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 SITZUNG AM MONTAG II, 8. JUNI 1992
 ΕΥΝΕΑΡΙΑΣΗ ΤΗΣ ΔΕΥΤΕΡΑΣ II, 8 ΙΟΥΝΙΟΥ 1992
 SITTING OF MONDAY II, 8 JUNE 1992
 SESIÓN DEL LUNES II, 8 DE JUNIO DE 1992
 SEANCE DU LUNDI II, 8 JUIN 1992
 SEDUTA DI LUNEDÌ II, 8 GIUGNO 1992
 VERGADERING VAN MAANDAG II, 8 JUNI 1992
 SESSÃO DE SEGUNDA-FEIRA II, 8 DE JUNHO DE 1992

PRESIDENCE DE M. ESTGEN

Vice-président

(La séance, suspendue à 20h25, est reprise à 21 heures)

LE PRESIDENT. - L'ordre du jour appelle la suite du débat sur le rapport de M. Harrison (doc. A3-170/92) sur l'incidence de la politique régionale communautaire sur l'environnement.

GUTIÉRREZ DÍAZ (GUE). - Señor Presidente, Señorías, el tema central que nos ocupa al debatir el informe Harrison es la frecuente inadecuación entre las bellas palabras en favor de la conservación del medio ambiente y la realidad de los proyectos que la Comunidad financia con el loable objetivo de combatir las disparidades regionales o para favorecer el desarrollo rural. De lo que se trata, por lo tanto, es de debatir si la Comunidad ha incorporado plenamente en sus diversas políticas el objetivo general -ahora incorporado al Tratado de Maastricht- de un desarrollo sostenible y, más concretamente, si en la política regional y en la aplicación de los Fondos estructurales se impulsan realmente programas y proyectos no degradantes para el medio ambiente. Los que seguimos de cerca la política regional y somos decididos partidarios de una mayor cohesión en la Comunidad sabemos cuán fácil es enunciar principios generales, y cuán difícil es luego afrontar las condiciones concretas de las regiones menos favorecidas para movilizar en ellas una combinación adecuada de recursos para su desarrollo económico. Muy a menudo las

opciones son escasas y algunas ofrecen un crecimiento a corto plazo que no es fácil descartar, a pesar de su inviabilidad a un plazo más largo.

En este contexto, el papel de las instituciones comunitarias es fundamental. La Comisión y este Parlamento deben ser conscientes de su posición privilegiada para impulsar y garantizar que la conservación del medio ambiente y la utilización sostenible de los recursos sean un objetivo «horizontal» que se imprime a todas las políticas comunitarias. Y en lo que se refiere a la política regional, ello significa que constituye un interés general comunitario garantizar que todos los programas y proyectos se elaboren y se apliquen dando prioridad a ese carácter de conservación medioambiental y de viabilidad a largo plazo.

A este respecto, señor Presidente, el informe Harrison es una aportación valiosa y positiva.

BETTINI (V). - Signor Presidente, dopo la prima discussione in sede di commissione regionale, avevo dichiarato, a nome del mio gruppo, che non avremmo presentato emendamenti alla relazione Harrison. Mi scuso quindi con il relatore, di cui ho molto apprezzato il lavoro, se, poi, in seguito abbiamo dovuto presentare ben 17 emendamenti in Aula. Ciò ci è stato imposto dal fatto che non esiste un parere da parte della commissione per l'ambiente.

Tengo a ribadire, comunque, di condividere ancora la posizione assunta dal relatore e soprattutto la sua posizione critica in merito all'utilizzazione dei fondi strutturali ed al conseguente impatto ambientale.

La Commissione, infatti, deve riconoscere che, a seguito della riforma dei fondi strutturali, l'impatto ambientale non ha ancora avuto l'importanza che esso merita.

Sono mancate, in passato, valutazioni sistematiche sulle implicazioni sociali, ambientali ed economiche. Si continua ancora a finanziare progetti - come ha detto lo stesso relatore - dannosi all'ambiente senza alcuna valutazione dell'impatto ambientale e senza nessun verifica.

Ora noi Verdi, con i nostri emendamenti, vorremmo fare chiarezza su un tema, alquanto di maniera, che è stato qui ricordato nella prima parte del presente dibattito, ossia nel concetto di «sviluppo sostenibile». Noi a questo preferiamo il più efficace parametro, vecchio di vent'anni e onorato dal Club di Roma, di «limiti dello sviluppo». Questi limiti devono essere chiari all'interno di una dinamica dei rapporti con le risorse disponibili.

Ora, alcuni progetti, signor Presidente e cari colleghi, si sono dimostrati non sostenibili dall'ambiente, in un preciso contesto di valore assegnato alle risorse. La nostra posizione è chiara: la continuità nel tempo dello sviluppo economico e sociale, nel rispetto dell'ambiente, è impedito - e sarà impedito - dalle stesse leggi fondamentali della termodinamica e dallo stesso fattore entropico.

Quindi, a nostro parere, non vale sbandierare la sola valutazione dei criteri settoriali del prodotto interno lordo; non vale, nell'adeguamento degli obiettivi dei fondi, proporre nuovi criteri per la concessione degli stanziamenti, senza tener conto di una ridefinizione, anche energetica, delle regioni, di un'adozione di indicatori di sviluppo, da verificare. Inoltre, secondo noi, si devono finanziare in via prioritaria gli investimenti che promuovono lo sviluppo regionale autonomo, endogeno, nell'uso delle risorse naturali, energetiche, umane, ambientali. Gli strumenti di controllo e di gestione finanziaria dei fondi devono essere altresì rafforzati per un uso ottimale delle risorse, per l'adeguamento dei progetti, nel rispetto anche della legislazione comunitaria, che rispettata ora non è. Il pubblico ha, infine, il diritto di essere informato sul funzionamento dei fondi strutturali, nella fase di preparazione, programmazione e valutazione. Inoltre devo, signor Presidente, rilevare con molta sorpresa, che dopo un errore iniziale, spero tecnico, consistente nell'aggiunta di un paragrafo 19, che non era stato discusso nella commissione regionale e che capovolge i contenuti e i criteri critici della relazione, si rischia di commettere un errore politico, con l'emendamento Raggio, che stravolge tutta la relazione. Quindi qui è inutile fare gli ipocriti, ossia affermare che la relazione Harrison va bene, per

poi inneggiare a Maastricht o ad altre soluzioni, come l'emendamento Raggio fa.

