

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

1999



2004

Session document

7 February 2002

B5-0118/2002

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to Oral Questions B5-0006/2002 and B5-0007/2002

pursuant to Rule 42(5) of the Rules of Procedure

by Caroline F. Jackson, Karl-Heinz Florenz and Jorge Moreira da Silva

on behalf of the PPE-DE Group

Dagmar Roth-Behrendt

on behalf of the PSE Group

Jules Maaten and Chris Davies

on behalf of the ELDR Group

Alexander de Roo, Patricia McKenna, Didier Rod and Inger Schörling

on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

on the sustainable development strategy for the Barcelona Summit

European Parliament resolution on the sustainable development strategy for the Barcelona Summit

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the decisions of the Göteborg European Council on promoting a sustainable development strategy in the Union, and in particular to revise it annually at its spring meetings¹,
 - having regard to its resolution on environment policy and sustainable development²,
 - having regard to the recently published synthesis report by the Commission and to its resolutions in preparation for and responding to the Göteborg Summit,
 - having regard to Oral Questions Nos by the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Policy pursuant to Rule 42 of the Rules of Procedure and having regard to the statements by the Commission and Council,
- A. whereas the Göteborg European Council established a proper EU strategy for sustainable development by adding an environmental dimension to the existing Lisbon process of annual assessment of sustainable economic growth and social cohesion,
- B. whereas at the Laeken European Council in December 2001 six initial environmental indicators were adopted to supplement the already established social and economic structural indicators,
- C. whereas the annual EU assessment of sustainable development will require a regular and structured annual process of review within the Parliament,
- D. whereas the forthcoming Rio +10 conference in Johannesburg represents a vital opportunity to further extend sustainable development principles at worldwide level; whereas the agenda and objectives for this conference will have to be carefully examined within the European Parliament, in conjunction with the other EU institutions and with other parliaments,

The preparations for Barcelona: the need for balance between environmental, economic and social indicators

1. Welcomes the fact that the Barcelona European Council represents the first in an annual series of assessments of EU progress towards sustainable development, integrating a number of pre-existing processes such as the Cardiff and Lisbon processes and leading to a more coordinated overall EU approach;

¹ PE 305.844, 18.6.2001

² A5-0171/2001, 31.5.2001

2. Believes that the environmental pillar of sustainable development should be considered of equal importance to the economic and social pillars; calls, therefore, for the number of environmental indicators to be increased so that there can be a proper balance between the economic, social and environmental dimensions of the Sustainable Development Strategy;
3. Believes that the environmental indicators developed by the Commission and included in the list of structural indicators for the first time are a good basis for future assessments of sustainable development, but that this list needs to be further elaborated and developed, notably in the field of biodiversity;
4. Calls upon the Commission to allocate sufficient resources not just to the development of all relevant indicators but also to the assessment of the availability and comparability of all necessary data;
5. Further considers that the use of indicators should be linked, wherever feasible, to clear targets and long-term timetables for the implementation of priority objectives, and should also be properly coordinated with the finally adopted 6th Environmental Action Programme;
6. Emphasises the importance of environmental technology for promoting growth and employment within the EU and welcomes the Commission's preparation of a report on this subject;

Future annual assessments of sustainable development

7. Regrets that the European Parliament has only reacted on an ad hoc basis to the preparations for the Barcelona European Council, and calls for there to be a regular, systematic and coordinated European Parliament response to future annual EU assessments of sustainable development;
8. Calls, in this context, for:
 - an annual European Parliament debate on progress towards sustainable development at a part-session in February, in time for the Council and European Council's assessment in March,
 - involvement of all European Parliament committees concerned, notably its Environment, Employment and Economic Affairs Committees, but also those on Agriculture, Fisheries, Industry, Transport and Development, by means of regular assessments of progress towards sustainable development in their own areas, and by annual appointment of rapporteurs or 'monitors',
 - the involvement of these various committees to be properly coordinated at European Parliament level, through coordinated committee reports or oral questions, possibly prepared by an ad-hoc working group of all relevant rapporteurs and other interested Members, established on an annual basis for a period of one to two months;
9. Considers that the Council also needs to reconsider its working methods with regard to sustainable development to ensure both better coordination and leadership on this

horizontal set of issues; believes, in this context, that the Environment Council should play an enhanced role in future annual assessments, and recalls its proposal that an Environment Policy Committee be established to complement the existing Economic Policy Committee;

Preparations for the Rio +10 conference in Johannesburg from 26 August – 4 September 2002

10. Emphasises the vital significance of the forthcoming World Summit on Sustainable Development, but expresses its concern that the large number of preparatory meetings at UN level have not yet led to a clearly focused agenda or specific objectives for the conference;
11. Calls for the fullest possible preparations within the EU institutions and undertakes to hold a full debate on this subject at the June or July part-session;
12. Believes that the preparations for this conference should not just involve civil servants but should also have significant parliamentary input; supports the idea, therefore, of a parliamentary conference on sustainable development and on the preparations for the Johannesburg conference, to be held under European Parliament and Council of Europe auspices in the late spring or early summer and with the widest possible parliamentary involvement;
13. Considers, in view of the importance of the Johannesburg conference and the need for broad representation of political groups and committees concerned, that a large European Parliament contingent of up to 25 Members should be authorised to attend the conference as part of the EU delegation;
14. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.