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

1995/0093(SYN) - 30/01/1995

PREVIOUS COMMUNITY LEGISLATION: the LIFE Regulation (No. 1973/92/EEC, OJ L 206, 22.7.1992) is a financial instrument for developing and implementing the Community's environmental policy. LIFE's objectives include strengthening services and structures, controlling and reducing various types of pollution, maintaining biogenetic diversity and providing support in connection with the implementation of international agreements. LIFE combined the ACE, MEDSPA, NORSPA and ACNAT environmental instruments into a single fund with a unified management and a unified environment committee. LIFE comprises two elements: first, sustainable development and the quality of the environment and, secondly, the protection of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora. POSITION OF EP: Parliament tabled 49 amendments (OJ C 267, 14.10.1991, p. 211), 38 of which were accepted by the Commission. The Council Regulation includes Parliament's amendment to incorporate the ACNAT and NORSPA financial instruments into the LIFE programme. However, the Council rejected the amendment seeking to allocate to LIFE part of the revenue generated by environmental taxes and/or levies, as well as the subsequent financing of LIFE from own resources. It likewise rejected the establishment of partnership committees to prepare and monitor the execution of operations financed by LIFE. SITUATION IN THE MEMBER STATES: the Community has so far co-financed four groups of projects through LIFE. In 1994, for instance, 99 projects in the field of demonstration and technical assistance were funded; 23% of them were in Italy, 13% in France and 12% in the United Kingdom. Community funding amounted to 21.5% of the total cost of the projects. Funding has also been provided for 22 other projects involving the protection of natural habitats and fauna and flora; Spain, Italy and France account for two-thirds of these. Community aid amounts to 56.7% of the total cost of the projects.