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REPORT

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology

on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (Doc. C2-74/85 - COM(85) 391 final)

for a decision adopting three multiannual research and development programmes in the field of the environment (1986-1990)

- I. Environmental protection
- II. Climatology
- III. Major technological hazards

Rapporteur: Mr N. ESTGEN

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Or. De.

By letter of 22 August 1985 the President of the Council of the European Communities consulted the European Parliament on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a decision adopting three multiannual research and development programmes in the field of the environment (1986-1990) I. Environmental protection, II. Climatology, III. Major technological hazards (COM(85) 391 final - Doc. C 2-74/85).

On 9 September 1985 the President of the European Parliament referred this proposal to the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology as the committee responsible and to the Committee on Budgets, the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection for an opinion.

At its meeting of 17 September 1985 the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology appointed Mr Nicholas ESTGEN rapporteur.

The committee considered the Commission proposal and draft report at its meetings of 16 October, 11 and 16 December, 22 January and 5 February 1986.

At the latter meeting the committee decided unanimously to recommend to Parliament that it approve the Commission's proposal with the following amendments.

The Commission stated before the committee that it had not taken a decision on amendments Nos. 1, 3, 6 and 7 and was prepared to accept amendments nos. 2, 4, 5 and 8.

The committee then unanimously adopted the motion for a resolution as a whole.

The following took part in the vote: Mr SALTER, acting chairman; Mr ADAM and Mr SELIGMAN, vice-chairmen; Mr ESTGEN, rapporteur; Mr KILBY, Mr KOLOKTRONIS, Mrs LENTZ-CORNETTE (deputizing for Mr MALLET), Mr LINKOHR, Mr METTEN (deputizing for Mrs LIZIN), Mr MUNCH, Mr ROBLES-PIQUER, Mr TURNER and Mrs VIEHOFF.

The opinions of the Committee on Budgets, the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection will be published separately

The Council has requested urgent procedure at the February part-session in accordance with Rule 57(1) of the Rules of Procedure.

The report was tabled on 6 February 1986.

The deadline for the tabling of amendments to this report appears in the draft agenda for the part-session at which it will be debated.

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The Committee on Energy, Research and Technology hereby submits to the European Parliament the following amendments to the Commission's proposal and motion for resolution together with explanatory statement :

Proposal from the Commission to the Council for a decision adopting three multiannual research and development programmes in the field of the environment (1986-1990)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendments tabled by the Committee on
Energy, Research and Technology

Preamble and recitals unchanged

Article 1 unchanged

Article 2

The appropriations necessary for the execution of the programme shall be fixed at 105 m ECU, including expenditure on a staff of 27, subdivided as follows

- Protection of the environment
65 m ECU 17 staff
- Climatology 25 m ECU 6 staff
- Major technological hazards
15 m ECU 4 staff

AMENDMENT No. 1

- Protection of the environment
80 m ECU 19 staff
- Climatology 20 m ECU 5 staff
- Major technological hazards
5 m ECU 3 staff

Article 3

The programme shall be reviewed in the course of the third year; this review may lead to a revision of the programmes effective at the beginning of the fourth year, following the appropriate procedures, and after the Committee referred to in Article 4 has been consulted. The Council and the European Parliament shall be informed as a result of the review

AMENDMENT No. 2

The programme shall be reviewed in the course of the second year; this review may lead to a revision of the programmes effective at the beginning of the third year, following the (remainder unchanged)

Articles 4, 5 and 6 unchanged

ANNEX

PART I : ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Funding :

Total	65 000 000 ECU
- Contract research	60 450 000 ECU
- Concerted actions	4 550 000 ECU

AMENDMENT No. 3

Total	<u>80 000 000 ECU</u>
- Contract research	<u>73 450 000 ECU</u>
- Concerted actions	<u>6 660 000 ECU</u>

