

# **Agenda 2000: Financial instrument for fisheries guidance, application FIG, structural assistance**

1998/0347(CNS) - 14/12/1998 - Legislative proposal

**OBJECTIVE:** to lay down the detailed rules and arrangements regarding community structural assistance in the fisheries sector. **CONTENT:** this proposal aims to reform the system for structural measures in the fisheries sector, following the proposal of 18 March 98 on the revision of the FIG within the framework of Agenda 2000 (funding for structural measures in the fisheries sector). The general aims of this revision relate to the following areas: - adjustment of the provisions on programming to the new situation as regards the Structural Funds (Objectives 1 and 2) where recourse is required to the EAGGF Guarantee Section; - clarifying some provisions found to have been insufficiently explicit or difficult to apply; - extending assistance to new areas; - bringing premiums and scales up to date. The main measures proposed: As regards the fleet: the fourth-generation multiannual guidance programme (MGP IV, 1997-2001) remains the reference basis. Management of fleet development is based on the following: a) a new fleet renewal system, including permanent arrangements for administering additions to and removals from the fleet: under the scheme proposed, additions with public aid will be possible only if outweighed by an associated withdrawal without aid. For the small scale coastal fishing segment, the additions must not lead to an increase in fishing effort; b) a marked tightening up of measures to deal with Member States which do not abide by the provisions of the MGP or the Community fishing vessel register; c) a redefinition of joint enterprises, which are now regarded as a special method of exporting which qualifies for a premium additional to the export premium. The current rules are tightened up in order, on the one hand, to ensure synergy with the practices and provisions governing fisheries agreements and, on the other, to take account of the Court of Auditors' criticisms concerning the management of joint enterprises in the past. As regards small-scale coastal fishing, it is proposed to pay more attention to the problems specific to this segment, whose modernisation (with no increase of fishing effort) is a political priority on account of its particular features and its contribution to employment. As regards the accompanying measures, it is proposed: a) to extend the range of socioeconomic measures by granting a premium to allow individual fishermen to switch to other occupations; b) to redefine the current mechanism for temporary laying-up. Public aid will be authorised only on the basis of strict, precise and transparent criteria. As regards the other areas of assistance, it is proposed: a) to continue measures in favour of productive investment in the processing industry and in aquaculture and in facilities at fishing ports, paying attention to the environmental aspects in the case of aquaculture and giving priority to collective measures; b) to introduce provisions on producer organisations (which are currently contained in the "market" regulation), improving and rationalising their content and making them more consistent with the other structural measures; c) to continue the operations by members of the trade, an option insufficiently used hitherto despite strong demand from the trade.