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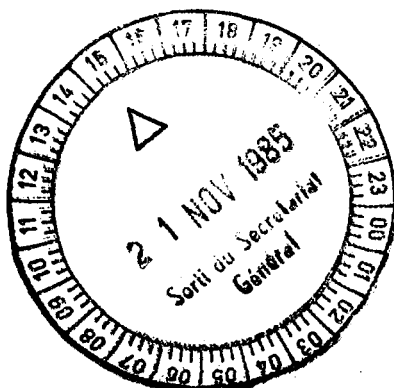
# COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

COM(85) 639 final

Brussels, 19 November 1985

DRAFT COUNCIL RESOLUTION  
adopting an action programme for  
the european year of the environment

(submitted by the Commission to the Council)



The European Council, at its meeting on 29/30 March 1985, decided that 1987 should be designated the European Year of the Environment.

2. Following this decision the Commission has made finance available in the 1985 Budget to enable planning work - including the preparation of an overall Community strategy and individual national strategies for each Member State - to be put in hand at once.

3. The majority of the necessary preparatory work will, however fall to be undertaken during 1986, in cooperation with a Steering Committee, chaired by the Commission and with National Committees, in each Member State. To this end the Commission indicated 10 million ECU for the European Year of the Environment (EYE) in its 1986 Budget proposals - Budget Line 666.

4. In designating 1987 as the European Year of the Environment the European Council did so in the context of its views that: -

- i. environment policy must be integrated as an essential component of the economic, industrial, agricultural and social policies of the Community and its Member States;
- ii. environment policy can contribute to improved economic growth and to job creation.

5. It is a valid question to ask why environment policy has not long ago been fully accepted as a central element of all economic and social policies; and as an economically positive element. The reason is simple - that it sometimes involves extra costs in the short-term. In the longer-term there are often profits from strong environmental policies. And almost always it is cheaper to prevent problems rather than to cure them after they have arisen and the environment has deteriorated.

6. The economic analysis (whether of individuals or of companies) is normally short-term. The European Council has taken a longer-term view. The task - the challenge - for EYE is to convince the rest of our societies to take a similar longer-term view. The challenge that faces us therefore is to change attitudes - at all levels of societies - so that environmental protection may increasingly be seen as something that must be given a central place in all our actions.

7. The Commission also recognises that Environment policy must be formulated and implemented in a way which helps the completion of the internal market to which the European Council is committed.

8. The challenge is thus a large one. Results can only be achieved by a major effort that - one way or another - reaches every citizen in the Community. This is therefore not a "Year" like other "Years". It has to be much bigger in scope - because the field in which it must seek results is extremely large - no less than all economic and social sectors as the European Council stressed.

9. Accordingly a significant budget is necessary if adequate results are to be achieved. The Commission must (through National Committees and otherwise) ensure that throughout EYE a series of events takes place in all Member States which can catch the imagination of everyone in our societies: -

10. The Commission has outline plans which will respond to this large challenge. What is needed now is to develop them in detail; seek and take advice; consult widely; launch competitions which can engage the interest of all concerned groups - of all individuals. To do this necessitates funds - to launch matters. The Commission is convinced, however, that these funds will be merely the seed corn. There will certainly be a very high degree of response; companies will be willing to contribute financially; commercial opportunities will arise. So the budget which the Commission has asked for in 1986 should be seen as something that can generate much greater economic benefits throughout society.

11. The Commission believes it is essential to face up to the challenge presented by the European Council. Attitudes will not be changed (as needed) without a major effort to convince everyone of the vital importance of strong environmental policies being built in as central elements to thinking in all fields. The Commission has explained its more detailed thinking in a short memorandum which was circulated during the Summer to all Permanent Representatives; a copy is attached at Annex I.

12. If EYE is to be a success it is urgently necessary that the Commission (in close cooperation with the Member States) should be given authority to make the necessary preparations and to commit funds. The Commission therefore stresses the need for decisions of principle on the procedures to be followed during the Environment Council meeting of 28 November 1985.

