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Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Public Health and the Environment

on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (Doc. 209/75) for a multiannual environmental research and development programme of the European Economic Community – Indirect action (1976-1980)

Rapporteur : Mr H.E. JAHN

PE 42.011/fin.

By letter of 1 August 1975 the President of the Council of the European Communities requested the European Parliament to deliver an opinion on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a multiannual environmental research and development programme of the European Economic Community - indirect action - (1976 - 1980).

The President of the European Parliament referred this proposal to the Committee on Public Health and the Environment as the committee responsible and to the Committee on Budgets and the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology for their opinions.

On 2 October 1975, the Committee on Public Health and the Environment appointed Mr Jahn rapporteur.

It considered this proposal at its meetings of 2 and 21 October 1975.

At its meeting of 21 October 1975 the committee adopted the motion for a resolution and explanatory statement by 13 votes to 2.

Present: Mr Della Briotta, chairman; Mr Willi Müller, deputizing for the rapporteur; Lord Bethell, Mr Brégégère, Mr Duval, Lady Fisher of Rednal, Mrs Kruchow, Mr Marras (deputizing for Mr Hartog), Mr Emile Muller, Mr Knud Nielsen, Mr Noè, Mrs Orth, Mr Rosati, Mr Springorum and Mr Vandewiele (deputizing for Mr Martens).

The opinions of the Committee on Budgets and the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology are attached.

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The Committee on Public Health and the Environment hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution, together with explanatory statement:

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 multiannual environmental research and development programme of the European Economic Community - indirect action - (1976 - 1980)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council¹;
 - having been consulted by the Council (Doc. 209/75);
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Public Health and the Environment and the opinions of the Committee on Budgets and the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology (Doc. 328 /75);
1. Approves the Commission's proposal;
 2. Urges, however, in agreement with its Committee on Public Health and the Environment, that research in the fields under consideration should be sufficiently broad-based and intensive to yield significant results;
 3. Urges the Commission to apply where necessary for additional appropriations far enough ahead to ensure continuity in Community environmental research;
 4. Insists that the Council approve, without any cuts, the multiannual environmental research and development programme (1976 - 1980) proposed by the Commission by the end of 1975;
 5. Asks the Commission to submit an annual report on the implementation of the environmental research programme not only to the Council but also to the European Parliament;
 6. Looks forward to the Commission's document on the main outlines of the multiannual research programme for the Joint Research Centre (direct action) beginning in 1977 and stresses that this programme must be a meaningful addition to indirect action;

¹OJ No. C 222, 29.9.1975, p. 117

7. Urges the Commission to incorporate in its proposal the following amendment to the text of the Council decision adopting an environmental research programme for the European Economic Community (indirect action), pursuant to the second paragraph of Article 149 of the EEC Treaty;
8. Requests its committee to keep a close watch over the implementation of the environmental protection programme and to report annually on the objectives achieved.

PROPOSAL FOR A COUNCIL
DECISION

adopting a research programme for the European
Economic Community in the field of environment
(indirect action)

Preamble and recitals unchanged

Articles 1 to 3 unchanged

Article 4

The Commission shall ensure that the programme is implemented. It is assisted in this task by the Advisory Committee on the Management of Environmental Research Programmes, established by the Council Resolution of 10 December 1973.

It submits every year a report to the Council about it.

Article 4

The Commission shall ensure that the programme is implemented. It is assisted in this task by the Advisory Committee on the Management of Environmental Research Programmes, established by the Council Resolution of 10 December 1973.

It submits every year a report to the Council and to the European Parliament about it.

Article 5 unchanged

¹For full text see OJ No. C222, 29.9.1975, p. 117



EXPLANATORY STATEMENTI. Joint environmental research to date

1. Community research on the effects of ionizing radiation and its environmental implications has been carried out under the EURATOM Treaty since 1961. The coordination of environmental research began in 1967 with PREST (Working Party on Scientific and Technical Research Policy of the Medium-Term Economic Policy Committee); this expert group was later taken over by COST (Committee on European Scientific and Technical Cooperation).

