Fishing vessels operating in the Regulatory Area of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO): observers

2003/0237(CNS) - 17/10/2003 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to amend Regulation 3069/95/EC so that Member States implement the NAFO Programme for observers. PROPOSED ACT : Council Regulation. CONTENT : In 1995, the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO) established a Pilot Project for Observers and satellite Tracking. This project provided for observers to be placed on all vessels operating in the Regulatory Area of NAFO. The pilot project was subsequently replaced by a Programme The Commission undertook in 1995 to ensure the application of the Program for observers and satellite tracking to Community fishing vessels and to bear the ensuing costs for observers. This was spelt out in council Regulation 3069/95/EC, by way of which the observer component of the program was implemented at Community level. In 2002, the Council adopted Regulation 2371/2002/EC, which constitutes the framework for the Common Fisheries Policy from 1 January 2003. Since the adoption of the Regulation, it is for Member States to control the activities carried out by vessels flying their flag outside Community waters, including being responsible for placing observers on these vessels. Therefore, there is no longer any justification for the Commission to bear the administrative and financial burdens entailed with the observer component in this programme. The member States must be entrusted with the task of running the NAFO Programme from now on. The Commission will work closely with Member states to ensure a smooth transition, and will also evaluate and monitor the application of the Programme by the Member states concerned. Council Regulation 3069 /95/EC should be amended accordingly. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS : - Budget line - Chapter B2-90, Article B2-902 : 110703 - Inspection and surveillance of fishing activities in EC waters; - Total allocation for action (Part B) - EUR: -3000 million for commitment; - Period of application : The intention is that Member States will assume the responsibility from 1 January 2004. The contract with the private agency running the Programme on behalf of the commission expires on 15.02.04, but it may be prolonged for a limited period in order to ensure there is observer coverage during the transitional period. - Overall estimate of expenditure for 2004 : Commitments: EUR -2000 million. Payments: EUR -1350 million. The proposal will have a positive impact on the Community budget.