EC/Czech Republic agreement: participation in the European Environment Agency and the European Environment Information and Observation Network

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PURPOSE: to present a proposal for a Council Decision on the conclusion of the agreement between the European Community and the Czech Republic concerning the Czech Republic's participation in the European Environmental Agency and the European Environmental Information and Observation Network.
CONTENT: Negotiations have been concluded and agreement reached with all 13 candidate countries for their participation in the European Environment Agency on similar conditions as for the non-EU Member States partipants in the Agency. The agreements state that the candidate countries participating in the European Environment Agency will take part in the Agency work programme including meeting the obligations of the Agency Regulation. Candidate countries will have to establish an infrastructure for providing uniform environmental data on the state of the environment in their territory. Each candidate country will contribute financially to the Agency to cover the cost of its participation. It is foreseen that these countries will be fully integrated in all Agency activities after a three year phase-in period. The financial contribution is therefore foreseen to increase during this three-year period. The candidate countries can obtain financial assistance from the relevant Community assistance programmes to subsidise 75%, 65% and in the third year, 50% of their membership fees to the Agency. As from the fourth year, all countries will have to cover the full cost of their participation in the Agency. When the full work programme is implemented, the total yearly financial contribution from all the 13 countries to the Agency will amount to EUR 8.82 million. Against this background, this proposal for a Council decision concerns the adoption of the Agreement between the Czech Republic and the Community concerning the Czech Republic's participation in the European Environment Agency and the European Environment Information and Observation Network.