# LIFE II: financial instrument for the environment (amend. regul. 1973/92/EEC)

1995/0093(SYN) - 12/04/1995 - Legislative proposal

The LIFE regulation is a financial instrument for developing and implementing the Community's environmental policy and legislation. Its purpose is to foster greater cohesion in the way in which Member States address environmental problems and to improve the balance between environmental policy and other Community policies. In the light of experience so far, the Commission proposes to focus action under LIFE over the next four years (1996-1999) on four key areas: 1) priority implementation of the European Natura 2000 network; 2) facilitating the implementation of Community environmental policy in areas other than nature protection, by funding preparatory, demonstration, technical assistance, support and motivation projects in relation to initiatives to: - increase the complementarity between environmental regulations and financial intervention for structural purposes, especially under Community funds and financial instruments for the environment; - help local authorities incorporate environmental factors into regional planning; - promote the sustainable development and integration of the environment into industrial activities; 3) helping certain third countries bordering the Mediterranean and Baltic Seas other than associated CEECs to establish the administrative structures needed in the environmental sector, develop environmental policies and undertake measures aimed at sustainable development; 4) disseminating the know-how and experience obtained. The Commission also proposes that: - LIFE should be open to CEECs, so that they can implement international conventions and solve common or global environmental problems as soon as additional protocols have been attached to the Europe Agreements between the EU and the countries in question; - financial support should be able to take the form of joint funding for projects or interest rate subsidies; - procedures should be simplified in order to make them more transparent; - 3% of the available budget should be earmarked for funding support measures in order to monitor projects. A financial reference amount of ECU 450 million has been set for the four years covered by the proposal.