Staff : 17

Staff : 19

Scientific content of the programme

(1) to (10) unchanged

AMENDMENT No. 4

(11) Scientific basis of environmental
legislation and management

(11) Scientific basis of environmental
legislation and management
including the development of
scientific criteria for
environmental impact assessment

Concerted actions

(1) to (7) unchanged

AMENDMENT No. 5

(8) 'New technologies and
environmental protection'
- environmental impact of new
technological processes
- environmental impact of new
technological products
- use of new technologies for
environmental protection

PART II : CLIMATOLOGY

AMENDMENT No. 6

Funding : 25 000 000 ECU

Funding : 20 000 000 ECU

Staff : 6

Staff : 5

Scientific content of the programme

unchanged

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendments tabled by the Committee on
Energy, Research and Technology

PART III : MAJOR TECHNOLOGICAL
HAZARDS

AMENDMENT No. 7

Funding : 15 000 000 ECU

Funding : 5 000 000 ECU

Staff : 4

Staff : 3

Scientific content of the programme

A. Physical and chemical phenomena and
mitigation of the consequences of accidents

A 1. to A 8. unchanged

AMENDMENT No. 8

B. Technological Aspects

delete

C. Assessment and management of risk

(unchanged)

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

embodying the opinion of the European Parliament on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a decision adopting three multiannual research and development programmes in the field of the environment (1986-1990) I. Environmental protection, II. Climatology, III. Major technological hazards

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal from the Commission to the Council (COM (85) 391 final)
- having been consulted by the Council (Doc. C 2-74/85),
- having regard to the report of the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology and the opinions of the Committee on Budgets, the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection (Doc. A 2-.../85),
- having regard to the result of the vote on the Commission's proposal,
 - A. whereas environmental problems, particularly pollution of water or the atmosphere are frequently of a transfrontier nature and cannot therefore be solved solely in a national context,
 - B. recognizing that it requires close Community and international cooperation to achieve major successes in reducing environmental pollution,
 - C. recognizing that the implementation of an efficient European environmental policy requires a scientifically well-founded basis setting out the fundamental requirements for a Community solution,
 - D. having regard to the present reorientation of the Joint Research Centre towards becoming a centre for research into safety in the environment,
- 1. Emphasizes the need to continue present research programmes and adjust and expand their areas of study;

2. Calls for better coordination within the appropriate Commission services so that research findings can be applied more satisfactorily and rapidly to Community measures for environmental protection;
3. Regrets that the Commission, when submitting this draft programme, did not use the opportunity to review the entire research action programme on the environment;
4. Wishes therefore closer integration of the various research programmes and a coordinated timetable for the research action programme and the framework research programme;
5. Wishes therefore the programme to be reviewed in the course of the second year to take account of the reorientation of the JRC programme (1987-1990) and the framework research programme (1987-1990);
6. Regards the overall funding proposed as justified and welcomes the shift in emphasis away from cost-intensive contract research towards more coordination and concerted actions;
7. Calls for the new research areas of 'new technologies and environmental protection' and 'the development of scientific bases for environmental impact assessment' to be included in the section on environmental protection and wishes therefore appropriate funds to be transferred from other sections;
8. Accepts in general the proposals for the climatology section but wishes to see the Joint Research Centre involved in this area of research;
9. Rejects at the present time the introduction of an extensive section on major technological hazards as this aspect is already largely covered by direct research in the ISPRA JRC;
10. Wishes this section of the programme to be reformulated in conjunction with the review of the JRC multiannual research programme to take better account of the JRC research potential;

11. Considers it advisable, however, to carry out pilot projects on the dangers of explosions in industry and the assessment of such risks to which industry would be expected to make a substantial financial contribution;
12. Approves the programmes subject to these reservations;
13. Regrets the fact that the Council of Research Ministers has already decided to cut back the programme even before Parliament had adopted its opinion;
14. Reserves the right, therefore, to initiate the conciliation procedure if the Council does in fact intend to depart from this opinion;
15. Instructs its President to forward to the Council and Commission, as Parliament's opinion, the Commission proposal as voted by Parliament and the corresponding resolution.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENTI. General observations

