EC/Croatia agreement: ecopoints for heavy vehicles travelling through Austria from 1st January 2004

2003/0319(CNS) - 22/12/2003 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : signature, provisional application and conclusion of an Agreement in the form of an exchange of letters between the European Community and the Republic of Croatia concerning the transitional points system applicable to heavy goods vehicles travelling through Austria. PROPOSED ACT : Council Decision. CONTENT : the Interim Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Croatia on trade and trade related matters was concluded on 28 January 2002 and entered into force on 1 March 2002. Protocol 6 on road transit traffic attached to this Agreement establishes that a system of ecopoints shall apply to transit traffic of the Republic of Croatia through Austria with effect from 1 January 2003. The Commission adopted a proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a system of ecopoints to be applied to heavy goods vehicles in transit through Austria for the year 2004. This proposal was the subject of an agreement between the European Parliament and the Council following the conciliation procedure on 25 November 2003. This agreement will lead to the adoption of a Regulation which will enter into force on 1 January 2004. In accordance with the provisions of Protocol 6 to the Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Communities and its Member States and Croatia, if the European Community establishes rules aimed at reducing pollution caused by heavy goods vehicles registered in the European Union, equivalent rules must apply to heavy goods vehicles registered in Croatia, allowing them to travel in Community territory. The Community should therefore now open negotiations with Croatia in order to reach a formal agreement. Given the short timescale in which the Agreement must be applied (from 1.1.2004), the Commission calls on the Council to pronounce, at the same time, on the recommendation for negotiations and the proposals for Council decisions on the signature, provisional application and conclusion of the Agreement. It therefore submits the relevant recommendation and proposals for decisions to the Council.