Developing countries, water management: policy and priorities for development cooperation

2002/2179(COS) - 04/09/2003 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by Paul LANNOYE (Greens/EFA, Belgium) on the Commission's communication on water management. (Please see the summary dated 09/07/03.) The resolution was adopted with 356 votes in favour, 10 against and 25 abstentions. Parliament stated that access to drinking water in a sufficient quantity and of adequate quality is a basic human right. National governments have a duty to fulfil this obligation. Reasonable access to water means at least 20 litres per person per day from a lean source within a radius of 1 km. With regard to the provision of water, Parliament felt that several management models exist, ranging from the local cooperative to the national or municipal agency and not discounting a combination of public-private management. It is the responsibility of the authorities in the countries concerned to adopt a policy able to satisfy the population's needs. In this connection, Parliament took the view that a revision of Articles VI and XXI of the GATS agreement is needed. This will protect the right of each developing country to decide freely on its method of water supply, in accordance with the collective national or regional interests of the population concerned. On the question of the European Water Fund, Parliament felt that the success of the fund depends on participation by its beneficiaries, who must be involved in the processes of design, implementation, monitoring and assessment, as well as in the management and control of the European fund.