

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Working Documents

1983-1984

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DOCUMENT 1-568/83

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

tabled by Mr GHERGO, Mr BARBI, Mr BARBAGLI, Mr BEUMER,
Mr BROK, Mr Chanterie, Mr COSTANZO, Mr DALSASS, Mr del DUCA,
Mr DESCHAMPS, Mr ERCINI, Mr ESTGEN, Mr FILIPPI,
Mr GEROKOSTOPOULOS, Mr GIAVAZZI, Mr GIUMMARRA, Mr HABSBERG,
Mr KAZAZIS, Mr LIGIOS, Mr McCARTIN, Mrs MAIJ-WEGGEN,
Mr MODIANO, Mr d'ORMESSON, Mr PAPAEFSTRATIOU, Mrs PHLIX,
Mr PROTOPAPADAKIS, Mr SÄLZER, Mr STELLA, Mr TRAVAGLINI,
Mr VANDEWIELE, Mr VERROKEN, Mr ZECCHINO, Mr BUTTAFUOCO,
Mr CECOVINI, Mr DIDO, Mr PETRONIO, Mr RIPA di MEANA
and Mr ROMUALDI

pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure

on the protection of the natural environment through
the development of earthworm-breeding for the biological
recycling of agricultural, industrial and urban waste
and the reclamation of barren or impoverished land

The European Parliament,

- A. having regard to the Treaty establishing the EEC and in particular to Articles 235 and 117 thereof,
- B. having regard to the pledge made by the Heads of State or of Government of the Member States at the Paris Summit of October 1972 to pay 'particular attention to intangible values and to protecting the environment, so that progress may really be put at the service of mankind',
- C. having regard to the environment action programmes adopted in 1973 and 1977 and to that planned for the period 1982 to 1986 and approved by Parliament in December 1982,
- D. recalling the resolution of 22 April 1982 on the guidelines for the 1983 budget, in which Parliament called attention to the global and supranational character of environmental policy deriving from the transfrontier nature of the ecosystems, as well as to the greater efficiency and lower cost of coordinated Community action,
- E. whereas, as has been clearly demonstrated by various Community initiatives concerning the pollution of the seas and rivers by, inter alia, agricultural and industrial residues and urban waste, the environment is under serious threat,
- F. whereas there is a need to increase the productivity of available agricultural land through the use of ever larger quantities of organic and chemical fertilizers, but whereas this method of soil enrichment may have a number of harmful effects both on foodstuffs and feedingstuffs and on the fertility of the soil in the medium and the long term,
- G. whereas there exist in the Community large areas of land which has either been rendered barren or can no longer be profitably cultivated and whereas there is therefore a social and economic need for such land to be reclaimed wherever possible by measures of various kinds,
- H. whereas the measures hitherto adopted, though noteworthy in terms of their specific content and objectives, have nonetheless been confined either to a given area or to the implementation of a particular project and consequently fail to evaluate the problems as a whole,

- I. whereas pollution and desert-encroachment have many complex repercussions on the biosphere, creating problems for the planet as a whole and therefore needing to be tackled with supranational policies,
- J. noting the development in North America and the Far East - and to some extent in Europe - of earthworm-breeding, a technique based on a natural process of transformation which was known in ancient China, described by Aristotle and studied scientifically by Darwin¹, but which industrial progress had caused to be forgotten,
- K. wishing to restore the old ecological balance and to develop a new agricultural sector,
- L. recognizing the imperative need for balance to be restored to industrial productive activity through the abandonment of technologies which are destructive to nature and harmful to human health and society and for encouragement to be given to productive activities which consume little energy and few raw materials,
- M. believing that earthworm-breeding, suitably encouraged and backed by adequate research, could be a means of reconciling high agricultural productivity with the need to recycle agricultural, industrial and urban waste and with the preservation of the ecosystem in a manner which is biologically conducive to the protection of the environment,
1. Calls on the European Commission to take all appropriate steps to ensure that in the agricultural, forestry and environmental policy sectors measures are formulated, along the lines suggested above, for the development and application of earthworm-breeding;
 2. Urges, to that end, the adoption of specific support measures in the form of financial incentives to encourage both the investment needed at the industrial breeding and distribution stage and the use of the product by farms for promotional purposes;
 3. Requests that the next framework programmes (1984-1987) of scientific and technological research² and agricultural research³ should consider the

¹ The formation of vegetable mould through the action of worms - London, 1881

² COM(83) 260 final

³ COM(82) 853 final

potential value of using earthworms in:

- the agricultural sector, for the production of bio-organic fertilizers, which could check the increasingly heavy reliance on chemical fertilizers, and for the production of high quality animal feed and protein meal;
- the environmental sector, for the recycling and hence the disposal of agricultural, industrial and urban waste and for the reclamation, through a process of regeneration, of barren or impoverished land, which is essential for the successful cultivation of trees and plants;

4. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission and the Council.