Additional assistance and further flexibility to outermost regions affected by severe natural disasters: cyclone Chido devastating Mayotte

2025/0104(COD) - 23/04/2025 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to address and mitigate the impact of natural disasters on the agri-food and forestry sectors in the outermost regions by providing additional flexibilities after exceptional natural disasters or severe meteorological events and in particular, after cyclone Chido in Mayotte.

PROPOSED ACT: Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the European Parliament decides in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and on an equal footing with the Council.

BACKGROUND: on 18 December 2024, an “exceptional natural disaster” was declared for the outermost region of Mayotte following the devastating consequences of cyclone Chido, that destroyed much of the agricultural and forestry potential of the island and threatened food availability and security. This unprecedented cyclone and other recent natural disasters in the outermost regions of the Union demonstrate the vulnerability of these regions to the effects of climate change, including the increased risk of exceptional natural disasters or severe meteorological events with long-term consequences.

In the face of ever more severe natural disasters in these regions, the need for further flexibilities was identified. In order to address the cash-flow challenges during the reconstruction of agricultural production after the frequent devastating natural disasters in outermost regions, Europe needs to be able to **rapidly deploy effective support and more flexibility** through the Programme of Options Specifically Relating to Remoteness and Insularity (POSEI) referred to in Regulation (EU) No 228/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

CONTENT: in order to provide further flexibilities to the outermost regions affected by natural disasters and severe meteorological events and to provide an adequate response to the impact of the unprecedented natural disaster Chido in Mayotte on the farmers, other EAFRD beneficiaries and the administrations, the Commission proposes to amend Regulation (EU) No 228/2013 as follows:

- allow the competent national authorities to **submit an exceptional programme modification to their POSEI programme while they apply the principle of force majeure or exceptional circumstances** where, as a result of the unexpected severe natural disaster, the agricultural production capacity was seriously or totally destroyed, and the restoration of certain sectors requires a longer period than could be covered by the application of the principle of force majeure or exceptional circumstances. This would allow the beneficiaries concerned to continue to receive POSEI support during the restoration period, irrespective of the level of their activity, but subject to their formal commitment to restore their agricultural production capacity;

- for the **Mayotte rural development programme**, (i) remove the limit of 10% of the 2021 and 2022 budgetary allocations concerning temporary support provided in response to the consequences of natural disasters, to be financed under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), and (ii) allow the selection of beneficiaries beyond the deadline of 30 June 2025.

Budgetary impact

The proposal does not require additional payment appropriations. It is planned to offset the necessary payment appropriations, amounting to EUR 13.5 million in 2025 and 2026, through decommitments at closure, which are expected to take place in 2026. Funds allocated to other rural development programmes (RDPs) that remain unused will be decommitted and will offset the additional costs associated with this change.

With regard to POSEI support, this proposal has no quantifiable budgetary impact. Any related expenditure will be maintained within the Member State's annual financial allocation under POSEI.