

Basic information

2001/0139(COD)

COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure)
Decision

Community action programme promoting non-governmental organisations primarily active in the field of environmental protection (2002-2006)

Repealed by [2004/0218\(COD\)](#)

Amended by [2003/0303\(COD\)](#)

Subject

3.70 Environmental policy

3.70.20 Sustainable development

6.40.14 Relations with non-governmental organisations, NGOs

Procedure completed

Key players

European Parliament	Committee responsible		Rapporteur	Appointed
	ENVI Environment, Public Health, Consumer Policy		JACKSON Caroline (PPE-DE)	26/06/2001
	Former committee responsible		Former rapporteur	Appointed
	ENVI Environment, Public Health, Consumer Policy		JACKSON Caroline (PPE-DE)	26/06/2001
	Former committee for opinion		Former rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	AFET Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security, Defense		The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
	BUDG Budgets		DOVER Den (PPE-DE)	11/07/2001
Council of the European Union	Council configuration		Meetings	Date
	Transport, Telecommunications and Energy		2395	2001-12-06
	Environment		2378	2001-10-29
European Commission	Commission DG		Commissioner	
	Environment			

Key events			
Date	Event	Reference	Summary
22/06/2001	Legislative proposal published	COM(2001)0337	Summary
02/07/2001	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 1st reading		
08/10/2001	Vote in committee, 1st reading		Summary
08/10/2001	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading	A5-0317/2001	
23/10/2001	Decision by Parliament, 1st reading	T5-0529/2001	Summary
06/12/2001	Council position published	13397/1/2001	Summary
13/12/2001	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 2nd reading		
18/12/2001	Vote in committee, 2nd reading		Summary
16/01/2002	Decision by Parliament, 2nd reading	T5-0004/2002	Summary
01/03/2002	Final act signed		
01/03/2002	End of procedure in Parliament		
16/03/2002	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2001/0139(COD)
Procedure type	COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure)
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Decision
Amendments and repeals	Repealed by 2004/0218(COD) Amended by 2003/0303(COD)
Legal basis	EC Treaty (after Amsterdam) EC 175-p1 Rules of Procedure EP 66_o-p4
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ENVI/5/15351

Documentation gateway				
European Parliament				
Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A5-0317/2001	08/10/2001	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T5-0529/2001 OJ C 112 09.05.2002, p. 0027-0095 E	23/10/2001	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, 2nd reading		T5-0004/2002 OJ C 271 07.11.2002, p. 0028-0055 E	16/01/2002	Summary

Council of the EU

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Council position	13397/1/2001 OJ C 110 07.05.2002, p. 0027 E	06/12/2001	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Legislative proposal	COM(2001)0337 OJ C 270 25.09.2001, p. 0125 E	22/06/2001	Summary
Commission communication on Council's position	SEC(2001)2005 	11/12/2001	Summary
Follow-up document	SEC(2008)2633 	09/10/2008	Summary

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
EESC	Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report	CES1329/2001 OJ C 036 08.02.2002, p. 0108	18/10/2001	

Additional information

Source	Document	Date
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act

Decision 2002/0466 OJ L 075 16.03.2002, p. 0001-0006	Summary
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Community action programme promoting non-governmental organisations primarily active in the field of environmental protection (2002-2006)

2001/0139(COD) - 23/10/2001 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted the plans for a new, streamlined funding programme for environmental NGOs. This procedure was adopted without debate. (Please refer to the previous text).

Community action programme promoting non-governmental organisations primarily active in the field of environmental protection (2002-2006)

2001/0139(COD) - 22/06/2001 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: To replace Council Decision 97/872/EC on the promotion of non-governmental organisations in the field of environmental protection with a more updated, flexible European Parliament and Council Decision. CONTENT: Initial EU funding for environmental NGOs was agreed in 1997 under Council Decision 97/872/EC. Justification for EU funding was based on the principle that environmental NGOs represent an insight into European public opinion. The 1997 Decision requests the European Commission to prepare a report, every three years, on the success or not, of the programme. Following extensive research as well as consultation with interested parties, the European Commission proposes replacing the previous Council Decision by a new European Parliament and Council Decision. The essence of the new Decision will remain the same but will incorporate changes deemed necessary in light of past experience. The main features of the new programme are: - A provision to promote the systematic involvement of European environmental NGOs in EU environmental policy; - An expanded Programme period from 4 to 5 years; - An earlier call for proposals and earlier Commission decision; - An expanded geographical scope to include Central and Eastern Europe; - A simplified selection, monitoring and evaluation system; - The introduction of selection criteria; - The introduction of a funding scheme, which refers to the audited expenses of the beneficiaries; - The introduction of a fixed auditing scheme. The New Action programme should be in place from 1 January 2002 and run for five years. An interim evaluation is scheduled for 31 December 2004. The budget envisioned for this five-year period is EUR 32 Million

Community action programme promoting non-governmental organisations primarily active in the field of environmental protection (2002-2006)

