

LIFE III, financial instrument for the environment: extension until 31 December 2006

2003/0260(COD) - 05/11/2003 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to amend Regulation 1655/2000/EC concerning the Financial Instrument for the Environment (LIFE). **PROPOSED ACT** : Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council.

CONTENT : in view of the mid-term evaluation results and recommendations (COD/1998/0336) and in line with the new policy context there is a need to extend the existing instrument. This will ensure continuity until a new approach is developed in view of the new post-2006 financial perspectives. An extension of the existing Regulation should avoid a legal gap between the end of the LIFE III phase on 31 December 2004 and the introduction of the new financial perspectives. The extension should therefore cover 2 years until 31 December 2006. In addition the extension should include the following modifications to the existing Regulation: - the Regulation should be fully aligned to the provisions of the new Financial Regulation; - considering that the 6th Environment Action Program has been adopted in 2002, the guidelines that define the priority areas for Life-Environment demonstration projects will be revised to clearly link them with the priorities set in the Program and the actions to be proposed in the EU Environmental Technology Action Plan. ETAP which is currently under preparation; - the complementarity of Life with Research, Structural Fund and Rural Development Programmes needs to be properly reflected in the regulation; - the committee procedure to which the implementation measures of the Life Regulation are subject is modified to take account of the judgement issued by the Court of Justice in January 2003; - the proposed amount for a two year extension of Life amounts to 317.2 million Euro; this is coherent with the present financial perspectives and takes into consideration the effect of enlargement; - a limited increase is proposed for accompanying measures from 5 to 6% of the budget to allow for a further improvement in the dissemination and monitoring activities; - an ex-post evaluation of the LIFE programme is proposed in 2006; - a special scheme is introduced to allow for the continuation of monitoring activities of projects still active after 2006. The geographical scope of LIFE is not modified in the proposal for a two years extension of LIFE III. However, the participation of Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus should be considered afterwards. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**: - Budget line : B4-3200A : LIFE (Financial Instrument for the Environment - 2005 to 2010) - Projects on Community territory - Part I (nature protection) - Expenditure on administrative management; B4-3201A : LIFE (Financial Instrument for the Environment - 2005 to 2010) - Projects on Community territory - Part II (Environmental protection) - Expenditure on administrative Management; B7-810A LIFE (European Financial Instrument for the Environment - 2005 to 2010) - Operations outside Community territory - Expenditure on administrative management; B7-810 LIFE (European Financial Instrument for the Environment - 2005 to 2006) - Operations outside Community territory; B4-3200 LIFE (Financial Instrument for the Environment- 2005 to 2006) - Projects on Community territory - Part I (nature protection); B4-3201 LIFE III (Financial Instrument for the Environment - 2005 to 2006) - Projects on Community territory - Part II (environmental protection). - Total allocation for action : EUR 317, 165 million (financial intervention EUR 284, 882 million for commitment; technical and administrative assistance EUR 32, 283 million). - Period of allocation : 2005-2006.