2. On 23 November 1971 three COST agreements were signed involving most Member States of the EEC and several Third Countries¹. They dealt with joint research on

- the physico-chemical behaviour of sulphur dioxide in the atmosphere (COST 61a).
- the analysis of organic micropollutants in water (COST 64b),
- sewage sludge processing (COST 68).

3. With the inclusion of non-nuclear research in the programme of the Joint Research Centre (JRC), an arrangement was eventually concluded in 1972 for carrying out environmental research at the ISPRA establishment under a contract between the six Member States and the JRC for a period of one year. This made it possible to establish the main lines of the direct action programme in this field.

4. On 14 May 1973 and 18 June 1973² the Council decided on the first common research programme on the protection of the environment (direct and indirect action). This was designed primarily to provide scientific and technical support for the Community's sectoral policy on the environment. This research programme is obviously closely connected with the programme of action of the European Communities on the environment of 22 November 1973³. Research was concentrated on 'measures to reduce pollution and nuisances' (Part II Title I of the programme of action) and in particular on

- objective evaluation of the risks to human health and to the environment from pollution,
- the improvement of methods of analysis,

¹ On 22 July 1975 the Commission submitted to the Council a proposal for a decision concluding the Agreements for the implementation of projects 61a and 64b (see Doc. 220/75). The European Parliament was also consulted on this proposal.

² OJ No. L 153, 9.6.1973, p. 1 and No. L 189, 11.7.1973, p. 30

³ OJ No. C 112, 20.12.1973

- a system for the exchange of information on environment protection.

The areas of research covered in the first programme (direct and indirect action) are dealt with on Pages 3 and 4 of the Commission document under consideration.

5. With the implementation of the First Environmental Research Programme (indirect action) a call for research proposals published in the Official Journal of the European Communities on 28 July 1973 as well as contacts with government authorities involved in environmental research management in the Member States produced a large number of applications. The Commission departments and the Advisory Committee on the Environment Programme¹ examined these proposals and selected a number of them on the basis of the following criteria:

- relevance to the overall programme,
- scientific value of the proposal,
- possibility of coordination with other direct and indirect projects as well as with national research programmes,
- prospects of success,
- cost,
- provisions for complementary financment.

6. As can be seen from page 4 of the Commission document, the stage reached in implementing the first research programme as of 31 January 1974 was as follows:

- 125 shared-cost contracts, for which the maximum contribution of the Community was fixed as a general rule at 50% of total cost, were signed or in the drafting stage. Of these:
 - 10 were under the topic 'epidemiological surveys of the effects of air and water pollution',
 - 27 were under 'harmful effects of lead',
 - 24 were under 'effects of micropollutants on man',
 - 38 were under 'ecological effects of water pollution',
 - 16 were under 'remote sensing of air pollution',
 - 10 were under 'data bank on environmental chemicals'.

¹Set up by a Council decision of 10.12.1973

These contracts will involve expenditure of about 3 million u.a. from the Community Budget for 1975. Allowing for the financial contributions of Member States, the total annual cost of current environmental research is about 6 million u.a.

7. The Commission notes that so far only preliminary results are available on most of the individual projects. For administrative reasons all contracts must terminate on 31 December 1975. Since some of the projects will not have been completed by then, the Commission feels that they should be pursued under the proposed second programme.

The Committee on Public Health and the Environment approves the position taken by the Commission on this point.

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II. Examination of the second environmental research programme
(indirect action)

8. The Commission explains that the basic motivation of the second research programme, as of the first, is to provide for the acquisition of the scientific and technical knowledge necessary to the execution of the Programme of Action of the European Communities on the environment. Unlike the first research programme, however, the second applies not only to the reduction of pollution and nuisances (Part II Title I of the Programme of Action), but also to the improvement of the environment (Part II Title II).