13. At Annex II is a draft Council Resolution which proposes a framework for the provision, utilisation and control of the financial resources which, in the Commission's view, are needed if an adequate response is to be generated to the European Council's demand. The framework proposed provides, at one and the same time, the possibility of rapid decision taking and action, but coupled with an adequate degree of information and control by both the Council and the Parliament.

THE EUROPEAN YEAR OF THE ENVIRONMENT, 1987INTRODUCTION

1. The European Council, at its meeting in Brussels on 29/30 March 1985, decided that 1987 should be designated European Year of the Environment.
2. In doing so the European Council at the same time affirmed its determination to give environmental protection policy the dimension of an essential component of the economic, industrial, agricultural and social policies implemented by the Community and by its Member States. It also stressed that environmental protection policy can contribute to improved economic growth and job creation.
3. The European Council thus reiterated and strongly reinforced the preventive approach to environmental protection which Community environmental policy has adopted over the years; and the need for environmental requirements to be integrated into the planning and execution of all economic and social policies.
4. But the European Council did more than this. It asked the Council of Ministers and the Commission to make every effort to ensure that the years to come are marked by significant progress in Community action for the protection of the environment in Europe and throughout the world.
5. This challenge is a very substantial one. If it is to be met, strong action to secure the protection and improvement of the environment will require the active and positive support not only of Governments and Parliaments, but also of every element in our societies - companies, trade unions, educational establishments, associations, societies, charities, interest groups, religious and cultural bodies - and above all of the individual citizen.

6. Most individuals and groupings are aware that the environment is important. But few are aware just how much it is threatened in many parts of the Community; or how much a healthy and attractive environment could contribute to health and wellbeing and to an improved quality of life. Still fewer yet share the European Council's perception that strong environmental policies can contribute positively to economic growth and job creation.

7. The central task of the European Year of the Environment is to bring about a widespread diffusion of awareness of these facts. It is a task of information and sensitisation. The aim must be to change attitudes - to convince every element in our societies - every man, woman and child in the Community - that the protection of the environment must become a fundamental element in their lives and in all human activities.

8. It is only when such a fundamental shift of attitude has come about that the cause of the environment will become an automatic part of all action, individual or collective. Only then will the needs of environmental protection no longer need to plead for a hearing. And only then will the Community find it easy to make the significant progress that the European Council demanded.

9. The Commission is determined to respond to the challenge presented by the decision of the European Council and to organise and stimulate a programme of events and activities throughout the European Year of the Environment on a scale commensurate with the challenge.

10. The remainder of this document gives a brief summary of the background to community environment policy and a preliminary indication of the Commission's ideas on the organisation and nature of the activities that will take place during the European Year of the Environment, 1987.

BACKGROUND

11. For over 12 years now the Community has been engaged in numerous initiatives concerned with protecting the environment.

12. It is as well to recall that this involvement was initiated and stimulated throughout the execution of 3 action programmes (proposed by the Commission and adopted by the Council of Ministers, in 1973, 1977 and 1983), by the European Parliament and especially by the European Council which had, as early as 1972, given the impetus to the start of a coherent Commission policy.

13. Since then more than 100 Community legislative measures have been adopted. Together with other actions in the field, these have contributed to specific progress in all areas, protection of water, action against noise and air pollution, waste management, nature protection, research into environmental problems, and education of the population. Indeed it is no exaggeration to say that the rapid development of Community environmental policy is one of the Community's success stories.

14. The growing popular support for Community involvement in environmental protection has contributed to and re-inforced these actions. The protection of the environment has thus become an important element in a People's Europe.

15. During this period environmental policy has evolved considerably. In the Resolution of the Council of Ministers which approved the general approach of the Community's Third Environmental Action Programme particular emphasis is placed on the need to strengthen the preventive side of environmental policy and to integrate the environmental dimension into other policies.

