

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1754/07
by Pierre Schapira (PSE)
to the Commission

Subject: Alternative funding for access to water in developing countries

In 2006, Parliament called on the Commission, in its resolution on the Fourth World Water Forum¹, to encourage local authorities in the European Union to allocate a proportion of the charges paid by users for the supply of water and sanitation services to decentralised cooperation measures. This proposal was inspired by a French initiative, the Oudin Law, which allows 1% of the amount of French customers' water bills to be used for the direct funding of decentralised cooperation on water policy for the benefit of people in developing countries.

The proposal features in the latest UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) Human Development report, which focuses on the international water crisis. If this financing arrangement were introduced in other developed countries, it would generate USD 3 million each year that could be directly allocated to development projects to ensure access to water.

It would appear that Parliament's request has come to nothing at European level, as the Commission has failed to make any proposals since the resolution.

Does the Commission plan to introduce any measure to encourage local authorities in the Union to set up a financing arrangement of this kind?

¹ OJ C 291 E, 30.11.2006, p. 294.