

Financial Instrument for the Environment (LIFE+) 2007-2013

2004/0218(COD) - 26/04/2005

The committee adopted the report by Marie-Anne ISLER BÉGUIN (Greens/EFA, FR) amending the proposal under the 1st reading of the codecision procedure:

- in **Article 1**, MEPs specified that the general objective of LIFE+ should include contributing to "nature conservation and biodiversity, in particular management of the NATURA 2000 network". They also firmed up the policy on greenhouse gases, saying that LIFE+ should contribute to "drastically reducing" such gases and thereby "averting potential economic, social and environmental upheaval". The committee also introduced protection of Europe's forests as an objective of LIFE+ in the implementation of the 6th Environmental Action Programme, as well as "increasing the involvement of European citizens in achieving environmental aims";

- the committee heavily amended **Article 2**, introducing a third component ('Nature and Biodiversity', focusing on the NATURA 2000 network) in addition to the two components suggested by the Commission. It also introduced a number of new elements into the original two components, such as encouraging the use of new technologies to facilitate environmental management and enabling management models to be devised to maintain forest biodiversity. In addition, MEPs laid down general criteria for projects financed by LIFE+;

- in **Article 3**, the committee introduced a new clause stipulating that priority will be given to interregional or cross-border projects;

- Parliament should be consulted on the multi-annual strategic programmes, which should subsequently be adopted under the codecision procedure to enable Parliament to have a role in decision-making. MEPs also said that these programmes should emphasise the need to ensure added value;

- although the proposal provided in **Article 5** for the Commission to entrust part of the budget implementation to national public sector bodies, the committee added the rider that the Commission "will be responsible for following up, validating and assessing this implementation, which will be included in a communication to the European Parliament";

- MEPs called for the total budget to be increased from EUR 2 190 million to EUR 23 190 million to take account of the needs indicated by the Commission for managing the sites protected under the NATURA 2000 network;

- the regions should be represented on the LIFE+ Committee set up to assist the Commission.