

Energy: cooperation with developing countries.

2002/2244(INI) - 19/06/2003 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted its own-initiative report drafted by Anders WIJKMAN (EPP-ED, Sweden) on energy cooperation with developing countries. (Please see the summary of 20/05/03.) Parliament emphasised that production and distribution of energy should be looked upon as essentially a public service and hence organised so as to guarantee affordable access for all. The key issue is not whether energy provision is organised by a public or private entity but rather the specific obligations provided by the policy framework. Parliament went on to ask the Commission to make sure that the primary purpose of energy programmes, within its development portfolio, is local development, facilitated by the decentralisation of energy programmes. Increased use of renewable energy sources would reduce dependence on expensive imports of fossil fuels and help improve the balance of payments. At the same time, renewable energy projects can have a significant impact on job creation. Parliament indicated that the ethanol programme in Brazil, for example, has generated at least seven hundred thousand new jobs in the rural areas. The governments of the developing countries, assisted by the Commission, must examine the possibilities of overcoming the many barriers to investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency, such as the lack of adequate legal, fiscal or regulatory frameworks, and the reasons for the lack of private investment. Finally, Parliament asked the Commission and the Council to establish binding environment and climate-related criteria for all grant-based assistance in the energy sector as well as for action taken within the EIB and national export credit agencies (ECAs) so as to promote investment in forms of sustainable energy. Negotiations with national ECAs must aim towards the introduction of an energy portfolio target of at least 20% in support of sustainable energy projects.