92 on agricultural production methods compatible with the requirements of protection of the environment and the maintenance of the countryside is not an evaluation and it is therefore impossible to make a comprehensive judgement on the effectiveness of the scheme. It hopes that the regulation's objectives will be clarified and more performance-related and that the levels of premia should be increased in some specific cases. Application of the programme has been affected by a lack of preparation and Parliament regrets that 86% of expenditure has been accounted for in five Member States and calls on the Commission to publish an evaluation report as soon as possible giving precise details of the application and impact of the programme. Parliament also considers: - that farmers should only receive specific funds if they demonstrate a commitment to the agri- environment programmes (environmental benefits must be visible and clear), - that the agri-environment programme should cover all land where farmers are making efforts to enhance the environment and be extended to less favoured areas, - that the requirement for 20 year set-aside in some cases is too long and that a more flexible variant should be introduced, - that the scheme should be widened in other ways (help with local planning, provision of advice, access to information, dissemination of research results, use of new technologies).