The second programme also provides for research projects on the environmental impact of energy production.

The Commission feels that it should be kept in mind that because of the nature of research work¹ there is an inevitable time lag between the initiation of most research projects and the achievement of results. The programme therefore includes not only projects pertaining to current requirements but also work designed to solve problems which may be reasonably expected to arise in the medium term. It also feels it necessary to take up problems that could not be tackled in the first programme owing to lack of funds or urgency.

9. Eleven Community officials will be assigned to the second research programme (indirect action) with total appropriations of 18.5 million u.a. Of this sum, 15,402,361 u.a. (83.3%) will be used for contract funding and 3,097,369 (16.7%) for management and coordination. 1976 expenditure from this total will amount to 3.5 million u.a. This was calculated by taking into consideration the 1975 level of funding of research contracts and allowing for the addition of new topics to the programme and the cost of coordination and assessment activities.

After examination of all the applications received by the Commission services and the Advisory Committee for the Management of Environmental Research Programme and taking into account the possibilities of carrying out concerted actions, the funds will be finally allocated to the various areas of research and study. About 80%, however, can be expected to go to the areas 'Research aimed at the establishment of criteria for pollutants and

¹ Research work is defined here as the acquisition of new knowledge through the application of the scientific method, in contrast with 'studies' which review existing information.

environmental chemicals' and 'Research and development on environmental information management'.

In 1977, the programme will be subject to review and any adjustments found necessary made early in 1978.

10. The content of the second research programme, which comprises four research areas, can be summarized as follows¹:

(A) Research area 1:

Research aimed at the establishment of criteria (exposure-effect relationships) for pollutants and environmental chemicals.

(a) Heavy metals:

- methodology of monitoring heavy metal contamination in the marine environment,
- presence and transformations of heavy metals in the environment.
- experimental research on direct and indirect health effects of heavy metals,
- application of screening tests for late and chronic effects to a series of heavy metals, alone and in combination,
- ecological effects of heavy metals in inland sea and marine environments;

(b) Organic micropollutants

- detection and measurement in air, water, soil, food and animal feed, etc.,
- presence of organo-chlorine and organo-fluorine compounds in the environment,
- experimental research on metabolism and effects in mammalian systems in order to assess risks to human health derived from overall exposure to micropollutants,
- ecological effects in terrestrial, freshwater and marine environments,
- developments of screening methodology to assess late and chronic effects;

(c) Asbestos and other fibrous materials:

- improvement of detection in air, water, tissues by physico-chemical and microscopic methods,
- epidemiological surveys on health effects in the general population,
- experimental research on effects with emphasis on interaction with other air pollutants;

¹This is treated in more detail on pages 13-26 of the Commission document.

- (d) 'New' chemicals:
- development of screening tests for chronic and late effects on human health and for effects on the biosphere;
- (e) Air 'quality':
- application and testing of remote sensing methods developed in the first programme;
 - physico-chemistry of air pollutants including formation of photo-chemical smog,
 - modelling of air pollution dispersion,
 - epidemiological surveys,
 - experimental research on effects of air pollutants in mammalian systems,
 - field and experimental research on effects on vegetation, especially non-visible damage (growth reduction);
- (f) Water 'quality':
- improvement of characterization of water quality,
 - epidemiological surveys on relations between water quality and health,
 - experimental research on health effects and water characteristics, especially with regard to re-cycled water and water abstracted through natural filtering media ('Uferfiltration'),
 - microbiological pollution,
 - assessment of risks resulting from newly identified pollutants;
- (g) Waste heat (Thermal pollution)
- ecological and microclimatic effects of heat releases in the freshwater and marine environments,
 - ecological and microclimatic consequences of heat release to atmosphere from cooling towers;
- (h) Marine pollution:
- development of methodology for monitoring seawater quality along the coasts and in the estuaries of the Community,
 - research and development in chemical and biological sensors for pollution monitoring,
 - research in situ and under controlled conditions on the effects of pollutants on marine life;
- (i) Noise pollution:
- epidemiological surveys on the long-term effects of noise-induced sleep disturbances and other consequences,
 - experimental research on the physiological effects of infrasounds and vibrations,
 - experimental research on the effects of intermittent or pulsed noise.