1. Environmental pollution which is now evident to all of us and in some cases already poses a threat to the ecological balance is a result of the growing exploitation of our natural resources and the constantly increasing production of material goods. Although it began with acute environmental problems such as air pollution as one of the main causes of damage to forests, the pollution of water or the dumping of poisonous chemicals, the environmental discussion has developed into a fundamental social discussion on the future. The awareness has grown that economic-technological progress is only desirable as long as it is not combined with unacceptable encroachments on the natural bases of life.

2. The importance of an intact environment for mankind means that the objectives of a forward looking environmental policy must form part of the general orientation of policy in the European Community (for example economic and industrial policy, its energy and transport policy goals and its aims in terms of improving living and working conditions).

Should it come to a conflict between competing objectives, priority should be given to environmental protection whenever the health of the population is at risk, the long-term protection of the natural bases of life are involved or there is the likelihood of irreversible damage (for example in the case of shifts in climate).

From this point of view environmental protection and the chemical industry do not conflict in the long term and from the macro-economic point of view.

II. Initiatives and proposals to increase the efficiency of environmental research in the European Community

3. Over the last few years the European Parliament has repeatedly advocated paying considerable attention in Community research and development policy to all the matters relating to environmental protection to provide the environmental policy of the Community with a scientifically well-founded basis and thus create the necessary conditions and scope for a Community solution.

In the past, therefore, Parliament supported Community research programmes into environmental protection and climatology but increasingly stressed that there should be more than coordination of national research projects or the promotion of environmental research by the Commission by indirect action on a cost-sharing basis.

4. For a long time the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology has been insisting that account should be taken of the need for more extensive Community action in the field of environmental protection including the definition and substance of the R & D policy of the Joint Research Centre (JRC), in which connection special attention should be given to defining its role as a centre for safety and environmental protection. In the report drawn up by Mr LINKOHR on behalf of the committee on the problems and prospects of Community research policy of 18 November 1982, paragraph 26 : 'urges that the next multiannual programme for the Joint Research Centre (JRC) should be used to make it specially qualified as a research centre for safety in high-risk industrial activities in the nuclear, chemical and biological sectors'. (See Doc. 1-654/82; OJ No. C 334, pp. 96 et seq., 20 December 1982).

The resolution on the JRC programme for 1984 to 1987 of 14 October 1983 (rapporteur again Mr LINKOHR) welcomes the fact that the Commission proposal contains essential elements of safety and environmental research but paragraph 4 expresses the hope, 'that the JRC will in subsequent years gradually take up other research topics in the field of safety and environmental protection'. (See Doc. 1-753/83; OJ No. C 307, pp. 116 et seq., 14 November 1983.)

5. One of the main obstacles to more efficient organization of the various measures and levels of action in Community environmental research has been the relative lack of success in the past in integrating the direct actions carried out by the JRC with those of contract research and coordination. The introduction of the concept of research action programmes, as provided for in the first framework programme for scientific and technical activities in the Community for the years 1984 to 1987 (known as the 'research framework programme'), is intended to lead to greater transparency for all R & D activities in the field of environmental research and to better coordination of the various R & D actions in the environmental field.

6. Recognizing this problem of coordination, Directorate-General XII of the Commission appointed in 1984 what was called an 'evaluation panel' of independent scientists which in a comprehensive report - 'Evaluation of the Community's Environmental Research Programmes (1976-83)' (COM XII/720/84) - investigated both programmes in terms of their efficiency and coherence. The report generally approved of earlier work but pointed in a number of cases to the urgent need for better coordination between the two programmes. According to the panel, the basis for better coordination must be a clearly defined formulation of the tasks and objectives of the two programmes. The authors make various suggestions (see pp. XX et seq., 37 et seq. and 19 et seq.), and although these recommendations do not have to be followed blindly, the important thing is that there should be a clear definition of the tasks of the Joint Research Centre on the one hand and contract research on the other and within the Commission permanent institutionalized coordination of these two areas of research.

