



Seventh environmental action programme: on the path to green growth

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Parliament called on EU member states to enforce EU environmental law more rigorously in Thursday's vote endorsing a deal with the Council of Ministers on the seventh EU environmental action programme, to run until 2020. This programme will structure the EU's entire environmental policy, from water management to climate change.

"Environmental action certainly entails costs, as does inaction, but it also entails benefits which public funding authorities and private investors cannot afford to ignore in today's climate. Environmental concerns must therefore no longer be the adjustment variable, but must be built in, well upstream, to various sector-specific policies, said rapporteur Gaston Franco (EPP, FR) whose text was approved by 472 votes to 81, with 21 abstentions.

"The aim, henceforward, is that undertakings given by the EU and its member states under this policy must be duly fulfilled and EU environmental legislation fully enforced. This is a duty to EU citizens and to our planet", he added.

The seventh action programme, proposed in November 2012, lists nine priority aims to be achieved by 2020, including protection of the environment and the strengthening of ecological resilience, support for sustainable and efficient growth, and protection against environmental threats to health.

To these ends, MEPs propose inter alia enforcing EU environmental law more rigorously, providing security for investments that support environmental policy and efforts to combat climate change, and taking more account of environmental concerns in other policies.

Next steps

The new environmental action programme is to be formally approved by the Council in mid-November and published in the EU Official Journal by the end of this year.

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