Fisheries sector: structural assistance, extension of the derogation (derog. Regulation (EC) No 2792/1999)

2001/0035(CNS) - 06/02/2001 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to extend, until the 30 June 2001, the grant for compensation for temporary suspension of fishing activities to the crew and owners of vessels concerned since 1 January 2000. CONTENT : following the expiry of the Fisheries Agreement between the European Union and Morocco on 30 November 1999, Spain and Portugal have been granting compensation for temporary suspension of fishing activities to the crew and owners of the vessels concerned since 1 January 2000 under Regulation 2792/1999/EC. The Community is contributing to these compensation payments through the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG) in the context of the structural programmes concerned. The relevant fleet conversion plans, approved by the Commission, have gone into implementation, making it possible to extend the grant of compensation until 31 December 2000. However, fleet conversion is proving to be a long and delicate operation and the European Council in Nice invited the Commission to extend the current system of aid for the inactivity of the fleet. The Commission is therefore proposing a further extension until 30 June 2001. Moreover, FIFG assisstance to all the measures covered by Article 16 of Regulation 2792/1999/EC for the entire 2000-06 programming period may not exceed a given threshold per Member State. Because of this situation described above, this threshold has already practically been reached for Spain and Portugal, and those two Member States no longer have any reserves for implementing other measures under Article 16 before 31 December 2003. The Commission is therefore also proposing that the FIFG assistance granted to the fleets dependent on the fisheries agreement with Morocco between 1 January 2000 and 30 June 2001 should not be taken into consideration for the purposes of the threshold concerned. FIFG approporiations will be reallocated to all the measures covered by Article 16 of Regulation 2792/1999/EC by transferring funds inside the structural programmes concerned, without increasing their overall FIFG allocation or changing the annual breakdown. This legislative proposal therefore has no impact on the Community budget.