2001/0139(COD) - 01/03/2002 - Final act

PURPOSE : to establish a Community action programme promoting environmental NGOs. COMMUNITY MEASURE : Decision 466/2002/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down a Community action programme promoting non-governmental organisations primarily active in the field of environmental protection. PURPOSE : The general objective of this Programme is to promote NGOs which are primarily active in the field of environmental protection and enhancement at a European level. The activities should involve contributing to the development and implementation of Community environmental policy legislation in different parts of Europe. The Programme will also promote the involvement of NGOs at all stages of the Community environmental policy making process, by ensuring relevant representation in stakeholder consultation meetings and public hearings. It will contribute to the strengthening of small regional or local associations working to apply the *acquis* in relation to the environment and sustainable development in their local area. The financial framework for the implementation of the programme for the period 2002-2006 is set at EUR 32 million. The Call for Proposals will be published by 30 September each year for grants in the following calendar year. The Commission must make a decision by 31 December each year and payments are to be made immediately. Support from the programme will target the priority areas from the Sixth Environment Action Programme, grouped under the four main headings of limiting climate change; nature and biodiversity - protecting a unique resource; health and environment; ensuring the sustainable management of natural resources and waste. A grant may not exceed 70% of the applicant's average annual audited eligible expenses during the preceding two years for Community NGOs or 80% for NGOs based in the candidate or Balkan countries. The programme runs from 01/01/02 to 31/12/06. ENTRY INTO FORCE : 17/03/02.

Community action programme promoting non-governmental organisations primarily active in the field of environmental protection (2002-2006)

2001/0139(COD) - 11/12/2001 - Commission communication on Council's position

The changes introduced by the Council help to clarify the terms of the proposal as well as to increase transparency and accountability. The Commission therefore supports the common position.

Community action programme promoting non-governmental organisations primarily active in the field of environmental protection (2002-2006)

2001/0139(COD) - 06/12/2001 - Council position

The Council made a number of changes to the Commission's proposal; the majority of these were made to clarify the terms of the proposal and to increase the transparency of management of the programme and the accountability of the Commission and the beneficiaries. In particular the Commission is now required to prepare an annual report for the Member States and the European Parliament. The report will detail the grant allocation process for the current year and the outcomes from the grants made in the previous year and the Commission will also convene an annual meeting of stakeholders to discuss the report. This will enhance both *ex-post* and *ex-ante* evaluation. For general clarification purposes the Council has also moved the objectives of the programme from an Annex to an Article; and has clarified the selection criteria and eligible expenses. The main changes of substance to the programme relate to the definition of an applicant NGO and to encouraging the inclusion of smaller NGOs in the programme. In its Plenary vote on 23 October, the European Parliament adopted 24 amendments to the proposal. Twenty-two of these have already been incorporated, either *verbatim* or *in spirit*, into the Council's common position. The two amendments which have not been incorporated proposed that contributions in kind made to NGOs should be included in their annual expenses. Given the structure of the new proposal (which includes a grant ceiling) and difficulties that were encountered during the previous programme in evaluation contributions in kind these amendments cannot be accepted. The amendments, which Council has incorporated into its common position are as follows: - a new recital making reference to the annual budgetary procedure; - to extend the scope to include NGOs active in the field of animal protection; - alteration of the definition of an applicant NGO, which expressly refers to associations of NGOs is a consequential change allowing grants to be disbursed to partner or member organisations; - introducing three new criteria for applicant NGOs which have been included in B of the Annex; - to add a new Article to ensure that the programme priorities appear in the articles. The text was originally placed in the Annex; - details further information that the Commission must make available in its call for

proposals; - addition made to Article 4(3) which requires the Commission to make immediate payment; - deletes the requirement in Article 6.1 to take account of the size of the NGO applicant; - introduces a new requirement on the Commission to provide unsuccessful applicants with reasons for their failure; - clarifies Article 8 in relation to accountability of partner organisations and financial accountability; - stresses the relevance of capacity building and promotion of sustainable development also at local and regional level; - clarifies that the distribution of funds will be made in such a way that beneficiaries with smaller "volumes of relevant activities" will receive a relatively higher rate of support (grant distribution on a non-linear basis). With regard to the most important innovations introduced by the Council, several Member States were of the view that the requirement that applicant NGOs must be active in at least three countries was a requirement which would disqualify a large number of smaller NGOs in particular in the more peripheral Member States. To address this concern several amendments were made to Article 2 of the proposal, as follows: - it is now clearly stated that an applicant NGO may be a single NGO or "several co-ordinated associations" of NGOs; and - provided that the primary objective of the activities of the applicant NGO is to support the development and implementation of community environmental policy as detailed in the objectives of the programme, then coverage of two, rather than three countries is acceptable. Lastly, a Commission statement has been included in the Annex which states that "The Commission may consider as an "exceptional circumstance" the creation of a new network by experienced NGOs, provided that their annual statement of accounts is certified by a registered auditor".

Community action programme promoting non-governmental organisations primarily active in the field of environmental protection (2002-2006)

2001/0139(COD) - 16/01/2002 - Text adopted by Parliament, 2nd reading

The European Parliament adopted the common position without amendments.