Se vogliamo essere credibili davanti alla pubblica opinione e alla Commissione stessa, dobbiamo ribadire il contenuto critico del rapporto Harrison. Altrimenti potremo dire addio alla riforma dei regolamenti dei fondi strutturali, alla conservazione delle risorse naturali, al controllo delle implicazioni ambientali, alla partecipazione degli eletti locali, delle associazioni, dei gruppi non governativi, dei movimenti di base, alla rappresentatività dei comitati di controllo, e via di seguito.

LANE (RDE). - Mr President, I compliment Mr Harrison on his work. Of course, all of us are concerned with the environment. One of the prime objectives in any development must be to protect and respect the environment. The record of environmental protection in Member States is varied. However, I would state categorically that Ireland's record is amongst the best in the Community. We still have clean rivers; some of our lakes and wetlands that were damaged are now being restored. I admit that we still have some work to do. Mr Harrison mentions the dangers of increased structural funds moving from being project-based to programme-based. This will not necessarily lead to more environmental degradation if proper safeguards are put in place. The Environmental Impact Assessment, EIA, is a necessary procedure in the planning of projects for structural funding and I fully support the principle. However, we must respect the record of state agencies that have over the years developed projects that respected the environment. If we have any respect for the principle of subsidiarity then these agencies must not be overruled at all times by the Commission or by people who have no stake in these projects. I mention in particular the Office of Public Works in Ireland which is an agency with an impeccable record, yet it is now being publicly denigrated by some people who were late arrivals in the environmental field. The real environmentalists are the local people and farmers who protected the wetlands, bogs and areas of ecological interest for centuries.

In particular, I say to Commissioner Millan and his colleague, Mr Ripa di Meana, to go ahead with structural funding for interpretative centres in Mullaghmore, Dunquin and Wicklow in Ireland. I would add that those groups who came to Brussels and Strasbourg to lobby against these developments do not represent the ordinary people in these areas. In fact, as regards Mullaghmore, County Clare, some of the objectors to this publicly funded interpretative centre are backing a private interpretative centre at Finore, County Clare. In this case, I regret that party politics are being put before the public good. I recommend that Amendment No 6, in particular, proposed by my Group

and aiming to support funding for these type of projects in tourist areas, should be fully endorsed.

ΕΦΡΑΙΜΙΑΝΣ (CG). - Κύριε Πρόεδρε, υπάρχει ένα τυραννικό ερώτημα: ανάπτυξη ή προστασία του περιβάλλοντος; Νομίζω, χωρίς να έχω καμία ειδικευση, αλλά από τα πράγματα, ότι πρόκειται για ένα ψευτο-δilemma. Η σύγχρονη επιστήμη η τεχνολογία, αντιλαμβάνεται και τις ανάγκες για το περιβάλλον, αντιλαμβάνεται και την ανάγκη για την ανάπτυξη και μπορεί να τα συνδυάσει έτσι και τόσο, ώστε από την ανάπτυξη όχι μόνο να μην προκύπτει καταστροφή και αλλοίωση του οικοσυστήματος αλλά, ενδεχομένως, στις περισσότερες περιπτώσεις αυτό και να βελτιώνεται. Όρος απαραίτητος είναι να φύγει εκείνος ο παράγοντας που κάνει την ανάπτυξη καταστροφική για το περιβάλλον και εννοώ, φυσικά, τη μανία, το κυνηγητό του κέρδους, την ασύδοτη ανάπτυξη με αποκλειστικό ελατήριο και σκοπό το κέρδος. Και εδώ, ίσως χρειάζεται τόσο η έκθεση όσο και η κοινοτική επέμβαση να το επεξημειναι αυτό.

Κατά τα άλλα, το ψήφισμα είναι πολύ θετικό, κάνει πολύ ενδιαφέρουσες παρατηρήσεις αλλά και προτάσεις. Μέσα σ' αυτές, κύριε Πρόεδρε, θέλω να διακρίνω ιδιαίτερα τη διαπίστωση που κάνει ο κ. Harrison ότι δεν υπάρχει συμμετοχή κοινωνικών φορέων τοπικής αυτοδιοίκησης στον σχεδιασμό, στην εποπτεία και τον έλεγχο των έργων που γίνονται από τα κονδύλια των διαρθρωτικών ταμείων και επανέρχεται και λέει ότι πρέπει να θεσμοθετηθεί και να ενταθεί αυτή η συμμετοχή διότι τότε έχουμε εξασφάλιση και της σωστής ανάπτυξης και της προστασίας του περιβάλλοντος. Με το σκεπτικό αυτό, θα ψηφίσω το ψήφισμα, γιατί το βρίσκω θετικό, τουλάχιστον κάνει ένα βήμα προς τα εμπρός. Θέλω να σημειώσω μόνο, όχι στο κείμενο του ψηφίσματος αλλά στην αιτιολογική έκθεση, την οποία βέβαια δεν συζητάμε και δεν πρόκειται να ψηφίσουμε, γίνεται αναφορά σε κάποιο έργο στην Ελλάδα, όπου θεωρείται ως ένα βαθμό καταστροφικό για το περιβάλλον. Αλλά, ο ίδιος ο συντάκτης της αιτιολογικής έκθεσης λέει ότι αυτό το συνήγαγε από πληροφορίες που είχε από κάποιους φορείς. Είχε όμως την ευκαιρία να δει το σύνολο των δήμων και κοινοτήτων της περιοχής, το τεχνικό και το γεωτεχνικό επιμελητήριο της περιοχής και τον βεβαιώσαν απόλυτα, με στοιχεία, ότι δεν υπάρχει κανένας κίνδυνος για το περιβάλλον, αλλά, αντιθέτως, υπάρχει απόλυτος σεβασμός και κυρίως ανάπτυξη σ' αυτή την πολυάνθρωπη περιοχή της Ελλάδας. Εδώ θα ήθελα να σημειώσω, κύριε Πρόεδρε, ότι η περιοχή αυτή, συγκεκριμένα η Θεσσαλία, έχει το μισό του μέσου όρου εισοδήματος της Ελλάδας και καταλαβαίνετε ότι σε σύγκριση με τον κοινοτικό μέσο όρο πόσο χαμηλά είναι. Μ' αυτό το έργο θα αναπτυχθεί αυτή η περιοχή και θα συμβάλει στην οικονομική και την κοινωνική συνοχή που επιδιώκει η Κοινότητα γιατί θα έχει επιπτώσεις σε όλη την ελλαδική ανάπτυξη.

