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Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

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DRAFT REPORT

on the proposal for a Council decision on the conclusion of the Protocol on Soil Protection, the Protocol on Energy and the Protocol on Tourism to the Alpine Convention
(COM(2006)0080 – C6-0099/2006 – 2006/0026(CNS))

Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

Rapporteur: Richard Seeber

Symbols for procedures

- * Consultation procedure
majority of the votes cast
- **I Cooperation procedure (first reading)
majority of the votes cast
- **II Cooperation procedure (second reading)
*majority of the votes cast, to approve the common position
majority of Parliament's component Members, to reject or amend
the common position*
- *** Assent procedure
*majority of Parliament's component Members except in cases
covered by Articles 105, 107, 161 and 300 of the EC Treaty and
Article 7 of the EU Treaty*
- ***I Codecision procedure (first reading)
majority of the votes cast
- ***II Codecision procedure (second reading)
*majority of the votes cast, to approve the common position
majority of Parliament's component Members, to reject or amend
the common position*
- ***III Codecision procedure (third reading)
majority of the votes cast, to approve the joint text

(The type of procedure depends on the legal basis proposed by the Commission.)

Amendments to a legislative text

In amendments by Parliament, amended text is highlighted in ***bold italics***. Highlighting in *normal italics* is an indication for the relevant departments showing parts of the legislative text for which a correction is proposed, to assist preparation of the final text (for instance, obvious errors or omissions in a given language version). These suggested corrections are subject to the agreement of the departments concerned.

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DRAFT EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION

on the proposal for a Council decision on the conclusion of the Protocol on Soil Protection, the Protocol on Energy and the Protocol on Tourism to the Alpine Convention

(COM(2006)0080 – C6-0099/2006 –2006/0026(CNS))

(Consultation procedure)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal for a Council decision (COM(2006)0080)¹,
 - having regard to Article 175(1) and Article 300(2), first subparagraph, first sentence of the EC Treaty,
 - having regard to Article 300(3), first subparagraph, of the EC Treaty, pursuant to which the Council consulted Parliament (C6-0099/2006),
 - having regard to Rules 51 and 83(7) of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (A6-0000/2006),
1. Approves conclusion of the protocols;
 2. Instructs its President to forward its position to the Council and Commission, and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.

¹ OJ C ... / Not yet published in OJ.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

The protection of the Alps is a major challenge to all Member States owing to the cross-frontier nature of the economic, social and ecological problems of the Alpine area. Our aim is to further increase the protection of the Alps as a living, natural and economic area. However, there must be a fair balance of interests and wishes.

The Alpine Convention forms an important international agreement on the protection of natural spaces and the sustainable development of the Alps. The ratification of the three protocols on soil protection, energy, and tourism would be an important step towards further strengthening the position, within EU legislation, of this all-encompassing agreement on the protection of the Alps. The protocols have already been ratified by Germany, France, Austria, Slovenia and Liechtenstein.

Soil Protection

The Protocol on Soil Protection contains a number of strong indicators for soil protection which are consistent with Parliament's resolution in this regard and with the views of the European Commission. One of the main aims is the protection of the multifunctional role of soil based on the idea of sustainable development. Various elements of the protocol could be integrated into the Community policy on soil protection, such as the identification of risk zones for erosion, flooding and landslides.

Energy

Those parties who sign the Convention are obliged to adopt appropriate measures which are consistent with the aims of the 6th Environment Action Programme both in the area of climate protection and in the sustainable use of natural resources. These include measures in the areas of energy saving and transport, for example.

Tourism

The tourism sector is of great economic importance in most parts of the Alps. Given the fact that mountain regions are ecologically very sensitive areas, it is extremely important to find a balance between economic interests, the needs of local communities and the environment protection aspects. The aim of the Protocol on Tourism is to encourage sustainable tourism in which possible environmental effects are considered in tourist management. Ratification would represent a definite follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to the 2002 International Year of Eco-Tourism and to the Agenda 21 Process for Sustainable European Tourism.