In addition to these two programmes, attention must be given to ensuring that research relevant to the environment is carried out in other areas of DG XII, as the panel rightly points out but under the restrictions of its terms of reference leaves open the question as to what extent coordination is already taking place in this sphere.

7. The research action programme (RAP) on the environment currently consists of two main components :

- the previous sectoral R & D programme in the environmental field (environmental protection and climatology (1981-1985) and
- the appropriate sections of the programme of the Joint Research Centre (1984-1987), namely
 - environmental protection
 - industrial hazards
 - remote sensing.

Given the different periods over which these programmes run it appears difficult at first sight to obtain genuine coordination or timetabling. Given the fact, however, that the presnet JRC programme is to be reviewed in 1986 and the present framework research programme in the same year, your rapporteur believes that this would be a suitable time to embark on a discussion on the entire research action programme on the environment as, for example, happened with the RAP on nuclear energy.

III. The Commission proposal

8. This is the situation in which the Commission is now presenting its new multiannual programme for research and development in the environmental field (1986-1990), known as indirect action. It provides for extensive contract research and concerted action over this period in the fields of environmental protection (65 m ECU), climatology (25 m ECU) and major technological hazards (15 m ECU). The total resources proposed for the next five years are 105 m ECU.

9. The difficulty for the European Parliament is in reaching a decision on this programme at the present time given that the imminent review or resubmission of the JRC multiannual research programme will also be concerned with extending direct action in the field of environmental protection. Although the statement by the Commission that the present proposal already takes account of the planned continuation of the JRC programme is to be welcomed, the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology, as the committee responsible, will have to study carefully to what extent this coordination then takes place. Your rapporteur therefore recommends that the committee's JRC working party should pay particular attention to this matter.

10. In addition to the review of the JRC programme, the research framework programme for 1987-1990 is being reformulated. A Commission proposal has been announced for spring 1986; this will then have to be carefully scrutinized by the European Parliament. Here again the aim should be to achieve as much congruence as possible with the current programmes or existing proposals for individual research programmes.

11. A further cause of uncertainty in the committees concerned is that the proposal for a programme does not show to what extent it relates to other Commission programmes affecting the environment, such as the programme of the Dublin Foundation, the Integrated Mediterranean Programmes, agricultural research, biotechnology and FAST. And more recently there has been a separate research unit in Karlsruhe studying dying forests which also receives financial support from the Community. The question arises to what extent the environmental aspects of EUREKA (acid rain/dying forests) overlap with the abovementioned programme.

12. On the basis of the problems described above and the considerations and initiatives introduced, the present proposal for a programme from the Commission could certainly provide the key to a logical and more efficient structure for environmental research at the Community level.

If both duplication and omissions in research are to be avoided, however, there needs to be within the individual directorates-general of the Commission, and between them, a consensus on the medium-term binding goals of environmental research and a clear definition of their respective roles.

13. In general your rapporteur wishes to point out that drawing up research programmes cannot, and must not, be a substitute for taking action where this is already feasible to provide environmental protection. Moreover, research programmes should be designed in such a way that their findings can be implemented in practical measures as directly as possible; if this is to happen, they need to be designed in terms of measures needed and the legislative requirements of other Commission services.

IV. Assessment of the Commission proposal

14. In general your rapporteur regards the increase in the total appropriations proposed from 54 m ECU for the previous programme to 105 m ECU as justified because according to the Commission this amount takes account of Community enlargement and the inclusion of training activities. Overall your rapporteur welcomes the fact that in some areas there has already been provision to move away from cost-intensive contract research towards coordination and concerted action.

