Fishing fleets registered in the Community outermost regions

2006/0148(CNS) - 07/11/2006 - Final act

PURPOSE: to extend a scheme allowing derogations from the general EU rules on the management of fishing fleets and the granting of public aid for fleet modernisation and renewal, in the Azores and Madeira, the Canary Islands and the French overseas departments.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Regulation 1646/2006/EC amending Regulation 639/2004/EC on the management of fishing fleets registered in the Community outermost regions.

CONTENT: Council Regulation 639/2004/EC on the management of fishing fleets registered in the Community outermost regions allows derogations from Article 9(1)(a) of Council Regulation 2792/1999 /EC laying down the detailed rules and arrangements regarding Community structural assistance in the fisheries sector and Article 13 of Council Regulation 2371/2002/EC on the conservation and sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources under the Common Fisheries Policy.

Following the political agreement reached in the Council on 19 June 2006 concerning the European Fisheries Fund, in order to take account of the particular structural, social and economic situation in the fisheries sector in the outermost regions, the period of validity of the derogations provided for in Article 2 (4) of Regulation 639/2004/EC is extended until 31 December 2006.

On account of the extension of the period of validity of the derogation provided for in Article 2(4) referred to above, the derogation provided for in Article 2(5) of that Regulation should be extended until 31 December 2008 to allow the entry into the fleet of capacity having benefited from public aid for the renewal of fishing vessels.

The derogations mainly concern the following:

- conditions for the entry of fishing vessels into the fleet: under EU measures, the entry of a vessel into the fleet must be compensated by the withdrawal of at least the same amount of capacity. However, outermost regions may introduce new capacity into the fleet without the withdrawal of a similar capacity, up to a certain limit ("reference levels").

- aid for renewal of the fleet: on the continent, public aid for the renewal of fishing vessels ceased to be available from 1 January 2005. However, under the specific scheme for the outermost regions, public aid for the construction of fishing vessels may still be granted until the end of the year.

- aid for modernisation of the fleet: modernisation aid may be granted to EU vessels for various measures, such as switching to more selective fishing gear and improving hygiene and the quality of the fisheries products on board. The granting of such aid is normally subject to the condition that the aid may not concern capacity in terms of tonnage or power but this condition does not apply to the outermost regions.

ENTRY INTO FORCE : 10/11/2006.