(B) Research area 2:

Research and development on environmental information management.

(C) Research area 3:

Research and development on the reduction and prevention of pollutions and nuisances (including clean technologies).

(a) Water pollution abatement:

- Advanced biological and physico-chemical treatment of waste water and other non-potable waters,
- treatment and utilization of sludges from waste water treatment,
- treatment of effluents from specific industrial branches, including in-plant pretreatment;

(b) Waste disposal - Environmental implications.

(D) Research area 4:

Research and development on the protection and improvement of the natural environment.

(a) Oriented basic research on the structure and function of ecosystems and on biogeochemical cycles (nitrogen, heavy metals);

(b) Reclamation of derelict land; mine waste tips, worked-over bogs, etc.;

(c) Application of remote sensing techniques for the study of environmental disturbances;

(d) Ecological consequences of land use planning: impact on the environment of the building of roads, industrial installations, residential areas;

(e) Ecological consequences of modern agricultural practices.

In addition to these four research areas, provision has been made for carrying out general studies on the implementation of the programme of action with a view to drawing conclusions that can be used as a guide to subsequent research.

11. In drawing up the second joint research programme the Commission considered a number of approaches, which can be summarized as follows:

- Community research can be oriented towards the most pressing needs of the Community action programme and the results obtained can be applied directly to it;
- Particularly difficult problems can be solved by concentrating on them the joint efforts of a series of highly specialized laboratories in the various Member States;

- It is possible to carry out important projects throughout the territory of the Community in order to obtain results which are statistically significant and comparable through the multiplicity of observations;
- Scientific cooperation with third countries involved in similar environmental research can be greatly facilitated by Community research;
- The effectiveness and productivity of the sum total of research carried out in the Member States can be increased by Community research by eliminating, through a progressive coordination, useless duplications while filling existing gaps in knowledge.

12. The content of the second research programme was reviewed and accepted by the Advisory Committee on Programme Management for Environmental Research. The Committee, however, recommended that research efforts in any given area should be of sufficient size to yield significant results.

The Committee on Public Health and the Environment feels that this recommendation is appropriate and wonders whether the appropriations of 18.5 million u.a. are sufficient for this comparatively far-reaching programme. It therefore asks the Commission, where necessary, to provide sufficient supplementary funds to maintain continuity in research.

13. The Commission has stated that it will shortly produce a document on the main outlines of the multiannual research programme for the Joint Research Centre (direct action). Your committee asks the Commission to forward this provisional programme not only to the Council but also to the appropriate committee of the European Parliament for information. It also stresses that research on environmental protection contained in the programme, which are principally reserved for the ISPRA research establishment, must be a meaningful addition to the environmental research and development programme (indirect action) under consideration.

14. The text of the Commission's proposal for a Council decision adopting a research programme for the European Economic Community in the field of environment (indirect action) is approved by your committee.

It feels, however, that an addition should be made to the second paragraph of Article 4 to the effect that the Commission should submit an annual report not only to the Council but also to the European Parliament on the implementation of the environmental research programme.

15. Subject to this amendment, your Committee on Public Health and the Environment approves the Commission's proposal for a multiannual environmental

research and development programme of the European Community (1976 - 1980). It urges the Council to approve this programme as soon as possible, certainly no later than the end of 1975, and not to make any cuts in order to maintain continuity of research.

III. Examination of the opinions of the committees asked for their opinions

(a) Opinion of the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology

16. The opinion of the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology, drafted by Mr Willi Müller, approves the Commission's proposals.

