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The Precautionary Principle

Motion for a recommendation
presented by Mr. Randegger and others

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only the members who have signed it

1. The Assembly believes that the prime challenge to regulators is to adopt a responsible approach to scientific research without hindering innovation in a way that deprives future generations of novel solutions to pressing problems. However, in many cases, a conscientious risk-benefit analysis may reveal that this alternative has serious disadvantages which outweigh the benefits.
2. The precautionary approach is an important topic. Since its adoption in 1992 the precautionary approach has developed into a much cited element of environmental-public-health-and safety policy.
3. However the meaning and implications of the precautionary approach are still a controversial issue.
4. The precautionary approach needs further discussion and there is great need for clarification and consensus on the implementation of the precautionary approach. On the basis of existing experience in risk assessment and management, consensus on interpreting the application of the precautionary approach should be achieved on an international level.
5. Therefore the Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers:
 - Agree on the meaning of the precautionary principle and study its implications in different areas of science;
 - Draws guidelines on how it should be used;
 - Encourage member states to implement such guidelines.

Signed (see overleaf)

*Signed*¹:

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BRASSEUR, Anne, Luxembourg, ALDE
de PUIG, Lluís Maria, Spain, SOC
DEES, Dirk, Netherlands, ALDE
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LEGENDRE, Jacques, France, EPP/CD
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O'HARA, Edward, United Kingdom, SOC
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WALTER, Robert, United Kingdom, EDG
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¹ SOC: Socialist Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EDG: European Democratic Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left
NR: not registered in a group