Community action programme promoting non-governmental organisations primarily active in the field of environmental protection (2002-2006)

2001/0139(COD) - 09/10/2008

The aim of this report is to communicate on the Commission's experience from the implementation of the programme for operating grants to European environmental NGOs in the period 2002-2007. Between 2002 and 2006, the legal basis for this grant aid was Decision 466/2002/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down a Community action programme promoting non-governmental organisations primarily active in the field of environmental protection for the period 2002-2006. This has been replaced by provision included in the single financial instrument for the environment, LIFE+ (2007-2013) which has provided the legal basis for funding since 2007.

This document is based on the findings of the 2005 external evaluation, information from the monitoring of NGO performance 2002-2006 and an internal survey among DG Environment policy units carried out in April 2008. It includes a description of the programme and its functioning, an overview of the types of organisations funded, and an assessment of the outputs of the NGOs and the relevance of the programme.

Main assessment of the programme

1. NGO outputs

1.1. Problem identification and definition of policy options: to support policy work NGOs, like other stakeholder groups, are systematically invited by DG Environment to participate in various working groups, scientific expert groups, advisory groups and preparatory and implementation committees. They fill the functions of providing specific expertise, balance to other interests and a grassroots' perspective. They also undertake research and studies resulting in scientific information that can feed into the policy process. The surveys undertaken among DG Environment policy units have shown that most units have experience with NGOs regularly giving this type of input in their policy areas and they underline the role of NGOs as important counterweights to other stakeholders with financial interests.

1.2. Policy definition and political debate: the participation of NGOs in consultations and policy debate contributes to a balanced and broad stakeholder representation. Being European networks, the funded NGOs coordinate the positions of their members, providing the Commission with one single interlocutor and giving a voice to a large number of local organisations which would otherwise have difficulties reaching to EU decision-makers. Examples of activities are lobbying and preparation of coordinated press releases, position papers and memoranda to EU presidencies. NGOs also reply regularly to public consultations providing useful input and perspective to the policy process.

1.3. Policy implementation: with their networks and specific expertise, NGOs are effective in promoting implementation of EU policy on the ground. They communicate EU environmental policy to their members at regional and national level and they serve as watchdogs for implementation by, for example, drawing attention to cases of non-compliance and publishing black lists and reports.

1.4. Awareness raising: NGOs carry out activities in view of raising awareness of the public and decision-makers e.g. through campaigns, events and awards, which often attract high press coverage, production and translation of information material, as well as environmental education targeting various groups such as children, officials and professionals. In this regard, NGOs have the advantage of being close to the ground and given their high credibility with the public, they have good potential to achieve effective awareness and outreach. NGOs are also actively raising awareness and promoting EU environmental policy beyond EU borders.

1.5. Organisational development: a separate objective of the funding programme is to contribute to capacity building of the beneficiaries and their networks in order to enable them to become a more effective interlocutor in the policy dialogue. In the evaluation of the programme carried out in 2005, it was found that, since the programme started in 1997, there has been an increase in staff, better organisational structures, improved professionalism

and a more co-ordinated action on EU policy-making among the beneficiaries. EU funding has made it possible for NGOs to increase the volume and quality of their contributions and their communication activities. There has also been an increase in the involvement of small regional or local associations thanks to improved network structures, co-ordination and capacity building.

2. Relevance of the programme

2.1. Need to support NGOs: without funding from the programme, the majority of beneficiaries would need to substantially reduce their activities, including the contributions to the EU policy process. NGOs stress that demands on environmental organisations, their European structures and their offices in Brussels have grown considerably, including demands from citizens and requests from the EU institutions for input and expertise. Insufficient resources force them to make priorities and be selective. Generally, the total budget available for the programme is not sufficient to fund all meriting applications. Furthermore, in order to provide support to a wide range of organisations who present programmes evaluated as being of high quality, funding to individual NGOs has been reduced compared to initial requests. This reduction has been in the order of 25 %. The final decision is a result of the need to achieve a balance of supporting a sufficient range of NGOs and the desire to avoid an excessive reduction of the initially presented programmes.

2.2. Validity of rationale: the rationale of the programme is given by the 6th Environmental Action Programme (6EAP) and the White Paper on European Governance and comes down to *greater involvement of civil society in EU policy process*. In the area of environment, NGOs make a significant contribution to ensuring the involvement of civil society and they are needed to provide a sound balance in relation to the interests of other actors with more resources and financial interests.

2.3. Added value of EU funding: one clear added value of providing funding at EU level is the increased effectiveness in civil society dialogue. By encouraging the creation of NGO networks, the programme provides the Commission with a more cost-effective way of dealing with civil society since one NGO represents the co-ordinated views of all national member organisations. This means that the Commission has only one or a few interlocutors in the NGO community instead of many uncoordinated positions, resulting in important savings of resources.

A second important aspect is that the selection of the beneficiaries is based on the priorities of the 6EAP. The funding programme thereby ensures that NGO input is given to the areas of importance at European level.

Thirdly, without funding at EU level it would not be possible to guarantee the presence of European NGOs as stakeholders in the EU policy process. National NGOs may be less suited and competent to work with EU institutions and they tend to have a different focus.