KÖHLER H.-F. (S). - Herr Präsident! Zunächst Herrn Harrison herzlichen Glückwunsch zu seinem ausgezeichneten Bericht, der aus der Sicht des Parlaments in doppelter Hinsicht von großer Bedeutung für die Gemeinschaft sein wird, weil er einmal zur rechten Zeit kommt - wir stehen vor der Revision der Strukturfondsverordnungen - und zum anderen ein erster gelungener Versuch ist, den Ziel-Konflikt zwischen Strukturentwicklung auf der einen Seite und Umweltschutz auf der anderen Seite auf vernünftige Weise anzugehen. Die Lösung dieses Ziel-Konfliktes ist eine wichtige Aufgabe, die in Zukunft noch an Bedeutung gewinnen wird, denn letztlich steht die Glaubwürdigkeit der Gemeinschaft auf dem Spiel, wenn es nicht gelingt, eine Strukturpolitik zu betreiben, die gleichzeitig den Umweltzielen gerecht wird.

Tatsache ist nämlich - und es nützt nichts, dies herunterzuspielen -, daß eine Vielzahl von Projekten von uns gefördert wurde, die nicht den Umweltzielen gerecht werden, die wir eigentlich fordern. Herr Harrison hat einige Beispiele genannt, aber es gibt ihrer sehr viel mehr.

Allerdings muß man bei der Bewertung des Zielkonfliktes beachten, daß der EFRE in erster Linie ein Entwicklungsfonds ist und daß es hier um Entwicklung geht. Andererseits machen wir hier Programmplanung, das heißt, es ist für die Kommission, die Gemeinschaft und das Parlament schwierig, dies im einzelnen zu beeinflussen.

Deswegen sollten wir für die Zukunft fünf Forderungen beachten. Erstens müssen durch Strukturfonds finanzierte Aktionen, die Einfluß auf Landnutzung und Ressourcenverbrauch haben, eine nachhaltige und umweltgerechte Nutzung sichern. Zweitens müssen wir im verstärkten Maße darauf hinwirken, daß auch technische und administrative Hilfe gewährt werden kann, um diese langfristige, nachhaltige und umweltgerechte Nutzung zu ermöglichen.

Drittens brauchen wir Begleitausschüsse, die gleichzeitig auch einen Umweltauftrag erfüllen, und in diesen Begleitausschüssen sollten Menschen mitarbeiten, die sich der Natur und Umwelt verbunden fühlen.

Viertens brauchen wir die öffentliche Zugänglichkeit für die Entwicklungspläne, für Förderprogramme und für die operationellen Programme, und fünftens muß eindeutig festgelegt werden, daß bei einem Verstoß gegen EG-Umweltrecht die Mittel, die die Gemeinschaft zur Verfügung stellt, ausgesetzt bzw. auch gestrichen werden.

Nur eine nachhaltige Verbesserung der Verhältnisse und damit auch des Umweltschutzes nützt letztlich den Regionen, die auf Hilfe angewiesen sind.

MAHER (LDR). - Mr President, I congratulate Mr Harrison because I think he has produced not only a comprehensive report but one that is quite balanced. Reports of this kind are not always as well-balanced as this one. However, in the little time I have at my disposal I want to concentrate on the following point. Of course, I accept that we must make every possible effort to ensure that we do not worsen the environment and even, if at all possible, to improve it when we are carrying out developments. But I must also make the point that people are important. They need jobs. Sometimes we have to infringe a little on the environment in order to ensure that people have jobs, because this world is not only about nature, it is also about people. I have experience in my own country of a pharmaceutical plant which was to be built to give employment to 300 people. The local authorities laid down the most stringent planning laws to ensure that the environment was protected, but there was so much opposition - much of it, I must confess, misguided - that the people who were planning to build that factory upped and went, and it has now been built in another country, giving employment in that country. We could have done with that employment; we have 20% unemployment. The point I am making is that it is dangerous to go to extremes, and we now have that situation. It is almost impossible now to drive a stake into the ground, in case somebody objects that you are damaging the environment.

Mr President, I think we have to be careful about this. We must have development and we must give jobs to people, whilst at the same time ensuring that we protect the environment.

ΠΑΠΑΓΙΑΝΝΑΚΗΣ (GUE) - Κύριε Πρόεδρε, καταρχήν πρέπει να δώσουμε τα συγχαρητήριά μας στον συνάδελφο κ. Harrison και για τη σπουδαιότητα της έκθεσής του και για το ότι τη βάσιμα, τουλάχιστον απ'όσο γνωρίζω για ένα τμήμα της, και σε επιτόπου έρευνα, πράγμα που είναι σπάνιο για κοινοβουλευτική εργασία.

Είναι προφανές από την έκθεση του κυρίου συναδέλφου ότι πρέπει οι ίδιοι οι κανονισμοί των Διαρθρωτικών Ταμείων να αλλάξουν και σαφέστερα να υιοθετήσουν ως κριτήριο επιλογής των δαπανών και των επενδύσεων και την αιτιολογία ή την διατηρήσιμη ανάπτυξη, πράγμα που θα προσέφερε και μία νομική βάση και στην Επιτροπή για να εγκρίνει και να κρίνει και στο Κοινοβούλιο για να ελέγχει.

