Basic information

1998/2602(RSP) RSP - Resolutions on topical subjects	Procedure completed
Resolution on climate change in the run-up to the Buenos-Aires Conference, November 1998, towards an EU Post-Kyoto Strategy **Subject** 3.70.03 Climate policy, climate change, ozone layer 3.70.18 International and regional environment protection measures and agreements	

Key players

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
Environment	2106	1998-06-16
Environment	2121	1998-10-06

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
16/06/1998	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		
17/09/1998	End of procedure in Parliament		
06/10/1998	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		
12/10/1998	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	1998/2602(RSP)
Procedure type	RSP - Resolutions on topical subjects
Procedure subtype	Resolution on statement
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 136-p2
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Motion for a resolution		B4-0802/1998 OJ C 313 12.10.1998, p. 0025	15/09/1998	
		T4-0508/1998		

Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects		OJ C 313 12.10.1998, p. 0125-0169	17/09/1998	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
For information	COM(1998)0353	03/06/1998	Summary
For information	COM(1998)0495	29/07/1998	Summary

Resolution on climate change in the run-up to the Buenos-Aires Conference, November 1998, towards an EU Post-Kyoto Strategy

1998/2602(RSP) - 17/09/1998 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on climate change in the run up to the conference in Buenos Aires in November 1998 based on the Commission communication on the implementation of a strategy for applying the principles of the Kyoto Conference. Regretting the limitations of the Commission's strategy paper, it called on the Commission and the Member States to take a lead in brokering an agreement on a set of common principles and a negotiating framework beyond Buenos Aires based on the following principles: - an agreement to have a worldwide binding limit on global emissions consistent with a maximum atmospheric concentration of 550 ppmv CO2 equivalent; - initial distribution of emission rights according to the Kyoto targets; - progressive convergence towards an equitable distribution of emission rights on a per capita basis by an agreed date in the next century; - across the board reductions in emission rights thereafter in order to achieve the reduction recommended by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC); - an agreement to have a quantitative ceiling on the use of flexibility mechanisms that will ensure that the majority of emission reductions are met domestically in accordance with the spirit of the Kyoto Protocol; - an adequately financed mechanism for promoting technology transfer from Annex 1 to non-Annex 1 countries of the Kyoto Protocol. Pending agreement to such a set of common principles, the European Parliament called on the Commission and the Member States to bring forward the policies and measures that the European Union must undertake in order to meet its Kyoto commitments. The European Parliament called for early ratification of the Kyoto Protocol in order to ensure achievement of the agreed reductions. It was committed to ensuring that the Protocol secured real reductions in greenhouse gases emissions from industrialised countries by 2008/2012 and would work to ensure that the COP 4 in Buenos Aires agreed to unambiguous, clear and fair rules to regulate joint implementation, clean development mechanisms and emissions trading. The European Parliament called for a Green Paper on the application of economic and fiscal instruments targeted at climate change and the removal of counterproductive subsidies. It asked for the adoption of a directive introducing a tax on energy and carbon dioxide emissions and the expedition of a directive restructuring the Community framework for the taxation of energy products. It called on the European Union to support proposals for meetings to prepare for COP 4 in Buenos Aires (Japan in September 1998 and Canada in October 1998). Parliament considered that the Commission communication and the commitment by the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association (ACEA) to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from passenger cars, (COM(98)0495) did not go far enough in that: - there were no arrangements for the continuation of the commitment should one or more of the assumptions made by the ACEA and the Commission not hold true; - the "estimated target range" of 165-170 g CO2/km for 2003 referred to in the ACEA commitment is too imprecise; - there is no description of the procedure for a possible revision in 2003; - the modus operandi of a joint ACEA-Commission monitoring system remains imprecise; - no provision has been made in the eventuality that manufacturers who are members of ACEA fail to comply with their commitments; - the proposed procedure for reducing carbon dioxide emissions from passenger cars is only worthwhile if the Commission simultaneously concludes identical agreements with manufacturers who import vehicles into the European Community; The European Parliament recalled that Parliament and the Council had set an objective of 120 g/km (5l/100 km for petrol engines and 4.5l/100 km for diesel engines) as a mean value for carbon dioxide emissions in 2005. This objective could only be attained if taken in conjunction with tax incentives and uniform rules for indicating the mean consumption of new vehicles. Finally, Parliament stated that it could only accept the procedure announced by the Commission once all these questions had been satisfactorily resolved.

