

Forests: protection and monitoring of atmospheric pollution and fires, action 2003-2008

Forest Focus

2002/0164(COD) - 17/11/2003 - Final act

PURPOSE : to provide a flexible monitoring scheme to assess forest ecosystems. **LEGISLATIVE ACT :** Regulation 2152/2003/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning monitoring of forests and environmental interactions in the Community (Forest Focus). **CONTENT :** the Council approved the amendments adopted by the European Parliament at second reading on the proposal for a Regulation concerning monitoring of forest and environmental interactions in the Community. Consequently, and since the EP's amendments correspond to a compromise agreement reached by the Council, the Regulation is adopted in the form of the Council's Common Position thus amended. The Swedish delegation voted against. The Regulation provides a multi-annual framework covering the period from 2003 to 2006. It aims to provide a flexible monitoring scheme to assess forest ecosystem conditions in a broader context. It also simplifies existing activities by regrouping elements of both regulations under a single framework regulation covering the protection and monitoring of forests. A Community scheme for broad-based, harmonised and comprehensive, long-term monitoring of the condition of forests, is hereby established to: a) continue and further develop: - monitoring of air pollution and air pollution effects and of other agents and factors that have an impact on forests, such as biotic and abiotic factors and factors of anthropogenic origin, - monitoring of forest fires and their causes and effects, - forest fire prevention; b) assess the requirements for and develop the monitoring of soils, carbon sequestration, climate change effects and biodiversity, as well as protective functions of forests; c) continuously evaluate the efficiency of the monitoring activities in the assessment of the condition of forests and the further development of monitoring activity. The scheme shall provide reliable and comparable data and information on the condition of and harmful influences on forests at Community level. It shall also help to evaluate ongoing measures to promote conservation and protection of forests for the benefit of sustainable development, with particular emphasis on actions taken to reduce impacts negatively affecting forests. The scheme will take account of, and where appropriate link to, existing and planned national, European and global monitoring mechanisms and will be in line with relevant international agreements. The financial framework for the implementation of the scheme for the period 2003 to 2006 shall be EUR 61 million, of which EUR 9 million can be used for fire prevention measures. The financial resources shall be increased in the case of accession of new Member States to the European Union. The annual appropriations shall be authorised by the budgetary authority within the annual budgetary procedure and the limits of the financial perspective **ENTRY INTO FORCE :** 11/12/2003. It shall apply from 01/01/03.