LIFE II: financial instrument for the environment (amend. regul. 1973/92/EEC)

1995/0093(SYN) - 18/12/1995 - Council position

The Council's common position incorporates most of the European Parliament's amendments included in the Commission's amended proposal. These amendments: - introduce a recital relating to the LIFE application procedures and public information procedures with a view to improving the transparency and efficiency of LIFE; - introduce a recital defining preparatory actions; - introduce a recital stipulating the origin of the funding to be allocated directly or as a supplement to initiatives to be implemented in CEECs which have signed association agreements with the Community; - define the scope of industrial activity actions and, as regards preparatory actions, include protection of the air (pollution, acidification, tropospheric ozone); - define the objectives of accompanying measures; - lay down the maximum rates of LIFE support (generally 50%, 30% for actions expected to generate significant income); possibility in the nature conservation sector of a maximum of 75% for certain species of birds in danger of extinction; - lay down the deadlines for submitting applications for assistance to the Commission and give an indication of the time needed to examine these applications; - introduce general and particular criteria for the various categories of actions to be carried out in the Community and detailed criteria for actions to be implemented in third countries. The Council also included certain new elements in the common position which: - allowed for the financial reference amount of ECU 450 million for the second stage to be reviewed by 31 December 97, with a view to revising it in accordance with the financial perspectives; - limited the funding to be allocated to preparatory actions (12% of 46%); - generally strengthened the criteria in order to improve the process of selecting projects; - indicated that LIFE would be opened to associated CEECs on the basis of additional credits. Finally, the common position did not incorporate amendments concerning: - definitions seeking to clarify the nature of actions jointly funded by LIFE; - a joint scope for actions to be undertaken in the Community and in the associated CEECs in connection with nature conservation; - the objective to protect water resources and water management (preparatory actions); - the inclusion of nature conservation actions for non-CEEC third countries; - the insertion of a new article providing for a reference framework for actions in favour of industry and local authorities based on an evaluation of environmental needs and intended to guide parties interested in LIFE support; - the abolition of the facility for the Commission to collect projects directly through invitations for expressions of interest; - periodic progress reports on actions jointly funded by LIFE.