

Developing countries: integrate the environment in the development process, sustainable development

1999/0020(COD) - 28/01/1999 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to introduce measures to promote the full integration of the environmental dimension in the development process of developing countries. **CONTENT:** this proposal for a Council Regulation aims to ensure the continuation of activities implemented under Council regulation 722/97/EC after the expiry of this regulation on 31/12/99. The proposed regulation sets the framework for the management of budgetline B7-6200, the most specific financial instrument available to the EC in the context of helping to implement environmental mainstreaming in the context of the activities funded by other (namely geographical) Community instruments in development cooperation. This instrument has evolved to finance essentially two types of activities: - pilot schemes in developing countries; - the development of guidelines and operational instruments; The financial aid and technical assistance provided will elaborate and promote policies, strategies, tools and technologies for the pursuit of sustainable development. These actions will include pilot projects in the field, schemes to build up the institutional and operational capacities of actors in the development process, the elaboration of policies, plans and strategies for sustainable development, inventory, accounting and statistical work, environmental assessments, raising awareness of local populations and support to multilateral processes. Financed actions will address a large range of issues related to the environment, such as: - global environmental issues; - transboundary environmental issues (in particular, air and water pollution); - environmental impacts of integrating developing countries into the world economy; - environmental impacts of macro-economic and sectoral policies in developing countries; - sustainable management and use of natural and environmental resources in all productive sectors of the economy; - conservation of biological diversity; - water-related issues; - coastal zone management; - desertification; - urban environment problems; - sustainable production and use of energy; - sustainable patterns of production and consumption. Within the framework of this programme, the Commission considers lesson-learning and dissemination of the results of activities carried out to be essential elements of implementing this regulation. Particular attention will be given to such factors as linkage with the overall objective of poverty alleviation and innovative local initiatives. Finally, measures will be taken to ensure the visibility of Community actions. Since environmental mainstreaming is a long-term commitment, it is suggested that the regulation be given an unlimited duration. The Commission will be responsible for management of the programme. It will be assisted in this task by the geographically-determined Committee competent for development. Decisions relating to grants of more than EURO 2 million for individual operations shall be adopted under a committee procedure described in the regulation. 4 years after the regulation's entry into force, the Commission shall submit to the European Parliament and the Council an overall assessment of the operations financed by the Community under this regulation, together with suggestions concerning its future. The Commission shall also regularly assess operations with a view to providing guidelines for improving the effectiveness of future operations. The new regulation should be adopted as soon as possible in order to be applicable from 01/01/2000. It should finally be noted that the proposal's financial statement sets the budget of this initiative at EURO 16 million for 1999.