Είναι επίσης σαφές ότι τα κράτη μέλη πρέπει να υποχρεωθούν να παρέχουν σαφέστερες και πληρέστερες πληροφορίες καθώς και εκθέσεις για την πορεία της σχέσης ανάπτυξης και περιβάλλοντος, που είναι το θέμα μας και που είναι το θέμα των ετών που έρχονται.

Ειδικότερα, κύριε Πρόεδρε, στο παράδειγμα που αναφέρεται για την Ελλάδα στον Αχελώο, εκεί νομίζω θα κριθεί και η σοβαρότητα και οι διαθέσεις της Επιτροπής για μια αλλαγή πολιτικής. Είναι ένα έργο που έχει μια γιγαντιαία εμβέλεια, φαραωνικής αντίληψης. Είναι ένα έργο στο οποίο η υποκρισία βασιλεύει, μελέτες δεν υπάρχουν, όλοι τις επικαλούνται αλλά συνολική μελέτη για το έργο δεν υπάρχει. Είναι ένα έργο του οποίου η οικονομική αβεβαιότητα είναι τεράστια και βασίζεται σε μία ανάπτυξη του μέλλοντος, η οποία στηρίζεται σε μία εντατικοποίηση, όπως την γνωρίσαμε στο παρελθόν και απέτυχε. Είναι ένα έργο το οποίο έχει αποδεδειγμένες οικολογικές ζημιές, τόσο στο Δέλτα του Αχελώου όσο και στην ίδια την περιοχή που λέγεται ότι θα ωφεληθεί απ' αυτό, τη Θεσσαλία, όπου άλλα μεγάλα έργα ίδιας αντίληψης και φιλοσοφίας πριν από 30 χρόνια, όπως η αποξήρανση της Λίμνης Κάρλας, έφεραν τεράστιες καταστροφές και οικολογικές και οικονομικές, ώστε να γίνεται σήμερα λόγος να την ξαναγεμίσουν με νερό, και σύμφωνα με το ανέκδοτο που κυκλοφορεί στην Ελλάδα: «με ποιο νερό; Ίσως, με το νερό του Αχελώου!».

MUNTINGH (S). - Mijnheer de Voorzitter, het verslag-Harrison had allang geschreven moeten zijn. Ik ben blij dat het nu geschreven is. Ik feliciteer de heer Harrison. Het is voortreffelijk. Maar als het in het verleden en eerder was behandeld in het Parlement dan zou de Commissie misschien niet de fouten hebben gemaakt die zij nu heeft gemaakt. Want naar mijn mening is het zo, dat het regionaal beleid per saldo één van de zwaarste aantasters van het natuurlijk milieu in de Europese Gemeenschap is geworden. Ik hoop dan ook dat de voortreffelijke aanbevelingen van de heer Harrison ertoe mogen bijdragen dat dat nu verandert. Het moet veranderen, want in de toekomst komt er nog veel meer geld vrij voor het regionaal beleid en wij mogen het ergste vrezen.

Wat moet er dan gebeuren? Laat ik dat kort, puntsgewijs, opnoemen. Naar mijn mening moet ten eerste, het regionaal beleid méde gebruikt worden om het milieubeleid uit te voeren. Ten tweede, de wetgeving inzake milieu-effectrapportage moet volledig worden uitgevoerd. Dat gebeurt nu niet. Ik heb vorige week in Portugal nog een regionaal project gezien waar dat niet gebeurd is. Ten derde, de openbaarheid van informatie moet volledig gerespecteerd worden. De heer Pimenta heeft erop gewezen. Ten vierde, het Cohesiefonds, een nieuw soort van regionaal beleid, zal voor minstens 50% besteed moeten worden aan het milieu.

Voorts zal de rechtsgrond van het regionaal beleid zodanig vastgelegd moeten worden, dat het milieubeleid daar fors in verankerd wordt. En al met al zou ik, als ik het in het totaal neem, willen zeggen dat het nu afgelopen moet wezen met de wijze waarop vanuit de lidstaten en vanuit de Commissie

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het milieu wordt veronachtzaamd. Ik ontken niet dat er hier en daar goede dingen gebeurd zijn. Maar het milieubeleid dient een forse voorwaarde en misschien wel de belangrijkste voorwaarde te stellen aan het regionaal beleid in de toekomst.

RAFFARIN (LDR). - Monsieur le Président, je crois que le rapport Harrison est un bon rapport et je voudrais remercier M. Harrison qui a bien voulu, à la page 11 de son rapport, rendre hommage à l'action menée en Poitou-Charentes pour faire de l'environnement une stratégie de développement. Cette belle région - dont j'ai l'honneur de présider le conseil régional - pourrait faire cependant encore mieux grâce à un meilleur partenariat avec la CEE. Pour cela, Monsieur le commissaire, il faudrait, je crois, distinguer en effet l'action pour l'environnement de celle en faveur du développement des zones rurales fragiles.

En effet, il ne faut pas limiter l'action pour l'environnement aux seules zones fragiles. Cette action est pourtant importante et, contrairement à ce que vient de dire M. Miert, elle est une politique régionale en matière d'environnement dans les zones fragiles. Mais, il faut pouvoir développer cette politique en dehors des zones fragiles. Je vous propose donc, Monsieur le commissaire - comme je l'ai déjà fait dans le passé - la création, pour la prochaine politique régionale, d'un nouveau fonds structurel qu'on pourrait appeler le fonds régional européen pour l'environnement qui, à côté du FSE et du FEOGA, vous permettrait à vous, commissaire en charge de la politique régionale, d'avoir un outil supplémentaire pour agir en faveur de l'environnement.

POLLACK (S). - Mr President, I fully support the carefully considered report of Mr Harrison. He has done a very great deal of work in his report and it makes a great many valuable points.

