

Environment policy: alignment of reporting obligations

2018/0205(COD) - 23/10/2018 - Text adopted by Parliament, partial vote at 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 606 votes to 27, with 34 abstentions, amendments to the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the alignment of reporting obligations in the field of environment policy and thereby amending Directives 86/278/EEC, 2002/49/EC, 2004/35/EC, 2007/2/EC, 2009/147/EC and 2010/63/EU, Regulations (EC) No 166/2006 and (EU) No 995/2010, and Council Regulations (EC) No 338/97 and (EC) No 2173/2005.

The matter was referred back to the committee responsible for interinstitutional negotiations.

As a reminder, the proposed Regulation seeks to streamline the alignment of reporting obligations of the environment-related legislation, updating specific provisions of 10 sectoral directives and regulations.

Purpose: Members considered that the Regulation should aim to **modernise information management** and ensure a more consistent approach to the legislative acts within its scope by simplifying reporting so as to reduce the administrative burden (notably for SMEs), enhancing the database for future evaluations, and increasing transparency for the benefit of the public, each time in accordance with the circumstances.

They stressed the need for a process of timely and comprehensive reporting of relevant information by Member States that can be used by decision-makers and the general public.

The proposed amendments aim in particular to:

- offer a **more transparent access to clear environmental information** for various stakeholders, including the public, and contribute inter alia to priority objective 4 of the 7th Environment Action Programme. For example, the Commission shall continue to carry out at regular intervals the evaluation of Directive 2007/2/EC establishing an Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community (INSPIRE) and make this evaluation available to the public. Comprehensive, accurate and comparable information shall be made public with regard to the assessment of Directive 2002/49/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise;
- clarify the **definitions** of various terms in the basic acts covered by the proposal or detailing certain terms, for example by introducing the new definition of 'spatial data services';
- **strengthen the role of co-legislators**, including the European Parliament, and clarify the role of the European Environment Agency in the overall reporting and monitoring exercise;
- introduce in Directive 2010/63/EC (animals used for scientific purposes) a requirement for the Commission not only to publish but also to regularly provide update on a Union overview based on the data submitted by the Member States;
- impose a clear deadline on Member States (by 31 March each year) for the communication to the Commission, by electronic transfer, of all the required data specified in Regulation (EC) No 166/2006 (European Pollutant Release and Transfer Register);
- reduce the reference period for Commission reports from six to five years for Regulation (EC) No 995/2010 (the Timber Regulation) so as to allow Parliament to examine Commission reports and possible legislative proposals during each parliamentary term.

Delegated acts: according to the amended text, the Commission may:

-

adopt a delegated act to amend Annex VI to Directive 2004/35/EC on environmental liability (ERD) as regards the detailed criteria to be applied for the classification of the **scale and type of environmental damage**;

- adopt delegated acts to complement Directive 2002/49/EC as regards the setting up of the mandatory data repository and the detailed rules of the digital information exchange mechanism to share the information from the **strategic noise maps** and summaries of action plans. The delegation of power shall be granted to the Commission for a period of five years from the date of entry into force of this Regulation.