Basic information

1996/2039(COS) COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	Procedure completed
Trade and environment **Subject** 3.70 Environmental policy 5.03 Global economy and globalisation 6.20.01 Agreements and relations in the context of the World Trade Organization (WTO)	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
RELA External Economic Relations	KREISSL-DÖRFLER Wolfgang (V)	21/03/1996

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
ECON Economic and Monetary Affairs, Industrial Policy	RIIS-JØRGENSEN Karin (ELDR)	24/04/1996
ENVI Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection	PIMENTA Carlos (ELDR)	24/04/1996
DEVE Development and Cooperation		

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
General Affairs	1943	1996-07-16
Environment	1939	1996-06-26

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
28/02/1996	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(1996)0054	Summary
27/03/1996	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
26/06/1996	Debate in Council		
16/07/1996	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		

10/10/1996	Vote in committee		Summary
10/10/1996	Committee report tabled for plenary	A4-0319/1996	
13/11/1996	Debate in Parliament		
14/11/1996	End of procedure in Parliament		
02/12/1996	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1996/2039(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 148
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	RELA/4/07685

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A4-0319/1996 OJ C 347 18.11.1996, p. 0006	10/10/1996	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T4-0599/1996 OJ C 362 02.12.1996, p. 0225-0245	14/11/1996	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(1996)0054	28/02/1996	Summary

Trade and environment

1996/2039(COS) - 14/11/1996 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mr Wolfgang KREISSL-DÖRFER (Greens, D), Parliament advocated the establishment of a separate UN agency specifically to monitor international environmental agreements. In the interim, WTO panels considering trade and environment matters should ensure greater transparency and participation by environmental experts. The resolution calls for the establishment of a code of conduct for transnational corporations, as well as a general ban on the export of domestically prohibited goods. The EP also considered that environmental impact costs should be internalized in the prices of energy, and welcomed the adoption of border taxes on manufactured products. Member States may continue to restrict or prohibit the import of goods for reasons of consumer health and environmental protection provided that such measures are non-discriminatory. Finally, the EP emphasized that the social and human rights dimension is inseparable from the environmental dimension of trade issues. The Commission and the Member States were called upon to seek the revision of Article XX of the GATT Agreement at the Singapore Ministerial Conference in December 1996.

Trade and environment

1996/2039(COS) - 28/02/1996 - Non-legislative basic document

OBJECTIVE: to lay down the Commission's guidelines on relations between trade and the environment. SUBSTANCE: the Commission communication lays down the guidelines for an appropriate Community policy which takes into account the current international discussions in preparation for the first WTO ministerial conference, which is scheduled to take place in Singapore in December 1996. The key idea which emerges from the Commission document is that trade policy and environmental policy may complement one another in pursuit of the objective of sustainable development and that economic performance and environmental performance are not necessarily incompatible. While recognizing that achieving environmental benefits may in some cases entail additional short-term costs, the Commission considers there to be a wide range of 'win-win' opportunities in the design and implementation of environmental policies: efficient use of resources, competitiveness and employment. Similarly, differences in environmental policies cannot justify the introduction of eco-duties levied on imported products as a means of compensating for the unfair competitive advantage which could result from the existence of lower environmental standards in the exporting countries than in the importing countries. According to the Commission the most effective way of tackling international environmental problems is to conclude international multilateral agreements and not to adopt unilateral trade measures. It also considers that the situation and the particular needs of developing countries and economies in transition should be taken into consideration as regards the question of trade and the environment. The EU is called upon to provide these countries with technical assistance which will enable them to adopt cleaner technologies.