Maritime pollution, Mediterranean Sea, 1995 Barcelona Convention: specially protected areas and biological diversity

1999/0019(CNS) - 22/10/1999 - Final act

PURPOSE : to conclude the Protocol concerning specially protected areas and biological diversity in the Mediterranean Sea in the framework of the Barcelona Convention. COMMUNITY MEASURE : Council Decision 1999/800/EC relating to the conclusion of the Protocol concerning specially protected areas and biological diversity in the Mediterranean, as well as the acceptance of the annexes to that Protocol (Barcelona Convention). CONTENT : the Community is a Contracting Party to the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution since 1977 and it has concluded a number of protocols in the framework of seeking to reinforce the prevention of pollution in the marine environment. In the framework of the revision and the improvement of the legal instruments of the Action Plan for the Mediterranean, the Contracting Parties (of which the Community is one) adopted a new Protocol in 1995 to the Barcelona Convention, signed by 16 Mediterranean countries and the Community. The Protocol relates to specially protected areas and biological diversity in the Mediterranean and replaces a previous version of this Protocol. The objective of the decision is to allow the Community to approve this revised protocol and its annexes covering the fields of Community competence in the environment. For the most part, the amendments aim to reinforce the protection measures provided for and to improve the state of the Mediterranean natural heritage and culture by the creation of specially protected areas, as well as reinforcing the conservation measures for endangered species. In addition, It also concerns protecting natural habitats and maintaining biological diversity on a long term basis. The new Protocol also has an annex on the common criteria that determine the selection of protected marine and coastal areas, as well as an annex relating to endangered or threatened species the exploitation of which will be regulated. In view of the effective realisation of Community environmental objectives, it is important that the Community accepts the amendments in line with the procedures laid down in the Treaty. The Community's acceptance is accompanied by a specific declaration that the Community is involved in the implementation of the provisions laid down in the annexes of the Protocol via the establishment of the Community's 'Nature 2000' network. ENTRY INTO FORCE : the decision shall take effect on 22.10.1999, the date of entry into force of the Protocol (and its annexes) requiring to be published at a later stage by the Secretariat General of the Council once all the necessary notifications to this effect have been completed.