

LIFE III, financial instrument for the environment: extension until 31 December 2006

2003/0260(COD) - 08/03/2004

The committee adopted the report by its chair, Caroline JACKSON (EPP-ED, UK), amending the proposal under the 1st reading of the codecision procedure: - land purchased by private entities using LIFE funds should be transferred to public bodies if those entities are unable to fulfil the objectives of the LIFE regulation; - to avoid the risk of double funding, as highlighted by the Court of Auditors in its special report on the financial management of LIFE II, the Commission should ensure that applicants' attention is drawn to the fact that they cannot cumulate subsidies from different Community funds. The Commission should also set up internal control mechanisms; - whereas the Commission was proposing funding of EUR 317.2 million for implementation of the extended phase in the period 2005/2006, the committee proposed that this sum be increased to EUR 354 million, to ensure sufficient funds for LIFE projects in accession countries; - the Commission should submit its evaluation report by 30 September 2005, rather than 30 September 2006 as proposed, together with a proposal for a possible extension of the programme where appropriate or alternative arrangements for a financial instrument in the environmental sphere, to apply from 2007 onwards. Moreover, Parliament and the Council should decide no later than 1 July 2006 on these proposals. MEPs argued that these provisions would ensure that the Commission gave a signal about its intentions in the context of the 2006 budgetary procedure and enable Parliament to be informed about a possible extension of the programme in the context of the negotiations for the new financial perspective; - lastly, the Commission should ensure that the results of all funded projects are disseminated to the general public and should publish annually a complete list of projects financed including a short description and a summary of funds expended in each case.