Protection of wild fauna: conclusion of the 1995 Agreement on the conservation of African-Eurasian migratory waterbirds

2004/0181(CNS) - 03/08/2004 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to conclude the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds.

PROPOSED ACT : Council Decision.

CONTENT : The Community is a Contracting Party to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Bonn Convention – CMS). Article IV of the Bonn Convention provides for the conclusion of regional agreements which for Appendix II species (those with an unfavourable conservation status) should be concluded as soon as possible.

The waterbirds of the African-Eurasian flyways, which are Appendix II species, merit immediate attention in order to improve their conservation status and to gather information as a basis for sound management decisions. An Agreement was finally adopted by consensus by sixty-three Range States and by the European Community. The Agreement was opened for signature from 16 October 1995. It was signed on behalf of the Community on 1 September 1997.

The Agreement aims at creating the legal framework for a concerted conservation policy of the Range States of migratory waterbirds species and populations, individuals of which migrate in the Western Palaearctic and Africa, irrespective of their current conservation status.

The Agreement covers:

-235 species of birds ecologically dependent on wetlands for at least part of their annual cycle;

- an area of 60 million square kilometres encompassing 116 Range States and covering the entire continents of Africa and Europe as well as part of Asia.

The Agreement text includes three annexes:

- a map showing the geographical area covered by the Agreement,

- a list of migratory waterbirds species covered by the Agreement,

- an action plan.

The Agreement requests in particular coordinated measures to achieve and maintain a favourable conservation status for African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds. Article III of the Agreement provides for the conservation measures to be taken. Annex III (the Action plan)specifies actions which the Parties shall undertake in relation to priority species consistent with the general conservation measures specified in Article III of the Agreement.

The Agreement mainly refers to matters falling within Community competence which at the internal level are regulated by Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds and 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. Furthermore, the Community is a Party to the

Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats and of the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution and to its protocols, in particular to the Protocol on Specially Protected Areas.

Accordingly, having signed the Agreement, it is appropriate that the Community should now conclude the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS :

- Budget lines and headings : 07 02 02 (formerly B7-811)

- Overall figures:

- Total allocation for action : EUR 34,700 (2004-2006);

- Period of application: 2004 – 2005 and subsequent years.

The budget of AEWA is established every three years at the Meeting of the Parties. The current budget has been set for 2003, 2004 and 2005 (a year with higher expenditure, as it will hold the next Meeting of the Parties). For these three years, the participation of the Community is an estimate based on a contribution of 2.5% of the overall budget. For the years 2006 and beyond, expenditure for subsequent years is just a forecast, considering expected evolution of the budget.

- Overall multiannual estimate of expenditure: EUR 34,700 in commitments and payments.

- Overall financial impact of human resources and other administrative expenditure : EUR 180 000;

- Total EUR 214,700.