It points out that the second multiannual environmental research programme still does not provide for research into the impact of energy production on the environment. Since these problems were the subject of a Council resolution of 3 March 1975 on energy and the environment.

17. The Committee on Energy, Research and Technology particularly welcomes those research projects which fall within its terms of reference, on

- the ecological and microclimatic effects of heat release to the atmosphere from cooling towers;
- the technical development of a system for the surveillance of oil pollution.

In its view, the problem of waste heat from power stations could best be solved by using it for district heating of homes.

18. Regarding the implementation of the research programme, the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology favours the indirect action proposed by the Commission. It has, however, strong reservations on the Commission's intention to supplement this programme by one of direct action, under the Joint Research Centre.

As against this, your Committee on Public Health and the Environment considers that there are no objections to reasonable and optimum complementarity by direct action, the new programme for which is to start in 1977. The point here is that the best possible use should be made of the available structures of the Joint Research Centre set up by Article 8 of the Euratom Treaty.

(b) Opinion of the Committee on Budgets

19. The opinion of the Committee on Budgets, drafted by Mr FABBRINI, criticises the budgetary aspects of the Commission proposal. It notes in particular that the multiannual research programme conforms broadly to the general guidelines of 22 November 1973 on the Community environment action programme. In its opinion the expenditure envisaged for the research programme is not excessive.

20. Like your Committee on Public Health and the Environment, the Committee on Budgets calls for the European Parliament to be closely associated with the development of the multiannual research programme and consequently claims that the annual reports provided for in Article 4 of the Commission proposal should also be submitted to Parliament.

21. The Committee on Budgets stresses the positive value of the financial statement accompanying the multiannual research programme. It nevertheless calls on the Commission to make a further effort on the method of calculating expenditure; while matters were perfectly clear as far as the calculation of 17% of the appropriations (administration, and coordination including staff costs) went, they were somewhat less clear when it came to the remaining 83% (contract payments).

Finally, the Committee on Budgets stresses that the expenditure on the multiannual research programme, amounting to 18,500,000 u.a., is non-compulsory, even if the legal basis for the programme is Article 235 of the EEC Treaty.

OPINION

of the Committee on Budgets

Draftsman: Mr FABBRINI

On 16 September 1975 the Committee on Budgets appointed Mr Fabbrini draftsman.

It considered the draft opinion at its meeting of 22 October 1975 and adopted it unanimously.

Present: Mr Lange, chairman; Mr Aigner and Mr Durand, vice-chairmen; Mr Fabbrini, draftsman; Lord Bessborough, Lord Bruce of Donington, Mr Cointat, Mr Dalyell, Mr Lagorce, Mr Shaw and Mr Yeats.

Background

1. The object of this, the second proposed research programme, is, according to the Commission "to provide for the acquisition of the scientific and technical knowledge necessary to the execution of the Programme of Action of the European Communities on the Environment." This second proposal acts as a follow-up to the first environmental programme (indirect action) adopted by the Council on 18 June 1973, which became operational in December of that year. The Official Journal published a call for research proposals, with a Community participation in the costs of up to 50% of the total cost of the projects in 1973, and by the end of January 1975 125 such shared cost contracts were signed, with a few others concluded during the course of this year. These contracts will be terminated at the end of 1975.

The Community share of the cost of these programmes, in terms of expenditure for the Community budget, is approximately 3 million units of account, i.e. total cost being about 6 million units of account.¹

The Commission gives details of projects already undertaken and a brief review of the situation regarding environmental research activities of the Communities.

