Plant protection products: sustainable use of pesticides

2002/2277(INI) - 27/03/2003 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution by 239 votes to 192 with 29 abstentions on reducing pesticides based on its own-initiative report drawn up by Kathleen VAN BREMPT (PES, Belgium). It regretted the fact that the Commission proposed no binding measures or economic instruments. (Please refer to the document dated 19/02/03.) It stressed the need for urgent and mandatory complementary action on pesticide use reduction and asked the Commission to speed up the development of effective measures, and to define clear goals and timetables for each Member State, taking into account reductions already achieved in some Member States since the implementation of their national reduction plans. Members did not, however, vote for a 50% reduction within ten years. They also voted down the committee's request for a regulatory framework for taxes and other levies on pesticides, as well as the clause on GMOs and the precautionary principle. In addition to extending the scope of the thematic strategy to non-agricultural pesticides, Parliament stressed the need for mandatory national use and risk reduction programmes, including quantitative reduction targets to be achieved by adopting a mix of mandatory and voluntary measures. These programmes should contain, among others, national action plans designed to reduce pesticide and measures to raise awareness, as well as mandatory requirements relating to technical equipment, preparation, storage and application. Parliament asked the Commission to propose: - a legally binding EU-wide pesticides pass in which the producer indicates the use of all pesticides in agriculture and in the storage of each product, in order to enable appropriate food controls to be carried out; - ban on the use in special protection zones such as for drinking water abstraction, on the use of pesticides in schools, playgrounds and parks in order to protect children, and in areas close to inhabited zones; - a system of compulsory protection zones for all surface water at European level; - an approximation of information systems relating to contamination caused by pesticides. Concrete and mandatory targets and timetables should be set for Integrated Crop Management and sustainable organic agriculture, and Integrated Pest Management should be made mandatory for all public authorities. The Commission should lay down clear definitions of these terms as well as minimum criteria and set deadlines for the mandatory application of ICM on all cultivated land not yet in organic farming.