

The communication points out as well that mass media campaigns have been widely used as a means of raising awareness on drug issues. To be effective, the messages in these campaigns should be well targeted, informed and realistic. It is of the utmost importance that such information campaigns act as a supportive element for local level actions undertaken with an educational perspective, both for young people and for key people in their environment. In addition, it should be stressed that this pedagogical approach implies that information for young people should be understood as a communicative process and dialogue rather than as a campaign. The Commission is convinced that the active involvement of young people in information activities is crucial for their success.

The European drug prevention week is a good example of combination of a grass-root approach with a European campaign to highlight the theme of the week and to support the visibility of local events. The Commission, within the framework of the Community action programme on the prevention of drug dependence (1996-2000), has launched and co-financed three European drug prevention weeks in all Member States. The 1998 week was addressed new synthetic drugs and young people and included a 30-second TV spot in 18 languages, a radio commercial in 6 languages, a press advertisement in 12 languages, a booklet in 13 languages and a poster in 19 language versions. The week was launched by a two-day international conference on drug prevention and policy, organised by the city of Vienna with the support of the Commission.

In addition, the Community action programme on the prevention of drug dependence (1996-2000) finances projects in several Member States to disseminate appropriate information among young people on synthetic drugs. These projects have produced many different types of education and information materials, in the form of brochures, booklets, audiovisual products and Internet sites. Moreover, these projects are organized in European networks to exchange models of good practice and develop joint actions that have European added value.

On the other hand, the Commission considers it inappropriate to promote media campaigns that do not take into account the needs and developments at local, regional and national level as being contrary to the principle of subsidiarity and a not very efficient use of public monies. The Commission is committed to continue its efforts to prevent drug dependency and promote healthy lifestyles among young people.

(¹) COM(99) 239 final.

(2000/C 280 E/031)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2365/99

by Anders Wijkman (PPE-DE) to the Commission

(13 December 1999)

Subject: Impact of carbon dioxide emissions on the climate

Many people consider climate change to be the biggest environmental problem facing mankind. It is vital that action be taken in the energy and transport sectors if greenhouse gas emissions are to be brought under control. The latest report from the European Environmental Agency in Copenhagen shows there to be great concern about CO₂ emissions, in particular from traffic. What steps does the Commission envisage taking, as part of its remit in the fields of energy and transport, to ensure a substantial reduction in CO₂ emissions in the EU?

Answer given by Mrs Wallström on behalf of the Commission

(14 February 2000)

Climate change is a key area for integration of environmental considerations into all sectoral policies. This was stated in the Commission's report (¹) on integration to the European Council of Helsinki, as well as in the reports of the Transport and Environment Council (²) to the European Council in Helsinki.

The cross-sectoral nature of climate change requires a broad integrated approach. Thus, the Commissioner in charge of the Environment in October 1999 announced the launching of a European climate change programme (ECCP) which is currently being prepared. Energy and transport must play a central role within the ECCP. The Commission is currently preparing a communication to list measures on climate change, as requested by the Environment Council of 12 October 1999.

Regarding transport, the Commission has already in the past made proposals that would, if adopted, have a beneficial effect in respect of climate change, for example the proposed package on rail revitalisation that is currently being discussed in the Council. However, action must go beyond these measures if the Community's Kyoto target is to be met.

The existing measures on carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from cars (voluntary agreements with the car industry and measures on monitoring and labelling) should be complemented by fiscal measures in order to achieve the target of CO₂ emissions of 120 grammes per kilometre (g/km) by 2005-2010. The Commission is currently thinking about extending the concept of environmentally enhanced vehicles (EEV) to also include CO₂ emissions, and to go beyond heavy duty vehicles. Renewable fuels must be considered in more detail, including the definition of common standards and distribution systems across the Community and the prevention of adverse effects in other fields, such as in air quality. Measures in air transport, as laid out in the communication on air transport and the environment⁽³⁾, should include environmental charges for flights and, possibly, voluntary agreements by the industry. The taxation of aircraft fuel, which is desirable in principle, must in practice await a legal situation on the international level that allows its introduction.

An existing proposal for developing sustainable energy is that for a directive on restructuring the Community framework for the taxation of energy products. Beyond this, however, closer co-operation on strategic goals between energy and environment is essential.

The Community strategy will need to focus increasingly on the conservation and more efficient use of energy; the promotion and development of renewable energies and new technologies; delinking energy growth from growth in national output; and on reducing and eventually removing subsidies and other aids to fossil fuel use. In this context measures with substantive national targets and with clear deadlines for both energy efficiency and renewables should be pursued. Access to electricity grids for renewable sources of electricity as set out in the Commission's latest proposal and the campaign take-off are important elements in meeting the objective of doubling the current share of renewables in energy consumption to 12% by 2010. There is now a need for measures to promote the penetration of co-generation in order to meet the target of doubling current levels by 2010 to 18%. Intensive work on the demand side of energy such as energy labelling, energy services, and minimum energy efficiency standards in the framework of an action plan on energy efficiency needs to be launched in 2000.

⁽¹⁾ Press Release No 13573/99.

⁽²⁾ Press Release No 13572/99.

⁽³⁾ COM(99) 640.

(2000/C 280 E/032)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2370/99

by Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE) to the Commission

(16 December 1999)

Subject: Twenty years of protection of birds in the European Union

The EU's directive on the protection of birds and the Bonn Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals are milestones in nature protection legislation. Twenty years on, it is time to draw a balance.