The Commission's proposals

2. It is proposed that a second programme for a five-year period 1976-1980 be adopted. This would be implemented in two ways, (a) common action, i.e. funded partly or wholly on the Community budget, and (b) concerted action, financed essentially from national sources with the Community financing merely the costs of coordination. The contents of the programme are divided into four main research areas:

- (a) research aimed at the establishment of criteria, i.e. exposure - effect relationships for pollutants and environmental chemicals: to be carried out mainly in the form of common actions;
- (b) research and development on environmental information management, essentially on environmental chemicals - the ECDIN project (environmental chemicals data - information network) again to be carried out mostly as a common action;

¹ The appropriations for commitments and appropriations for payment are shown in Annex 1 (Research and Investment) of Section III Commission of the General Budget of the Communities. The indirect action programmes in the sector of the protection of the environment are shown under Chapter 3.52 "protection of the environment" (pollution). In the financial regulation Articles 93-103 show the special provisions applicable to research and investment appropriations.

- (c) research and development on the reduction and prevention of pollution and nuisances including through the application of "clean" technologies to be carried out mainly in the form of concerted actions including the follow-up of COST (scientific and technical cooperation) Project 1968;
- (d) research and development related to the protection of the natural environment to be carried out in the form of common and concerted actions.

Finally, the Commission proposes studies of a more general nature to be carried out on an ad hoc basis to review particular environmental problems with a view to guidelines for future research.

The Commission gives a detailed outline of the proposed research areas, an assessment of which is clearly not within the competence of the Committee on Budgets.

Financial implications of the Commission's proposals

3. The Commission outlines two sources of expenditure: first the financing on a cost-sharing basis of contracts, and secondly to cover the costs of managing the common programme and of coordination of national and Community environmental research activities particularly to avoid overlapping of work being undertaken. This second part of the expenditure would include personnel for a management unit (11 persons), meetings of national experts (including the meetings of the advisory committee on programme management for environmental research etc.), the exchange of personnel among contractors, the organisation of scientific meetings and the publication of reports. The maximum limit set for commitment appropriations for the programme over the five years is 18.5 million units of account composed as follows:-

15,402,361 units of account (83.3%)	for contract funding
3,097,639 units of account (16.7%)	for management and coordination expenditure
<hr style="width: 10%; margin-left: 0;"/>	
18,500,000 units of account	

For the 1976 financial year, expenditure of 3.5 million units of account is envisaged, based on the current level of expenditure of programmes in the 1975 financial year. The Commission says that the breakdown of funds among the different research areas would be decided by the Commission services and the advisory committee for the management of environmental research programmes after the examination of the response to the call for contracts.

Nonetheless the Commission ventures to suggest that the bulk of the funding would go to the two areas outlined, that is about 80% for the two areas, with the slight preponderance destined for the first area, namely research aimed at the establishment of criteria.

The Committee on Budgets felt that the ratio of administrative expenditure (16.7%) to contract expenditure (83.3%) was not as it should be. It nevertheless appreciated the reasons for the fairly high percentage of administrative expenditure but would like a closer check kept on this item.

Conclusions of the Committee on Budgets

4. The outline of the programmes seems to conform broadly to the general guidelines of the declaration of the Council meeting on 22 November 1973 on the programmes of action of the European Communities on the environment.¹ Nor does the overall expenditure envisaged under this envelope seem excessive.

5. The Committee on Budgets notes that the programme is to be subject to a review, "on the basis of a proposal from the Commission" to be prepared in 1977 and to take effect at the beginning of 1978. It is vital that Parliament be closely associated with the development of these research programmes, and to ensure that better information is provided for the Parliament, it would seem desirable that the annual report provided by the Commission to the Council be also statutorily available for the Parliament. An amendment to Article 4 of the Commission's proposal for a Council decision would therefore seem advisable.

6. The Commission's financial statement (PE 42.121) follows exactly the model submitted by the Commission to the Committee on Budgets and requested by the committee for every Community proposal with financial implications.

The Commission will readily appreciate that with this information, Parliament can not only deliver its opinion on each proposal in full knowledge of the facts, but is also able to discharge its supervisory responsibility in that it can assess the real scope of the budget appropriations for the financial year. One further area which requires an effort on the Commission's part is in the method of calculating expenditure. In the case under consideration matters are perfectly clear as far as the 17% of appropriations goes but somewhat less clear

¹O.J. Vol. 16, No. C112, 20.12.73

when it comes to the remaining 83%. However, this remark is not intended as a reservation; the rapporteur simply wishes to stress the positive value of the financial statement, which at long last honours the undertaking the Commission had given to Parliament.