Resolution on climate change in the run-up to the Buenos-Aires Conference, November 1998, towards an EU Post-Kyoto Strategy

1998/2602(RSP) - 03/06/1998 - For information

OBJECTIVE: to define an interactive process for developing a global strategy to apply the commitments made by the Community at the Kyoto conference on climate change. CONTENT: The European Union succeeded during negotiations at Kyoto in persuading its main partners to accept the application of legally-binding targets with a view to reducing emissions of greenhouse gases. The acquis of the Kyoto Protocol for the Community and its Member States involves: - setting legally-binding targets for reductions in a basket of 6 gases, including 3 so-called traditional gases (carbon dioxide, methane and et nitrous oxide) and 3 industrial gases (hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorinated hydrocarbons and sulphur hexafluoride); - reducing emissions of these 6 gases in the EC and its Member States by 8% in relation to 1990 levels between 2008 and 2012 (with tangible results from 2005

onwards); - distributing commitments between Member States ("Community bull") in order to split up the "pollution load" and fulfil obligations jointly; - implementing so-called flexibility mechanisms, i.e. a system for trading emission rights (whereby a Member State unable to achieve the required level of emissions would sell some of its emission rights to other parties), a procedure for joint application of emission rights (joint implementation of projects with additional reductions in emissions in the country hosting the project) and a "clean" development mechanism (or implementation of projects with no precise emission reduction targets); - implementing a stronger information exchange strategy between the Member States. If these commitments are to be applied, the Community needs to define a global strategy which incorporates all sectors of the economy and applies to the possible scope for action both internally and internationally. In order to develop this strategy, the Community and its Member States need to implement an interactive process which allows them to coordinate individual actions, exchange information and identify the scope for action to achieve the reduction targets. This will involve, at the very least: 1) accepting the principle of shared responsibility between the Community and its Member States (by developing sectoral policies with a view to achieving the general target set at Kyoto and defining individual responsibilities in each sector so that efforts can be better divided); 2) defining the implications of the intracommunity flexibility mechanism: the Commission considers that an approach whereby emission rights are traded at Community level could facilitate the administrative implementation of the system enormously and prevent the emergence of new trade barriers; 3) implementing a credible monitoring mechanism in order to monitor progress made by all the parties involved and ensure that commitments are respected; 4) establishing a solid dialogue with the other parties in order to ensure full application of the Kyoto commitments (including developing countries). The Council is called upon to approve the principles described in the communication so that a global strategy for the application of the Kyoto commitments can be defined. For their part, Member States should communicate their application strategies to the Commission, together with their views on the Community contribution to the strategy, by the end of 1998, so that the Commission can publish a final communication containing the EU's global strategy for implementing the Kyoto commitments in 1999.

Resolution on climate change in the run-up to the Buenos-Aires Conference, November 1998, towards an EU Post-Kyoto Strategy

1998/2602(RSP) - 29/07/1998 - For information

OBJECTIVE: within the framework of the Community strategy to reduce CO2 emissions from passenger cars, to present the environmental agreement concluded with the European automobile industry. CONTENT: the European Commission and the ACEA (European Automobile Manufacturers' Association) reached a voluntary agreement with a view to reducing CO2 emissions from passenger cars, thereby avoiding the need for a binding legal framework (which would be presented by the Commission automatically if the agreement was not applied properly). The agreement makes provision for the European automobile industry to undertake to limit CO2 emissions to 140 g/km by 2008 for all new vehicles marketed in the European Union (the Council set a target limit in 1996, based on the general strategy to reduce CO2 emissions, of 120 g/km by 2005 or 2010 at the latest for new vehicles). The limits would apply both to traditional vehicles, innovative designs and cars using replacement fuels or new propulsion systems. The ACEA also undertakes to evaluate the situation in 2003 and, if necessary, to review the targets with a view to achieving additional reductions by the year 2012. It also undertakes to market cars with CO2 emissions of 120g/km or less by the year 2000. An "estimated target range" has been set for 2003 for average emissions from new cars but is purely indicative (165-170 g/km). Reductions in CO2 emissions should be achieved both through technological developments and by changing the market structure (directing demand towards smaller cars which are more efficient in terms of consumption). This change in the market could be induced both by changing consumer attitudes and through new product and marketing policies, tax measures and special "fuel economy" labelling. Additional tax measures (not included in the agreement) could give added value to the agreement. The Commission could emphasise potential effects safeguarded by tax measures in the recommendation on the agreement which it has undertaken to present at a later date. For its part, the ACEA undertakes to achieve its target reductions for CO2 solely through technological progress and its impact on the market. However, implementation of the agreement depends on a certain number of assumptions independent of the ACEA commitment: - the availability of appropriate fuels to implement technologies which allow CO2 reduction targets to be achieved (the agreement is based on the negotiated compromise on the "fuel quality" aspects of the auto-oil programme); - removing distortions to competition which might give American, Japanese and Korean competitors an unfair advantage over European manufacturers as the result of their efforts to reduce CO2; - the absence of obstacles to the marketing of reduced consumption technologies (which does not limit the freedom of the Community and the Member States to take recourse to fiscal or legislative measures); - the general economic climate in the European automobile industry. Finally, the agreement makes provision for the implementation of a system for monitoring CO2 emissions from passenger cars for which the Commission and the ACEA will be jointly responsible.