16. Progress is being made in these directions; but it is clear that much more still needs to be done in order to respond adequately to the call of the European Council for significant progress in the years to come. The



Community is still far from having solved all existing environmental problems - let alone newly emerging problems. And it is still far from realising all the positive contributions that environmental protection and improvement can make.

17. In part the reason for this is that actions for environmental protection and the improvement of the quality of life for the population bring with them political and technical appreciations which differ from one Member State to another and call into question the economic and social interests of various groups of the population.

18. Equally, while in all Member States the protection of the environment is seen as a necessity, the speed of its deterioration and, as a consequence, the general awareness of the situation are often dissimilar. Thus it is that while in the main the political and social forces contribute to and stimulate the Community action they too, because of the actual situations or because of the interpretation of - sometimes contradictory - interests can slow down and delay these actions.

19. Given the difficult compromise of interests - with differing circumstances and awareness - and with difficult problems of Community inter-relationships to resolve, it is apparent that a substantial effort to explain the Community's endeavours and essentially positive actions is necessary.

20. In planning this action it is of great importance to keep in mind that the European Council has underlined the fact that environment policy is an essential part of economic, industrial, agricultural and social policies and can contribute to improved economic growth and job creation. The Council equally emphasized the need for coherent Community action especially for the protection of the air, the sea and soil.

#### THE OBJECTIVES AND ORGANISATION OF THE EUROPEAN YEAR OF THE ENVIRONMENT

21. The overall objective of the European Year of the Environment must then be to increase the awareness of the practical application of the basic principles of Community environmental policy - the preventive

approach and the integration of environmental requirements into the planning and execution of policies and actions in all economic and social fields - whilst at the same time placing emphasis on the newer perceptions underlined by the European Council i.e. the contribution that environmental policy can make to economic growth and job creation.

22. In order to achieve this objective the Commission intends to organise the planning of and preparation for the European Year of the Environment through committees at three levels comprising highly qualified individuals :

- (1) a "Committee of Honour";
- (2) a Steering Committee chaired by the responsible Commissioner Mr. Stanley Clinton Davis;
- (3) a series of national committees in each Member State, whose chairmen would also be members of the Steering Committee.

23. As regards the "Committee of Honour", the intention is to invite well known personalities from every Member State, outstanding for their commitment to the questions of environmental protection and willing to make every effort to use their prestige to promote the European Year of the Environment and Community actions.

24. From an operational point of view, the Commission would hope to give, through the Steering Committee, stimulus, support and aid from personalities of renown at national and where possible, international level, well versed in environmental policy and improvement of the quality of life. It would also seek to increase awareness and promote policies in the respective countries. The intention is that all the chairmen of national committees would also serve on the Steering Committee.

25. The national committees would, in turn, take more local initiatives highlighting and expanding actions which form the Community plan. It will also be their function to encourage and stimulate activities which could be undertaken during the European Year of the Environment by every element in society - companies, trade unions, schools and universities, churches and charities; associations and groups of all kinds.

ACTIONS PROPOSED FOR THE EUROPEAN YEAR OF THE ENVIRONMENT

26. The first step which the Commission has taken is to develop an initial outline of proposals for a series of actions to be undertaken and financed by the Commission (with the advice and support of the Steering Committee) which will provide the essential central stimulus for the launching, preparation and celebration of the European Year of the Environment.

27. However it is clear that if adequate preparations for the European Year of the Environment are to be made in time, actions cannot wait until the 1986 Budget is approved. For this reason the Commission has already taken steps for funds to be made available for the 1985 Budget to finance preparatory actions during the remaining months of 1985. These will relate, in particular, to the preparation of overall strategies for action at both Community and national levels and to preparatory work for certain specific actions such as competitions.

28. The Commission wishes to emphasize that it believes that there will be strong support for the European Year of the Environment; and a readiness by many elements in society to contribute financially to its success. It believes also that profitable commercial opportunities exist and could be used. National Committees will seek funding from private sources to support many of their activities during the Year.

29. It is clearly not appropriate for the Commission to go into further details at this stage as to the specific actions to be undertaken during the European Year of the Environment since these will depend very much on the decisions to be taken and advice given by the Steering Committee and the national committees. However some general indications can be given.

