

The risk assessment is currently under finalization so that it is premature to draw firm conclusions about the need for actions in specific sectors. However, the final report is expected shortly.

The outcome of the risk assessment, together with the results of the study on advantages and drawbacks of banning certain azo dyes and products treated with them and of the study on the effects of a ban on suppliers in developing countries, will provide information on the need for and proportionality of harmonised restrictions. The result of the study programme will form a basis for further discussions with Member State experts and a possible Commission proposal to introduce harmonised legislation.

(98/C 304/210)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0621/98
by Angela Billingham (PSE) to the Commission
(9 March 1998)

Subject: Kurdish Community in Diyarbakir

Is the Commission aware of the allegation that the Kurdish community in Diyarbakir is being poisoned by sewage being pumped into its water supply? It is alleged that what used to be a fertile valley is dying and that many children are becoming ill. If true, is this acceptable behaviour from a country seeking to join the European Union?

Answer given by Mr Van den Broek on behalf of the Commission
(31 March 1998)

The Commission is well aware of the low level of socio-economic development in the south-east of Turkey, exemplified, among other things, by the poor state of sewerage systems in several parts of that region. Leaks from the sewerage systems affect the health of the most vulnerable sections of the population, including children. The Turkish authorities are aware of this problem. It was on the agenda of the meeting of the Turkish National Security Council of 26 February 1998.

Since 1997, under the MEDA programme, the Commission has chosen to focus in particular on basic infrastructure and projects for improving socio-economic development in south-east Turkey. Last year it approved a drinking water project for Sanliurfa worth more than ECU 21 million. It has also allocated financing (almost ECU 23 million) in the form of interest-rate subsidies on loans from the European Investment Bank (EIB) to improve the sewerage systems in Adana and Izmit.

As regards the city of Diyarbakir, the Commission has programmed interest rate subsidies for 1998 on an EIB loan for the Diyarbakir Water and Sewerage Administration to build a sewage treatment plant and a sewerage system.

(98/C 304/211)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0625/98
by Juan Colino Salamanca (PSE) and Jesús Cabezón Alonso (PSE) to the Commission
(9 March 1998)

Subject: COM in raw tobacco: use of the research fund

The current proposal to reform the COM in raw tobacco establishes a Community Tobacco Fund, funded by holding back the equivalent of 2% of the subsidy; the current level is 1%.