Classification of the expenditure

7. The Committee on Budgets once again stresses that this expenditure must be classed as non-compulsory, for the following reasons:

- (a) research expenditure is at present generally included among non-compulsory expenditure;
- (b) when submitting proposals for strengthening the budgetary powers of Parliament, the Commission took the line that the category of non-compulsory expenditure should be progressively extended to all expenditure not flowing automatically from long-range previous decisions¹.

¹Doc. COM 1000 final, 10.10.1973, page 5, first part

OPINION

of the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology

Draftsman: Mr Willi Müller

On 17 September 1975 the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology appointed Mr Willi Müller draftsman.

It considered the draft opinion at its meeting of 30 September 1975 and adopted it unanimously on 23 October 1975.

Present: Mr Springorum, chairman; Mr Flämig, vice-chairman; Mr Müller, draftsman; Mr Dalyell, Mr Ellis, Mr Giraud, Mr Hamilton, Mr Härzschel (deputizing for Mr Burgbacher), Mr Krall, Mr Memmel, Mr Noè, Mr Normanton, Mr Osborn, Mr Pintat, Mr Schwabe (deputizing for Mr Lautenschlager), Mrs Walz.

I. Introduction

The first Community initiatives in the field of environmental research date from 23 May 1971, when three COST¹ (Scientific and Technical Cooperation) agreements were signed by most of the Member States of the Community. But the real starting-point of the Community's policy on the environment was the Programme of Action on the Environment adopted by the Council on 19 July and 22 November 1973. Finally, within the framework of this action programme, on 14 May and 18 July 1975 the Council established a first multiannual research programme on the protection of the environment. This programme covered both direct action (carried out by the JRC) and indirect action (carried out under contract by various research centres).

This first multiannual programme, designed to provide scientific and technical support for the Community's sectoral policy on the environment, was basically concerned with projects in the field of 'Reduction of pollution and nuisances'. It sought to make an objective assessment of the risks for man and his environment stemming from pollution and nuisances, to improve methods of measuring pollution, and to initiate environmental information management.

The programme proposals now submitted to our committee follow on from the first research programme, but only in respect of indirect action.

II. Comparison between the first and second multiannual environmental research programmes

(a) Motivation

According to the Commission, the basic motivation of the second research programme, as of the first, is to provide for the acquisition of the scientific and technical knowledge necessary to the execution of the Programme of Action of the European Communities on the Environment (programme adopted by the Council on 19 July and 22 November 1973). This programme of action contains two main parts:

- reduction of pollution and nuisances;
- improvement of the environment.

¹The very specific research programmes related to:
- the physico-chemical behaviour of sulphur dioxide in the atmosphere;
- the analysis of organic micropollutants in water;
- sewage sludge processing.

In the first programme attention was focused solely on research connected with the reduction of pollution. The second, however, includes in its sphere of action research connected with the improvement of the environment.

(b) Content

Indirect action under the first programme, for which shared-cost research contracts were to be concluded before 31 December 1975, fell into the following categories:

- epidemiological surveys on the effects of air and water pollution;
- toxicity of lead;
- effects of micropollutants on man;
- assessment of the ecological effects of water pollutants;
- monitoring atmospheric pollution by remote sensing techniques;
- creation of a data bank on environmental chemicals.

The second programme is a continuation and, partly, an extension of these research projects. It comprises the following four research areas:

- research aimed at the establishment of criteria for pollutants and chemicals;
- research and development on environmental information management, essentially on environmental chemicals;
- research and development on the reduction and prevention of pollution and nuisances, including clean technologies;
- research and development on 'Protection of the natural environment'.