30. To achieve the objectives of the European Year of the Environment it will be necessary to involve all branches of the media, radio, television, films and the press. To stimulate media interest, awards

could be given for the best environmental coverage. Additionally, other groups, such as the national administrations, industrialists, the world of science and education, could be encouraged, for example, through offering prizes for the best performance in environmental protection in the different areas. Major conferences would also be sponsored throughout the Community, to exchange information and pool ideas in the environment field.

31. A particular importance would be attached to competitions and prizes for major projects for environmental improvement carried out under the aegis of the Commission and under the responsibility of the appropriate national authorities. These projects would demonstrate the advantages of active environmental policy and would be a durable achievement of the European Year of the Environment.

32. It is the Commission's view that the programme of the European Year of the Environment should reflect Community policy on the environment and the general lines laid down by the European Council. It should particularly stress the need for a preventive approach and also the need to integrate environmental considerations into all social and economic actions. In addition there are the Community's priority actions against atmospheric pollution, water protection with special emphasis on the North Sea and the Mediterranean, and the protection of soil - which is, more and more, being recognised as a priority area. But above all the Commission intends to seek to demonstrate, through the actions undertaken during the European Year of the Environment, the truth of the newer perceptions underlined by the European Council i.e. that environmental protection policy can contribute to improved economic growth and job creation.

33. Finally the Commission wishes to stress and underline the central aim of all the actions to be undertaken during the European Year of the Environment i.e. to bring about a shift in attitude in society so that, in future, the fundamental importance of the protection of the environment and of the improvement of the quality of life will not only be accepted, but will be built in to and clearly manifested by all actions taken and policies pursued - whether in relation to environmental

protection as such or in the economic and social field - by individuals, Parliaments, Governments and all other participants - at whatever level - in the life of the Community.

34. Given the breadth and fundamental nature of these objectives the Commission is under no illusions that they can be achieved by a limited range of actions (important though these will undoubtedly be), generated by the Commission alone, with the advice of the Steering Committee; or generated by the national committees. What is needed above all is to stimulate widespread interest in, commitment and enthusiastic support for the objectives of EYE. This will be one of the key tasks of the Steering Committee and the national committees. They must act as the catalysts which will release the inventiveness and goodwill of all the many elements in our societies who can contribute to making EYE the success that it needs to be if the ambitious objectives of the European Council are to be achieved.

35. In this perspective the Commission will, in all its preparatory work for the European Year of the Environment, attach great importance to:-

- i. actions which can enable individual citizens to generate ideas for and to participate in the celebration of European Year of the Environment.
- ii. the active support and participation of the European Parliament; of the Economic and Social Committee; and of national Parliaments and regional, provincial and local Government bodies;
- iii. encouraging other bodies or groups within the Community, who will be organising events of whatever character during the European Year of the Environment (whether special event or e.g. annual meetings) to plan them in such a way that they can be taken under the patronage of the European Year of the Environment; but included in its programmes; and contribute towards the achievements of its objectives;
- iv. a close collaboration with international institutions along lines yet to be decided, so that while they follow their own actions they might also contribute to the objectives of the European Year

of the Environment; to this end the Commission intends to discuss its plans for EYE with such bodies as the Council of Europe, EFTA, WCED<sup>1</sup> and UNEP<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> World Commission of Environment and Development

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Environment Programme

COUNCIL RESOLUTION OF

adopting a programme for the European Year of the Environment (EYE)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community,

Having regard to the *draft* from the Commission,

Whereas the Community's environment policy can contribute towards economic growth and help create jobs;

whereas this policy should become an essential aspect of the economic, industrial, agricultural and social policies implemented by the Community and the Member States;

Whereas the European Council has asked the Council and the Commission to spare no effort to ensure that the Community makes significant progress in the matter of protecting the Community and world environment in the next few years;

Whereas such progress requires active support not only from governments and parliaments but from all sectors of our societies and thus requires an active campaign for public awareness;

Whereas the European Council has decided that 1987 shall be designated "European Year of the Environment";

Whereas it is appropriate to organize and promote a programme of events and activities to take place throughout the European Year of the Environment and whereas these events and activities should be aimed at raising public consciousness and changing behaviour patterns towards the environment,

HAS ADOPTED THIS RESOLUTION:

Article 1

The objectives and the main lines of an action programme for the European Year of the Environment, as described in the annex, are approved for a period of three years from January 1st 1986.