Recently I have seen an example of some over-enthusiastic use of the Community structural funds in the new motorway in the Algarve of Portugal, which is putting a scar right across the whole of that area - in advance, it seems, of any proper environmental assessment. Mr Harrison's report is full of hope that, in the debate on the renewal of the structural funds, the Commission will begin to take on board the notion of sustainable development in its dispensation of these funds. I am sure that his report is going to meet with broad agreement here in the House, Mr President; but I am deeply concerned and disturbed about the continuation of trends to build roads with European Community money. One wonders if the Commission has heard of the greenhouse effect. We hear all this debate about the carbon tax; does the Commission realize

that the carbon tax is an attempt to mitigate the effects of increased road transport?

In the last week we have seen the population of Denmark voice concerns about the way the Community is making its decisions. Is it any wonder? We can have both jobs and sustainable development. I am astonished at the tone of some of the debate here tonight, which implies that if we do not build roads we cannot have jobs.

This week we are taking a very principled stand on the environment at the Earth Summit, and in the Community we seem to do nothing but talk about sustainable development, but we do not seem to be putting our money where our mouth is. The Commission is on the verge of approving a piece of ad hoc planning at its worst, namely, the proposal to build 12,000 kilometres of new motorways in the Community - an increase of 40% in ten years - without any serious complementary plan to develop the railways. What has happened to integrated planning? Please can we have some?

MILLAN, Member of the Commission. - Mr President, if I can answer that last point first to get it out of the way, my colleague, Mr Van Miert, is going to produce the *schémas directeurs* for railways - we have already got the TGV - for airports, ports and the rest, so I do not quite understand the suggestion made by the honourable Member. I should say that Mr Van Miert is very much in favour of an integrated transport system and very much against the overuse of motorways and roads when alternative transport methods are available. So I must reject that particular suggestion on behalf of my colleague immediately.

Incidentally, nothing will be done by the Commission unless it is agreed by the Council of Ministers in this whole area of *schémas directeurs*. These are not Commission proposals; they have to be agreed by the Council of Ministers and nothing can be agreed in a *schéma directeur* in any Member State unless it is agreed by the Member State itself. So if there are criticisms there, they ought to be directed towards Ministers and not towards the Commission.

I now turn to the report by Mr Harrison. Of course this raises very serious issues and I am glad that in his opening remarks he paid tribute to the work that has already been done by the Regional Fund in the field of the environment. It is rather a pleasant change that that should be done in this Chamber because I have listened in the past to a good many speeches and one or two tonight, if I may say so, which failed to acknowledge that the only significant element of Community funding for the pro-

tection and enhancement of the environment is, of course, the Regional Fund. It arises from the Structural Funds. We have, as a matter of fact, in terms of Community support framework expenditure in the Objective 1, 2 and 5b regions, something like ECU 3,000 m involved in environmental measures and not only in the CSFs, but also in particular programmes ENVIREG is an obvious example, the RECHAR Programme is very largely concerned with clearing up some of the environmental mess left by the coal industry, as was the RESIDER Programme before it in so far as the steel industry was concerned. In all the Community support frameworks for the Objective 1 regions, except for the Portuguese CSF, there is a specific heading for environmental action. So when Mr Muntingh said a few minutes ago that the Commission ignores environmental considerations in its operation of the structural funds I must repudiate that absolutely. It is simply not true. It is really rather outrageous that this kind of statement should be made in this Chamber given the evidence which is in fact included in Mr Harrison's report itself.

Can I say something about the particular issues which were raised and the particular regions which were mentioned in the report. Can I say something about Doñana because the committee that was established to look at the problems of Doñana was established by Mr Chávez, who is the President of Andalusia and myself jointly. It was an expert committee. DG XVI were involved in it as was DG XI. It produced an excellent report and I am glad that that is again acknowledged. I am grateful to Mr Harrison for acknowledging that in his report.

The recommendations will require a bit of money but I am confident that we will be able to find that money. A Member of this House, a distinguished ex-President of Parliament, Mr Enrique Barón, now has certain responsibilities in this area and I am sure he has the environmental considerations very much in mind as, indeed, if I may say so, does the Spanish Prime Minister, Felipe Gonzalez, who spends a fair bit of time in the summer living in the Doñana national park and is not likely to be interested in seeing the environment there damaged.

Now I mention this particularly because, until recently, the Regional Fund was being accused of damaging Doñana. We have never done anything to damage Doñana National Park. We were being accused of deciding to help finance a tourist development near the park which was going to damage the environment. We have never said we would support such a tourist development but in any case the Andalusian Government itself refused planning permission for the tourist development. Up until recently I had to listen to constant complaints about the damage that the Structural Funds were doing in Doñana and these complaints were wholly

unjustified. Now we have something which, as Mr Maher very properly pointed out, is going to reconcile development on the one hand, the people who live in or near the area, and the needs of environmental protection. I am very happy to have visited Doñana within the last month or so and it is of course a unique area and I am very happy that we are going to be able to do something to protect it.

So far as the Spanish projects mentioned in the report are concerned, I will not go into detail except to say that neither of the projects that are mentioned in this report as case studies has been agreed by the Spanish Government as I understand it. Neither of them has come to the Commission for Structural Fund support. If they do come to the Commission we shall insist that environmental considerations are properly taken into account. But these projects are mentioned in this report as if we had already committed ourselves to spending money on them. It is simply not true. They may be projects in the minds of the Spanish authorities. If they come forward we will consider them with regard to environmental as well as other considerations. But at the moment they are certainly not a scandal so far as the Structural Fund is concerned. We have not even been asked to support them at the present time.

Can I now say something about the Acheloos river project. I notice that at least two of the Greek Members who have taken part in this debate take a rather different view about Acheloos from the rapporteur. We have gone over the issue of Acheloos on many occasions here; I have answered numerous questions and so have my colleagues. Can I make the first point that it is not true as Mr Harrison said that a decision has been taken to provide Community funding for the Acheloos project as it is at the present time. There are certain things which have happened at Acheloos already which were agreed under the Integrated Mediterranean Programme. I have been to the area myself to see the effect of these particular projects on the area. They do raise environmental considerations but we have had environmental impact assessments. We have also had an ELA as far as the Mesolonghi wetlands are concerned. But I have taken no decision to support the further Acheloos development and, indeed, I have commissioned some independent consultants to look at the economics of the project. Not because of environmental considerations, although they are obviously an issue here, but I decided to do so in any case. I have also done that with the Irish Gas programme, with the programme for bringing gas to Northern Ireland, with the Greek gas network and the Portuguese gas network. We sometimes hear accusations that we are so desperate to spend regional fund money that we go ahead regardless of economics and regardless of the environment. It is simply untrue. Studies are

exactly what is called for in this report, but the general thrust of it I am perfectly happy to look at.

