Transboundary movement of genetically modified organisms (GMOs). Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

2002/0046(COD) - 18/02/2002 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : in accordance with the precautionary principle, the objective of the proposed regulation is to establish a common system of notification and information for exports to third countries of genetically modified organisms (GMOs). CONTENT : on 24 May 2000, the European Community and its Member States signed up to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. Implementing legislation must now be put in place at Community level in order to conclude this international agreement, in accordance with Article 300 of the Treaty. Against this background, the Commission is committed to present a proposal for an appropriate legal instrument to implement the provisions of the Protocol. More specifically, the proposed Regulation lays down at Community level requirements for the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. The overall objective of the Protocol is to contribute to ensuring an adequate level of protection in the field of safe transfer handling and use of genetically modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology that may have adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking also into account risks to human health, and specifically focussing on transboundary movements. It should be noted that pharmaceuticals for human use are excluded from the scope of this Regulation. The proposed regulation aims at avoiding differences and overlap between national laws, regulations and administrative provisions concerning exports and unintentional transboundary movements of GMOs which may hinder the free movement of products, creating conditions of unequal and unfair competition. A Community Regulation laying down a harmonised framework for transboundary movements of such products would, therefore, provide for legal certainty as well as a coherent and consistent approach that should contribute to the effective functioning of the internal market.