It can be seen that neither the first nor the second programme concerns itself with research connected with problems of pollution and nuisances caused by energy production. This is understandable considering that, following a Commission proposal, these problems have already been the subject of a Council Resolution (adopted on 3 March 1975) on energy and the environment¹.

Furthermore, the problems of energy and the environment must, as the Commission points out in its explanatory statement, be placed within the framework of the energy research and development programme,² adopted by the Council on 22 August 1975.

¹ Council Resolution: OJ No. C 168, 25.7.1975
EP report: Doc. 320/74 - Rapporteur Mr NOE'
Opinion of our committee: Mr LAGORCE

² Council Decision OJ No. L 231, 2 . 9. 1975
Report by Lord BESSBOROUGH (Doc. 526/74)
EP Resolution: OJ No. C 76, 7 April 1975

Nevertheless, a more thorough-going examination of these research projects has shown that there are at least two questions which directly concern our committee. These are, within the framework of research aimed at establishing criteria for pollutants and chemicals in the environment:

- research on the ecological and microclimatic effects of heat release to atmosphere from cooling towers;
- research on the technical development of a system for the surveillance of oil pollution.

As regards cooling towers, our committee can only express the hope that, as a result of research in this field, precise information may be obtained on the effects of this system on the environment. It should be recalled that, in the aforementioned report presented by Mr Noé on behalf of the Committee on Public Health and the Environment¹, it was pointed out that 'some calculations made recently suggest that it would be preferable to invite the Member States to use power station waste heat for long-range heating of homes'.

Despite this fact, and bearing in mind the problems still to be solved before waste heat can be used in this way, our committee feels that the research projects proposed by the Commission in this field are necessary.

Our committee also lends its support to research on the technical development of a system for the surveillance of oil pollution.

(c) Ways of implementation

The multiannual programme is for a 5-year period (1976-1980), and will be jointly financed from the Community budget and by the Member States. The Community's financial contribution for the five years is estimated at 18.5 million u.a.²

The programme is to be implemented in two ways:

- (a) common action, funded partly or wholly on the Community budget;
- (b) concerted action, financed essentially from national sources - except for the cost of the actual coordination - but carried out according to a jointly agreed programme and under the supervision of a steering committee.

¹Doc. 320/74

²6.3 million u.a. were set aside for indirect action under the first programme, for a period of 2 years (1974-1975)

As mentioned above, the second programme is to be wholly implemented through indirect action. This means, firstly, that the direct action provided for in the first programme will continue until the end of the multi-annual research programme, i.e. 1976.

Secondly it means, according to the Commission, that 'as in the past, every effort will be exercised to bring about optimum complementarity with the direct action (and not indirect action as is erroneously stated in the Commission document), the new programme of which is due to start in 1977. This time lag should greatly facilitate the preparation of the JRC programme; it will be possible to determine its environmental activities to make them fit, taking into account available skill, within the framework of Community research needs established in preparing the present proposal.'

Whereas our committee fully approves the implementation in the form of indirect action of the programme submitted to us, it can only express the strongest possible reservations on the Commission's intention to supplement this by a programme of direct action.

A thorough examination by our committee, in collaboration with independent experts, of research projects carried out at the JRC has shown that all environmental research should be carried out in the form of indirect action. Your committee intends to develop this argument in its next report on 'Progress necessary in the field of direct Community research: conditions needed to give fresh impetus to Community research at the JRC'.

Our committee welcomes the fact that the proposal for a Council decision provides, in Article 3, for the possibility of reviewing the programme and adapting it to evolving research requirements. The success of a programme depends on its flexibility and adaptability. It is to be hoped that the procedure for deciding on a possible review will be as rapid as possible, as a programme will suffer from any delay in its implementation.

The role of the Advisory Committee on Programme Management for Environmental Research (Art. 4 of the proposal) will be of the greatest importance in this field.

III. Conclusion

Subject to the foregoing observations, our committee is able to approve the proposals submitted to it.