

# Aquaculture: rules and arrangements regarding Community structural assistance

2003/0261(CNS) - 05/11/2003 - Legislative proposal

**PURPOSE** : to modify Council Regulation 2792/99/EC in order to allow the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance to better contribute to the implementation of the Strategy for the sustainable development of European aquaculture. **PROPOSED ACT** : Council Regulation. **CONTENT** : The Commission submitted to the Council and the European Parliament in September 2002 a Communication on a Strategy for the sustainable development of European aquaculture (COM/2002/511). The Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance has an important role to play in order to fulfill the objectives of the Strategy. The Strategy specifies the modifications to the FIFG regulation that need to be done. The main points are as follows: -there is greater emphasis on improvement of knowledge and transparency in production and in the market, including statistics and economic analysis; -Member States may grant financial compensation to shellfish farmers where the contamination due to the growth of toxic algae makes it necessary to suspend harvesting for more than six consecutive months. The granting of compensation may cover no more than six months of suspension of harvesting over the entire period from the entry in force of this Regulation to the end of 2006; -there are new limits placed on the financial contribution from the FIFG; -recurrent seasonal suspension of fishing and aquaculture activity will not be eligible for compensation; -small-scale, applied-research initiatives, not exceeding EUR 150 000 in total cost and three years in duration will be eligible as pilot projects, provided that they contribute to the objectives of sustainable development of the aquaculture industry in the Community. -aquaculture enterprises are encouraged to improve their environmental performance and to develop voluntarily initiatives that go beyond the minimum legal requirements in terms of environmental protection; -in order to enable public aid for aquaculture service vessels to be maintained, the proposal establishes a clear distinction between those vessels and fishing vessels as defined in Council Regulation 2371/2002/EC since some fishing vessels may be exclusively used in aquaculture but could possibly revert to fishing activity. -since overproduction is a threat for some branches, new priorities within the aquaculture measures in the FIFG Programmes are set and in certain cases the rate of aid reduced; -since extensive fish farming may have an ecologically beneficial role, as a way to associate an economic activity with the conservation wetlands, an increase in public support is justified. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS** : - Budget headings: B2 - 1010, B2 - 1300, B2 - 1610 There are no financial implications.