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**Guidelines and  
priority actions under  
the Community energy  
policy**

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EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES  
Commission

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# summary

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## **Introduction**

The constant increase in energy demand is a feature of modern society. On a world scale social and economic developments will lead to increases in demand—until at least the end of the century—such that it will double roughly every fifteen years. The protection of the environment introduces a further constraint, since the measures imposed thereby often necessitate a higher energy consumption and restrictions on certain products.

Over the next fifteen or twenty years the major factors involved will be not so much the actual availability of energy as the economic and political conditions under which it is obtained. In the longer term the volume of new energy sources needing to be tapped and developed will require an unprecedented level of effort and the gradual replacement of hydrocarbons by other forms of energy will demand enormous investments, as well as greater effort in the field of the rational use of energy.

As was stressed by the Heads of State or Government of the enlarged Community in Paris in October 1972, the underlying problem besetting energy policy is to guarantee long-term security of supplies under satisfactory economic conditions.

The measures to be taken to this end must be based henceforth on a long-term global assessment of trends. They must also constitute an entity which is coherent enough to render instruments of varying scope truly effective.

## **Relations between the Community and energy importing countries**

The fact that energy supply is gradually assuming a worldwide dimension inevitably makes it virtually impossible for a country, or even a group of countries, to solve the problems in this field on its own. The desirability of reducing the risk of mutual overbidding and confrontation is making it necessary to institute coopera-

tion, based on certain principles, in respect of fields and within a framework still to be determined, among the major energy-importing areas—primarily, given the scale of their consumption, the Community, the United States and Japan, though provision must also be made for associating those developing countries which import their energy.

## **Principles**

Cooperation must be based on the observance of non-discrimination and reciprocity of obligations.

It must also take account of the characteristics and particular circumstances of each party, and so far as is possible, having regard to the aims in view, must not interfere with specific moves intended to improve individual parties' security of supply.

The Community must give priority to this cooperation, but without allowing it to work against the legitimate interests of the energy-exporting countries.

On the contrary, the Community must contribute indirectly to the economic growth of the developing countries, in particular those which have no energy resources.

## **Fields**

The most immediate benefit and the most urgent objective of the cooperation envisaged is the avoidance, by means of a continuous exchange of information and appropriate concertation, of needless and expensive overbidding for crude oil by the importing countries.

One instance would be contingency arrangements against unexpected supply difficulties, with each party undertaking to introduce a compulsory stockpiling scheme harmonized with those of other countries, and to take all necessary action to cushion the impact of the crisis on all those involved. In addition, a crisis affecting any or all the parties should