So far as projects compared with programmes are concerned, I must remind the House that we are now managing the funds on the basis of programmes, not projects. That is what the regulations say. It is a question of subsidiarity, apart from anything else. This House has always been very strong on subsidiarity. But it cannot have subsidiarity which puts responsibilities principally on the Member States, and then expect the Commission to deal with every individual project. That is not the system. If there are problems in any particular area - and particularly if they are drawn to my attention - I see that these matters are fully ventilated. But we cannot change the system back to a project assessment from the present system of programmes.

On paragraph 4 - I am still reading from the report - about seeing that the BIA directive is enforced, I absolutely agree with that. But it should be enforced everywhere, not just in the areas receiving structural funds. That is a directive which has to be applied everywhere. We cannot impose obligations on structural funds operations which are not provided for in the directive. I want to make that absolutely clear. This is a problem everywhere. It is not a problem that arises out of the structural funds.

So far as involving local people is concerned, I am in favour of that. But again, I am not able to enforce it in the terms of the present regulations. I do not determine the exact make-up of the monitoring committees. I would like the monitoring committees to be rather more extensive, to take more account of local interest than perhaps they do at the present time. We should be making some recommendations to that effect when we produce amended regulations. But at the moment I cannot impose that on authorities. Incidentally, it would not always please environmentalists if I did, because as I understand it the local people, in the case of the interpretive sentence in Ireland are very much in favour of going ahead. It is interests elsewhere that for one reason or another are against the interpretive sentence and the particular locations that have been chosen.

On the question of public right of information, there is nothing, so far as I am aware, that prevents information on the structural funds being widely available. I have always said that we have no secrets as far as the structural funds are concerned. The CSFs are published. The operational programmes are public documents. I am willing to give the maximum of information. When the directive on freedom of information on environmental

currently under way on the economies of Acheloos. We shall see what results the independent consultants come up with and they will be taken into consideration before any decision is reached on the use of structural funds for the further development of Acheloos. It is not true that we have already taken a decision there. It is certainly not true that we have ignored environmental considerations. So far as the Mesolonghi wetlands are concerned, there was a meeting involving DG XI as well as DG XVI on that just within the last few weeks. On the basis of the information supplied by the Greek Government, if there has been a reduction in the water supply in that particular area the damage has been done by projects that were carried out in the 1960s and 1970s. On the best information available to me at the moment, the diversion of the Acheloos river would make no significant difference to what has already happened there.

Indeed there is remedial action required for what has already happened there, whether we go ahead with the Acheloos project or not. That is the best information that I have at the moment. We have had an environmental impact assessment on that. Nothing would be done without that environment-tal impact assessment. There will be a further visit to the wetlands later this month. If there is additional or alternative information coming to me, that will be taken into account. There is no question of going ahead on these particular issues. That is another cause célèbre at the moment - Acheloos; as if we had already committed large sums of money without taking account of the environment. It is simply untrue. I must repudiate that. That sort of thing is given currency. I am sorry to say, far too often in this House and elsewhere.

I should now like to say something about the individual recommendations in the report which are addressed to the Commission. I do not think that I could accept, in the terms in which it is expressed, the question of the exact wording insofar as the horizontal objective is concerned in sustainable development. But I am certainly very happy when we come to look at the revision of the regulations which, incidentally, will have to come to this House so that they can be fully debated regarding this as well as many other matters, to see whether we could not do something more for the Community support frameworks and the operational programmes with regard to the environment that we have at the present time.

I am sympathetic to the idea that in submitting these plans to us, the Member States should deal with the environmental situation in the regions concerned and the relevance of the development to the protection of the environment. There are ways in which that could be done. I could not accept

matters comes into operation at the beginning of 1993, the position will be further improved.

On the question of substitution, it is not true that if there is an infringement, the Member State simply goes ahead anyway with its own money. First of all, it is very unlikely that they will go ahead, because they are normally depending on our money in the first instance to allow the project to go ahead; and secondly, if they do go ahead, if there is an infringement we can still take action against them. So that is not really a major problem as far as the environment is concerned.

I will not go through all the recommendations here because many of them we are already implementing. I am in sympathy with many of them in principle. I am not in any way diminishing the role of the environment in our structural policies, but I have to make it clear that the regulations and policies as they are at the moment are policies for economic development taking full account of the environmental considerations. They are not policies simply for the environment. The regional fund is not an environment fund. If we want - as Mr Rafarin has indicated - a separate development fund for the environment - indeed we have it to some extent in LIFE and we have it in the MEDSPA part of the counterpart to the ENVIREG - that is a matter for this House and for the Council of Ministers.

I personally favour such a fund. We have started it with LIFE and MEDSPA. But the regional fund has objectives other than the protection of the environment. That is one thing that I hope we do conscientiously, as I have tried to indicate in the remarks I have made this evening. But it cannot be the be-all and end-all of regional development policy. I therefore welcome the points that have been made by Mr Maher as far as that is concerned. Generally, despite some of the critical remarks I have made, I very much welcome the interest of this House in environmental matters.

I say again to every honourable Member here this evening: if they have evidence of infringements in any part of the Community with which the structural funds are associated, would they kindly let me know about them and I can assure them that they will be very conscientiously and thoroughly investigated. At the end of the day I do not think I can make a fairer offer than that.

(Applause)

LANE (RDE). - Mr President, I compliment Commissioner Millan for his great interest in the regions and his commitment to the structural funds. In fact, Commissioner, you mentioned the question of subsidiarity and you also mentioned

that in Ireland's case the local people are in favour of the interpretative centres and the opposition is from outside. I fully respect your backing for those projects but I would ask you is there somebody else in the Commission, for example Commissioner Ripa di Meana, blocking the decision to fund these three projects?