15. In the light of some of the individual detailed proposals from the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection which has been asked for an opinion and which your rapporteur does not wish to anticipate, and in the light of the abovementioned assessment study by an independent panel of experts, the following remarks may be made on the individual sections :

16. The section of the programme on environmental protection essentially makes a favourable impression as it does not simply follow on from the second and third programmes but contains in some respects a shift in emphasis and takes account of new areas. Account has been taken in several respects of the reforms proposed by the assessment panel and to a certain degree the context of the environment research work carried out by the JRC can be clearly discerned.

17. As far as the increasing importance of new technologies are concerned and in the light of the resolutions of the European Parliament of 8 October 1985¹ on the technological challenge, the Commission is recommended to introduce a new section 12 'new technologies and environmental protection' broken down into

- environmental impact of new technological processes
- environmental impact of new technological products
- use of new technologies for environmental protection.

18. In the light of the recommendations of the assessment panel there should also be in addition the 'development of scientific criteria for environmental impact assessment'.

19. The financing for the environmental protection section should be increased by 15 m ECU to carry out these additional tasks with this sum being taken from the other two sections of the programme.

¹See in particular the reports by Mr PONIATOWSKI on the European response to the technological challenge of the modern era (Doc. A 2-109/85,, PV 31, II, pp. 8-15) and by Mr CIANCAGLINI on the effects of new technologies on European society (Doc. A 2-110/85, PV 31, II, pp. 16-21)

20. In the climatology section, your rapporteur suggests that in research area I : the physical basis of climate, the emphasis should be placed on the heading scientific bases for seasonal forecasting of European climates which should incorporate studies already being conducted in European non-member states. Your rapporteur would also like to see the involvement of the JRC in the climatology sector.

The overall resources should be reduced by 5 m ECU which should be transferred to the environmental protection sector.

21. The section 'Major technological hazards' is a new addition to the programme. It presents a number of problems for the rapporteur : this programme does not fit into the context of the other two programme elements, nor is there any apparent reason why the parallel programme sector of industrial hazards in the Joint Research Centre should at this point be supplemented by an extensive contract research programme. There is no denying that such a programme could be useful. The question arises, however, whether the Commission would not be better advised, given the reform planned for 1986 of the multiannual research programme for the Joint Research Centre, to develop a coherent overall concept for this programme area, which

- has been coordinated with all the Commission services involved,
- takes account of the work already done in Ispra, the laboratory installations and staff capacity available and planned,
- provides a rational breakdown of this programme into independent research activities, contract research and concerted actions,
- can demonstrate a significant financial participation by industry in this research.

It is therefore suggested that at the present time there should only be pilot projects in this field with financing restricted to 5 m ECU and for the remaining 10 m ECU to be transferred to the environmental protection section.

V. Conclusion

22. The rapporteur regrets that the Commission has not conducted a comprehensive discussion on the orientation and substance of the research action programme (RAP) on the environment at the present time. Given the imminent reviews of the research framework programme and the multiannual research programmes of the Joint Research Centre this would have been the ideal time for a thorough discussion on the integration of all the various measures.

23. Your rapporteur believes that it would be sensible to review this programme after two years as by then the new decisions on the JRC programme and the research framework programme will have been taken. Thus the timetable for the RAP on the environment could be brought into line with the framework programme.

24. Subject to these reservations and the above changes and modifications and reallocation of resources, your rapporteur recommends that the Commission proposal should be approved.

25. Your rapporteur regrets however that the Council of Research Ministers has yet again discussed a Commission proposal without waiting for Parliament's opinion. This practice is even more acceptable since at its meeting of 10 December 1985 the Council of Research Ministers ('subject to the opinion of Parliament') decided on a substantial reduction in the funding from 105 m ECU to 75 m ECU.

This reduction does not reflect the views of the committee, nor does it further the cause of environmental protection. Reducing the funding for Community environmental research because of a general lack of finances is a false economy which in the medium term can only be to the detriment of our environment and quality of life.

Your rapporteur therefore recommends that the conciliation procedure should be introduced if the Council does in fact depart so drastically from Parliament's opinion.