Common fisheries policy: financial contribution of the Community towards the expenditure in collecting data and for financing studies and pilot projects from 2001 to 2006

2004/0213(CNS) - 29/09/2004 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to adapt the application period of Decision 439/2000/EC on a financial contribution from the Community towards the expenditure incurred by Member States in collecting data, and for financing studies and pilot projects for carrying out the common fisheries policy (CFP).

PROPOSED ACT : Council Decision

CONTENT : Decision 439/2000/EC covers the period from 2000 to 2005. It is closely linked to Regulation 1543/2000/EC, which lays down that Member States shall draw up for six year periods a national programme. However, the first programming period should exceptionally cover the years 2002 to 2006 inclusive, whereas the collection and management of data in 2001 was organised by means of calls for proposals and invitations to tender also covered by Decision 439/2000/EC.

Member States wishing to receive a financial contribution towards the expenditure to be incurred during the first programming period from 1 January 2002 to 31 December 2006 should have presented to the Commission, not later than 31 May 2001, their annual expenditure forecasts for this period, followed by yearly updates due before 31 May each year. On the basis of this information, the Commission should decide each year on the eligibility of the forecast expenditure and on the amount of the financial assistance from the Community for the following year. The preparation of the national programmes for 2002 to 2006 and the corresponding Commission Decision to co-finance them were therefore supposed to take place in the year before their execution.

However, due to the late adoption of implementing rules for the application of Regulation 1543/2000/EC, Member States submitted their national programmes and expenditure forecasts only in the autumn 2001 instead of May 2001. This late submission on the one hand and the lengthy procedure for examining these (using external consultants) on the other hand, made it impossible to commit the appropriations for the first exercise (2002) in the year before (2001). Instead, the commitment of expenditure took place in the year of execution, 2002. The same phenomenon of a postponed administrative and financial cycle occurred in 2003 and 2004. Consequently, the Commission decision on the amount of the financial assistance from the Community towards the expenditure to be incurred in 2006 will only be prepared and adopted in 2006 instead of 2005.

It is thus proposed that the reference period referred to in Article 1, paragraph 2, be changed from 2000 to 2005 into 2001 to 2006.

The reference amount laid down in Article 1 of Decision 439/2000/EC does no longer reflect the actual needs proved true for the previous years and the updated estimations for the following years. Furthermore it does not take into account the needs of the new Member States. Therefore, the reference amount should be adapted to the updated estimations.

FINANCIAL IMLPICATIONS :

- Budget heading : 11.07.01 – Support for the management of fishery resources (collection of basic data and improvement of scientific advice).

Expenditure: Financial year until 2003 : EUR 55.7 million. Current financial year 2004 : EUR 30 million. EUR 25.5 million is foreseen for national programmes of Member States 2004. EUR 4.5 EUR million foreseen to cover studies pursuant Article 9 of Decision No 439/2000. Following financial year 2005 : EUR 39.4 million. (EUR 33.5 million is foreseen for national programmes of Member States 2005 (25.5 for EU-15 + 8 for EU-10. EUR 5.9 EUR million is foreseen to cover studies pursuant Article 9 of Decision No 439/2000.) Estimated expenditure 2006 : EUR 39.4 million.

- Total : EUR 164.5 million. EUR 164.5 million is the sum of actually committed appropriations from 2001 to 2003, available appropriations for 2004 and updated estimation of needs for 2005 and 2006 (including new Member States).