MILLAN, *Member of the Commission*. - President, if I could just answer that particular point because it was a matter of some importance. I have made it clear that if there is any environmental infringement the Commission is fully entitled and obliged to take action against the Irish Government on this matter. If there is no environmental infringement, then as far as I am concerned the exact location of these centres is a matter for the Irish authorities and not for the Commission. I am not going to substitute my judgement for the judgement of the democratically elected government and the local authorities in the areas concerned. It really is as simple as that. But if there is an infringement, there will, of course, be absolutely no question of any structural fund support being made available.

BETTINI (V). - Signor Presidente, siccome il Commissario Millan ci ha chiamato in causa chiedendo di fornire prove di violazioni, io vorrei sapere da lui se è mai stato a Matalascañas, che è la megalopoli turistica che finisce al cancello del parco nazionale, anzi direi europeo, di Doñana. Se il Commissario Millan avesse fatto un giro da quelle parti si renderebbe conto che le nostre proteste non sono inutili, perché è con i fondi della Comunità che è stato sviluppato quel centro turistico. Signor Commissario lei deve rispondere di questi problemi. Ci dica che senso ha per lei avere sviluppato un simile insediamento contiguo ad un parco nazionale.

La seconda domanda è questa: signor Commissario, l'impianto eolico di grande importanza europea di Tarifa è stato finanziato con i fondi VALOREN. Ora, non c'è stata alcuna preventiva valutazione di impatto ambientale su questo impianto, al punto tale che oggi sembra quasi un giacimento di pale morte, per quanto cominci a funzionare. Non le pare, signor Commissario, che stiamo spendendo i soldi in maniera errata anche quando facciamo interventi positivi come nel caso di finanziamenti di progetti di energia alternativa, e che ci rendiamo responsabili di gravi violazioni di impatto ambientale che poi la popolazione, l'opinione pubblica, ci rinfacciano, al punto da ridicolizzare persino progetti come quelli delle risorse energetiche alternative? Gradirei una risposta, signor Commissario, perché con questi due esempi ho dimostrato che non parliamo a vanvera. Lei ci ha trattato come ragazzini a scuola, ci ha detto che siamo discoli, ha battuto la penna sul tavolo, ha picchiato il martello, assumendo atteggiamenti thatcheriani, ha detto

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che non sappiamo. Ma qui è tutta la commissione per la politica regionale che protesta e si leva contro di lei e contro la Commissione. Non solo io Verde, dunque, ma tutti abbiamo fatto questo discorso. I dati sono a nostra disposizione.

MILLAN, Member of the Commission. - We have not financed a major tourist development at the Doñana National Park. The honourable Member is misinformed about that. I do not know about the other project but he is perfectly capable of writing to me about it. He does not have to wait until tonight and raise it at the end of this debate. If there is a problem let him tell me about it and I will investigate it but it is absolutely absurd to raise it at the end of this debate. He is perfectly capable of getting in touch with me and he can do that at any time and I will give him a considered reply.

HARRISON (S), rapporteur. - Mr President, I do not want to go over the debate which we have had tonight and which has been a very good one. I want to end on a positive note because I think Commissioner Millan does see some merit in some of the suggestions we are putting forward and this report is a timely intervention intended to help both the Commission and the Community come to what we think would be a better view of how we might implement the Regional and Structural Funds at the same time as protecting the environment. I take Mr Maher's word "balance", which he used in his speech earlier, as our benchmark. What we want to do now is to work with the Commission in order to come up with an even better set of regulations to achieve objective which I think we share in common.

PRESIDENT. - The debate is closed.

The vote will be taken tomorrow at 12 noon.

Samarbejde på tværs af landegrænserne

Grenzüberschreitende Zusammenarbeit

Διασυνοριακή συνεργασία

Cross-border cooperation

Cooperación transfronteriza

Coopération transfrontalière

Cooperazione transfrontaliera

Grensoverschrijdende samenwerking

Cooperação transfronteiras

LE PRESIDENT. - L'ordre du jour appelle le débat sur le rapport (doc. A3-188/92) de M. Cushnahan, au nom de la commission de la politique régionale, de l'aménagement du territoire et des relations

avec les pouvoirs régionaux et locaux, sur la coopération transfrontalière et interrégionale.

CUSHNAHAN (PPE), rapporteur. - Mr President, Mr Commissioner, although border communities may come from different national and linguistic backgrounds, they do nonetheless share a common heritage. Regrettably it is a heritage of constant neglect by their own national governments. As less populated regions far removed from the centre of political decision-making, they have poorer transport and communications systems, poorer infrastructures, poorer levels of public services and structurally higher levels of unemployment. National governments traditionally based their physical and economic planning around the centres of population and economic activity, ignoring the needs of their more peripheral citizens. Many border communities looked to the European Community for salvation but they were to be equally disappointed. Plenty of lip service was paid to their problems, but it was not matched by adequately funded measures. In this regard I certainly would recognize what the present Commissioner has done in his own commitment to this problem, not least of all with the INTERREG Programme.

But whatever problems are faced by internal border regions, they pale into insignificance when compared to the unique problems faced by those border areas on our external frontiers which share a common land frontier with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Proposed cooperation in this area is a match of unequals. No matter how under-developed the Community's external frontier region may be, it will still be far superior to its corresponding neighbour in Central and Eastern Europe. The problem is exacerbated further because the Commission is restricted from extending its initiatives and measures outside the Community's territory. I believe we have a dual responsibility in this regard, to our own external border areas, and equally to do all that we can to assist those fledgling democracies who have only recently thrown off the yoke of totalitarianism.

Complementary initiatives should be introduced specifically for Eastern Europe, to facilitate cross-border cooperation. New budget lines should be established and, if necessary, we should be prepared to sacrifice other internal Community projects in order to provide the necessary funding. These former Communist countries are striving to establish pluralist democracy. It is totally in keeping with the European ideal to build a new Europe stretching to the East as well as covering the West, and we should not be selfish, and should demonstrate a willingness to assist at our own expense during the transition period.

