

# Common Fisheries Policy CFP: establishment of Regional Advisory Councils

2003/0238(CNS) - 15/10/2003 - Legislative proposal

**PURPOSE** : to establish Regional Advisory Councils under the Common Fisheries Policy. **PROPOSED ACT** : Council Decision. **CONTENT** : with the aim of improving governance within the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), Regional Advisory Councils have been provided for in the framework of the CFP reform, particularly in Council Regulation 2371/2002/EC on the conservation and sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources under the CFP. This Regulation lays down certain principles which require further development if they are to provide a general framework that will serve as a basis for the establishment of Regional Advisory Councils by stakeholders. Even though stakeholders will be responsible for the operation of Regional Advisory Councils, it is necessary that they comply with this general framework in order to ensure a consistent and balanced approach amongst the Regional Advisory Councils. The Decision focuses on the main aspects that should be clarified at Community level: the definition of the areas to be covered, the main structure of Regional Advisory Councils, their composition, functioning, appointment procedure and financing. On the basis of the criteria laid down in this Decision, stakeholders will submit a request for the establishment of a Regional Advisory Council to the Member States concerned by the Regional Advisory Council and to the Commission for verification and approval. These Regional Advisory Councils are also meant to enhance the dialogue between the different interests concerned with the CFP. Building mutual trust between scientists and fishermen would certainly contribute to improving the transparency of scientific advice. In defining the structure of the Regional Advisory Councils, it is necessary to find a balance between efficiency of discussions and inclusiveness of all parties with a real interest. The Commission proposes that the Regional Advisory Councils consist of a general assembly, which will appoint an executive committee, restricted in size but with a balanced representation of all interests affected by the CFP. Member States are best placed to appoint the representatives of the various interests that will be members of the general assembly. Participants in the Regional Advisory Councils will be considered as members, observers or experts. Another important point is that some meetings will be open to the public. With regard to the financing of Regional Advisory Councils, the aim is that they become self-financing in the long-term. The Commission proposes that a Regional Advisory Council be established for each of the following: - Baltic Sea; Mediterranean Sea; North Sea; North Western waters; South Western waters; Pelagic stocks (blue whiting, mackerel, horse mackerel, atlanto-scandic herring). **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS** : - Budget line : B2-903 (110401) : closer dialogue with the fishing industry and those affected by the common fisheries policy. - Total allocation for action : Estimate of expenditure for the period 2004-2009 = EUR 2.278 million in commitment appropriations.