Article 2

The actions will be financed from credits under article 666 of the annual budget of the European Communities.

Article 3

The Commission will be responsible for the implementation of the programme as outlined in the annex. It will submit an annual report on the implementation of the programme to the Council and the Parliament.

For the Council  
The President



## ANNEX

### 1. Aims

The general aim of the European Year of the Environment (EYE) is to convince all sectors of society, and in particular the man in the street, that environmental protection is an essential aspect of all human activity and that ecological requirements should be given full consideration in the planning and implementation of policies and action in all areas of economic and social activity.

The emphasis will be on the need for preventive action to protect the environment and on how such action can help further economic growth and job creation.

### 2. Organization

The European Year of the Environment will be organized with the help of the following Committees:

#### 2.1 Committee of Patrons

This Committee will consist of public figures known in the Member States for their commitment to environmental protection and willing to lend their name to furthering the objectives of the EYE.

#### 2.2 Advisory Steering Committee

This Committee will be chaired by the Commission and will comprise the Chairmen of the National Committees and representative public figures and will be responsible for the general coordination of all action during the EYE.

#### 2.3 National Committees

These Committees will be composed of members representing the circles concerned and will support and promote the national activities and propose suitable projects for Community support.

### 3. Activities to be promoted

Four types of activity will be promoted, namely:

#### 3.1 Activities that are models of environmental protection and the efficient management of resources

With the approval of the National Committees, the Community will provide financial support for specific projects to improve the environment and ensure the efficient management of resources.

The following are examples of such projects:

Waste water treatment plant in certain less favoured regions; port disposal facilities (e.g. for spent oil and waste water); establishing areas within which groundwater is protected; introducing new technologies into certain industrial sectors and small and medium-sized undertakings; creating an inter-connected network of works for the processing and elimination of toxic waste, multinational countryside parks; model farms which use acceptable ecological techniques; reclamation of abandoned industrial sites; preservation of historical monuments; urban renewal.

### 3.2 Model surveillance activities

The implementation of environmental law and policies leaves much to be desired throughout the Community.

With the approval of the National Committees, the Community will support surveillance activities which set an example in the main areas of environmental policy. It will support numerous small and medium-scale activities which contribute towards the effective implementation of environmental laws or demonstrate the importance of environmental policies.

In particular, these projects will concern the equipment of air and water pollution measuring stations (in cross-border areas), the training of inspectorate staff (toxicologists, waste water treatment specialists), aid for creating jobs such as country park warden, etc., training courses on model farms for young farmers, and aid for the recovery and recycling of waste.

### 3.3 Sensitization

This will involve promoting certain types of activity which will make the media (radio, TV, films and press) more aware of the problems. To encourage the media, prizes could be awarded for the best piece of reporting or the best film. Other circles, such as government, industry and the world of science and education could also be encouraged by prizes for the best performance in the field of environmental protection.

Dossiers could be produced on Community and national environment policies. A bulletin could be issued for disseminating information on environmental protection and resources management.

### 3.4 Coordination and management of the activities

Simple, temporary machinery will be put in place to coordinate the activities decided by the National Committees and private initiatives to make sure that they fit in with the aims of the EYE and contribute towards its objectives.

4. Financing

The activities listed in 3.1 to 3.3 will be financed by appropriations entered in the Commission's annual budget under Item 6661 "European Year of the Environment - medium-term actions". The coordination and management mentioned in 3.4 will be financed by appropriations entered under Item 6660 "European Year of the Environment".