

Opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee on the Proposal for a Council Decision laying down Community criteria for the eradication and monitoring of certain animal diseases (codified version)

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(2006/C 324/13)

On 11 July 2006 the Council decided to consult the European Economic and Social Committee, under Article 24 of the Treaty establishing the European Community, on the abovementioned proposal.

The Section for Agriculture, Rural Development and the Environment, which was responsible for preparing the Committee's work on the subject, adopted its opinion on 8 September 2006. The rapporteur, working without a study group, was **Mr Coupeau**.

In view of the renewal of the Committee's term of office, the Plenary Assembly has decided to vote on this opinion at its October plenary session and has adopted **Mr Coupeau** as rapporteur-general under Rule 20 of the Rules of Procedure.

At its 430th plenary session, held on 26 October 2006, the European Economic and Social Committee adopted the following opinion unanimously.

1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of the Commission proposal is to undertake a codification of Council Decision 90/638/EEC of 27 November 1990 laying down Community criteria for the eradication and monitoring of certain animal diseases. The new Decision will supersede the various acts incorporated in it. It preserves their content and hence does no more than bring them together with only such formal amendments as are required by the codification exercise itself.

2. General comments

2.1 Accordingly, the Committee approves the proposed codification, which will give the public easier access to the law and contribute towards better lawmaking.

3. Specific comments

3.1 The issue of whether other simplification procedures could be used without undermining the effectiveness of the current system of monitoring and eradicating animal diseases should also be addressed.

3.2 Increasingly, the pathogens which affect animals tend to come from countries outside the European Union. In the very near future, the European Union and its Member States will need to become more vigilant and to pool their skills in the area of combating animal diseases in order to preserve public health and ensure that citizens can eat meat products safely.

Brussels, 26 October 2006.

The President
of the European Economic and Social Committee
Dimitris DIMITRIADIS