Ομιλία του Επιτρόπου MILAN κατά την συζήτηση της έκθεσης HARRISON
(Ανεπίσημη μετάφραση)

...θα πω τώρα ορισμένα πράγματα για το σχέδιο σχετικά με τον Αχελώο. Παρατηρώ ότι τουλάχιστον δύο έλληνες ευρωβουλευτές που λαμβάνουν μέρος στην συζήτηση έχουν διαφορετική από τον εισηγητή άποψη για τον Αχελώο. Έχουμε συζητήσει το θέμα του Αχελώου επανειλημμένα. Εγώ ο ίδιος όπως και οι συνάδελφοί μου έχουμε απαντήσει σε πολλές ερωτήσεις.

Το πρώτο που θέλω να επισημάνω είναι ότι δεν αληθεύει αυτό που ο κ. Harrison λέει, ότι δηλαδή έχει ληφθεί απόφαση να χρηματοδοτήσει η κοινότητα το σχέδιο του Αχελώου, όπως αυτό έχει διαμορφωθεί μέχρι σήμερα. Έχουν γίνει ήδη ορισμένα έργα στον Αχελώο, τα οποία είχαν συμφωνηθεί στα πλαίσια των ολοκληρωμένων μεσογειακών προγραμμάτων. Πήγα ο ίδιος στην περιοχή για να διαπιστώσω την επίπτωση των σχεδίων αυτών στην περιοχή. Πράγματι, εγείρουν προβληματισμούς αναφορικά με το περιβάλλον, όμως έχουν γίνει ήδη εκτιμήσεις για τις περιβαλλοντικές επιπτώσεις. Έχουμε επίσης πραγματοποιήσει μια μελέτη περιβαλλοντικών επιπτώσεων στην λιμνοθάλασσα του Μεσολογγίου. Αλλά δεν έχω λάβει καμιά απόφαση να υποστηρίξω την παραπέρα ανάπτυξη του Αχελώου και, πράγματι, έχω αναθέσει σε ανεξάρτητους συμβούλους να εξετάσουν τις οικονομικές πτυχές του σχεδίου. Οχι εξαιτίας περιβαλλοντικών προβληματισμών, αν και στη συγκεκριμένη περίπτωση ολοφάνερα αποτελούν ένα ζήτημα, αλλά έχω αποφασίσει να πράττω κατ'αυτόν τον τρόπο σε κάθε περίπτωση. Το έπραξα επίσης με το ιρλανδικό πρόγραμμα για το φυσικό αέριο, με το πρόγραμμα της μεταφοράς φυσικού αερίου στην Βόρεια Ιρλανδία, με το ελληνικό σχέδιο για το φυσικό αέριο καθώς και για το πορτογαλικό. Πολλές φορές είμαστε αποδέκτες κατηγοριών ότι θέλουμε τόσο να διαθέσουμε τα κονδύλια του περιφερειακού ταμείου ώστε προχωρούμε ανεξάρτητα από τις οικονομικές και τις περιβαλλοντικές επιπτώσεις. Αυτό δεν είναι αληθές. Αυτή τη στιγμή βρίσκονται υπό επεξεργασία μελέτες σχετικά με τις οικονομικές πτυχές του σχεδίου για τον Αχελώο. Θα δούμε σε τί πορίσματα θα καταλήξουν οι ανεξάρτητοι σύμβουλοι, τα οποία θα ληφθούν υπόψη πριν από την λήψη οποιασδήποτε απόφασης ως προς την ανάμιξη των διαρθρωτικών ταμείων στην παραπέρα εξέλιξη του έργου. Δεν αληθεύει ότι η απόφαση έχει ήδη ληφθεί. Αναμφισβήτητα επίσης δεν αληθεύει ότι αγνοούμε τις περιβαλλοντικές επιπτώσεις. Αναφορικά με την λιμνοθάλασσα του Μεσολογγίου - στο βαθμό που εμπλέκεται στο θέμα- πριν από μερικές εβδομάδες έγινε μια συνάντηση στην οποία συμμετείχαν η DGXI και η DGXVI. Με βάση την ενημέρωση που έγινε από την ελληνική κυβέρνηση, στο βαθμό που έχει σημειωθεί μείωση των υδάτινων αποθεμάτων στην περιοχή, αυτή οφείλεται σε έργα που διενεργήθηκαν κατά τις δεκαετίες του 1960 και του 1970. Με βάση την πληροφόρηση που διαθέτω σήμερα, η εκτροπή του Αχελώου δεν πρόκειται να επιφέρει αξιοσημείωτες μεταβολές σε ό,τι έχει ήδη συντελεστεί.

Πράγματι, απαιτούνται επανορθωτικές δράσεις για ό,τι έχει ήδη συντελεστεί, ανεξάρτητα από το αν θα προχωρήσουμε ή όχι με το σχέδιο του Αχελώου. Έχουμε ήδη προβεί σε εκτίμηση των περιβαλλοντικών επιπτώσεων γι'αυτό. Τίποτε δεν θα μπορούσε να γίνει χωρίς να προηγηθεί αυτή η μελέτη. Κατά τη διάρκεια του τρέχοντος μηνός θα πραγματοποιηθεί νέα επίσκεψη στην λιμνοθάλασσα. Σε περίπτωση που έχω διαφορετική πληροφόρηση, αυτό θα ληφθεί υπόψη. Δεν υπάρχει θέμα ότι θα προχωρήσουμε σε αυτά τα ειδικά θέματα. Για τον Αχελώο επίσης λένε ότι έχουμε καταβάλει υψηλά ποσά χωρίς να λάβουμε υπόψη μας το περιβάλλον. Αλλά, δεν είναι αλήθεια. Πρέπει να το διαψεύσω. Τέτοιου είδους γεγονότα είναι συνήθη, λυπάμαι που το λέω, και μέσα σε αυτό το κοινοβούλιο και αλλού.