



Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2000/2110(INI)	Procedure completed
Implementation of directive 91/676/EEC on nitrates		
Subject 3.70.04 Water control and management, pollution of waterways, water pollution		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	 Environment, Public Health, Consumer Policy		23/02/2000
		PPE-DE GOODWILL Robert	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	 Agriculture and Rural Development		10/10/2000
		V/ALE GRAEFE ZU BARINGDORF Friedrich-Wilhelm	

Key events			
04/05/2000	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
05/12/2000	Vote in committee		Summary
05/12/2000	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0386/2000	
17/01/2001	Decision by Parliament	T5-0014/2001	Summary
17/01/2001	End of procedure in Parliament		
18/09/2001	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2000/2110(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Implementation
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 54; Rules of Procedure EP 142-p2
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ENVI/5/12711

Documentation gateway				
Committee draft report		PE293.683	10/10/2000	EP
Committee draft report		PE293.683/ANN	14/11/2000	EP
Committee report tabled for plenary, single		A5-0386/2000	05/12/2000	EP

reading					
Committee opinion	AGRI	PE286.385/DEF	05/12/2000	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE293.683/AM	05/12/2000	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T5-0014/2001 OJ C 262 18.09.2001, p. 0077-0128	17/01/2001	EP	Summary

Implementation of directive 91/676/EEC on nitrates

The committee adopted the own-initiative report by Robert GOODWILL (EPP-ED, UK) on the implementation of the 1991 directive on nitrates. The first point made by the committee was that the immediate priority should be to implement the existing legislation rather than to redraft and reform the directive. It was critical of the Member States, with the exception of Denmark and Sweden, for the inadequate implementation of the directive hitherto, pointing out that they had failed to achieve the stated aim of reducing nitrate pollution and preventing the problem of eutrophication. The report also pointed out that the Commission had been slow to censure Member States for non-compliance and urged the Commission to continue to use the appropriate legal enforcement means within its powers to ensure proper implementation of the directive and to act more speedily whenever it detected a breach of the Member States' obligations. Farmers in Member States which complied with the directive were at a competitive disadvantage to those who did not meet its exacting requirements, and this was particularly true in the case of Denmark. The Commission should therefore take all necessary steps to ensure full EU-wide compliance with the directive to remedy this unfair situation and set a clear deadline for full implementation. In this context, the committee also pointed out that nitrate use in the applicant states was at present relatively low and that this good starting position should be maintained. Full implementation of the directive in the 15 current Member States would enable the EU to press for environmental improvements and the harmonisation of environmental legislation in the applicant countries before accession without being accused of hypocrisy. The committee made a number of recommendations for more effective implementation of the directive, such as the introduction of Community guidelines for the sampling of waters to enable direct comparisons between the performance of Member States in achieving the aims of the directive, the use of computer modelling for the accurate prediction of fertiliser requirements and better practical and technical support for farmers in the task of reducing nitrate leaching from the soil (such as free soil analyses and aid for the sustainable processing of animal manure). It called for wetlands to be re-established wherever possible and for plantation of set-aside areas with certain renewable raw materials in order to reduce leaching of nitrates. Lastly, it called on the Commission to compile a catalogue of measures that had proved effective in countries where the directive had been implemented successfully, including the expansion of organically farmed areas, incentives for farmers who used environmentally-friendly methods of cultivation, increased afforestation and the establishment of fertiliser limits for individual holdings, with a system of fines if such limits were exceeded.?

Implementation of directive 91/676/EEC on nitrates

The European Parliament approved the report drafted by Mr Robert GOODWILL (EPP/ED, UK). (Procedure without debate). (Please refer to the decision of the Committee responsible). It should however be emphasised that the Parliament calls on the Commission to continue without hesitation to use appropriate means of legal enforcement whenever it detects a breach by the Member States of their obligations and to impose financial penalties. ?