



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



10876 (Presse 192)

**PROVISIONAL VERSION**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

2740th Council Meeting

### **Environment**

Luxembourg, 27 June 2006

President

**Josef PRÖLL**

Federal Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and  
Water

# **P R E S S**

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1  
**EN**

## **Main Results of the Council**

The Council adopted:

- a regulation concerning the base year for the allocation of quotas of hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) with respect to the Member States that acceded to the EU on 1 May 2004;
- a common position with a view to the adoption of a regulation establishing the EU's financial instrument for the environment - LIFE +;
- a Joint Action regarding a further contribution of the EU to the conflict settlement process in Georgia/South Ossetia;
- a directive extending the period of application of VAT arrangements for electronic commerce until 31 December 2006;
- common positions on the draft regulation for the registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals (REACH), and establishing a European Chemicals Agency and on the draft directive relating to the classification, packaging and labelling of dangerous substances, in order to adapt it to the draft regulation on REACH.

**CONTENTS**<sup>1</sup>

**PARTICIPANTS..... 6**

**ITEMS DEBATED**

FLOODS ..... 8

AIR QUALITY ..... 10

WASTE - *Council conclusions*..... 12

URBAN ENVIRONMENT - *Council conclusions* ..... 18

GMOs ..... 21

BIOFUELS/BIOMASS ..... 22

OTHER BUSINESS ..... 23

**OTHER ITEMS APPROVED**

*ENVIRONMENT*

– Quotas of hydrochlorofluorocarbons ..... 25

– Financial instrument for the environment - LIFE + \* ..... 25

– International river basins agreements ..... 26

– Conservation of European wildlife and natural habitats ..... 26

– Alpine Convention - Protocols on Soil Protection, Energy and Tourism..... 26

*COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY*

– Georgia/South Ossetia ..... 27

<sup>1</sup>

- Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks.
- The documents whose references are given in the text are available on the Council's Internet site <http://www.consilium.europa.eu>.
- Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the abovementioned Council Internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

*COOPERATION TO DEVELOPMENT*

– European development fund .....	27
– Liberia - Financial aid - Rule of law .....	28
– Relations with Greenland.....	28

*TAXATION*

– Code of conduct on transfer pricing documentation for EU associated enterprises - Resolution .....	28
– VAT arrangements for businesses: broadcasting services and e-commerce .....	29

*JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS*

– Passenger name records.....	29
– Organised crime - Cooperation between asset recovery offices .....	30
– Surrender procedure between the Member States of the EU and Iceland and Norway * .....	30
– Fourth Eurojust Annual Report (calendar year 2005) - <i>Council conclusions</i> .....	31

*EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA*

– Amendment to the EEA agreement - European security research .....	34
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*TRADE POLICY*

– Tariff quotas.....	35
– Tariff duties.....	35
– Anti-dumping - Seamless pipes and tubes of iron or steel .....	35

*INTERNAL MARKET*

– Motor vehicles.....	35
– New legislation on chemicals.....	36

*AGRICULTURE*

– Codex alimentarius.....	37
– Drug precursors.....	37

*FISHERIES*

– Catch documentation .....	37
– Improving Council's Working Methods as regards the adoption of the annual Regulation on fixing the fishing opportunities and associated conditions for fish stocks - <i>Council Conclusions</i> .....	38

*EDUCATION*

- "Youth in action" programme for 2007-2013 .....40
- Lifelong learning .....41

*APPOINTMENTS*

- Chairman of the EU Military Committee.....42
- Director-General of the EU Military Staff .....42

## **PARTICIPANTS**

The Governments of the Member States and the European Commission were represented as follows:

**Belgium:**

Mr Benoît LUTGEN

Minister for Agriculture, Rural Affairs, the Environment and Tourism (Walloon Region)

**Czech Republic:**

Mr Tomáš NOVOTNÝ

Deputy Minister for the Environment, International Relations Section

**Denmark:**

Ms Connie HEDEGAARD

Minister for Environment and for Nordic Cooperation

**Germany:**

Mr Sigmar GABRIEL

Federal Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Reactor Safety

**Estonia:**

Mr Olavi TAMMEMÄE

Deputy Minister for Environment

**Greece:**

Mr Stavros KALOGIANNIS

State Secretary for the Environment, Regional Planning and Public Works

**Spain:**

Ms Cristina NARBONA RUIZ

Minister for the Environment

**France:**

Ms Nelly OLIN

Minister for Ecology and Sustainable Development

**Ireland:**

Mr Dick ROCHE

Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government

**Italy:**

Mr Alfonso PECORARO SCANIO

Minister for the Environment and Protection of Natural Resources

**Cyprus:**

Mr Panicos POURIOS

Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment

**Latvia:**

Mr Raimonds VĒJONIS

Minister for the Environment

**Lithuania:**

Mr Arūnas KUNDROTAS

Acting Minister for the Environment

**Luxembourg:**

Mr Jean-Marie HALSDORF

Minister for the Interior and Regional Planning

**Hungary:**

Mr Miklós PERSÁNYI

Minister for the Environment and Water Management

**Malta:**

Ms Theresa CUTAJAR

Deputy Permanent Representative

**Netherlands:**

Mr Pieter van GEEL

State Secretary for Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment

**Austria:**

Mr Josef PRÖLL

Federal Minister for Agriculture, Forestry, the Environment and Water Management

**Poland:**

Mr Jan SZYSZKO

Minister for the Environment

**Portugal:**

Mr Francisco NUNES CORREIA

Minister for the Environment, Regional Planning and  
Regional Development

**Slovenia:**

Mr Janez PODOBNIK

Minister for the Environment and Town and Country  
Planning

**Slovakia:**

Mr László MIKLÓS

Minister for the Environment

**Finland:**

Mr Jan-Erik ENESTAM

Minister for the Environment

**Sweden:**

Ms Lena SOMMESTAD

Minister for the Environment

**United Kingdom:**

Mr David MILIBAND

Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural  
Affairs

**Commission:**

Mr Günter VERHEUGEN

Mr Stavros DIMAS

Vice-President

Member

.....  
The Governments of the Acceding States were represented as follows:

**Bulgaria:**

Mr Dzhevdet CHAKAROV

Minister for the Environment and Water

**Romania:**

Mr Attila KORODI

State Secretary for European integration, Ministry of  
Environment and Water Management

**ITEMS DEBATED**

**FLOODS**

The Council reached political agreement on a draft directive on the assessment and management of flood risks.

Concerning the main issues yet to be solved, the Council decided:

- to require that the preliminary flood risk assessment would be complete by 22 December 2012;
- to allow transitional provisions on the use of existing risk assessments, maps and plans until 22 December 2010;
- to require the revision and updating of the flood hazard maps and of the flood risk maps by 22 December 2019 and revision of plans in 2021 and every six years later.

The text will be adopted without further discussion at a forthcoming Council meeting in the form of a common position and sent to the European Parliament with a view to the second reading.

When presenting its proposal (5540/1/06), the Commission took into account that, between 1998 and 2004, Europe suffered over 100 major floods, including catastrophic floods along the rivers Danube and Elbe in 2002, floods that caused some 700 fatalities, the displacement of about half a million people and insured economic losses totalling at least EUR 25 billion, and that flood events during summer 2005, in Austria, Bulgaria, France, Germany and Romania and elsewhere, had pushed these figures even higher.

Assets at risk from flooding include private housing, transport and public service infrastructure, commercial and industrial enterprises, and agricultural land. In addition to economic and social damage, floods can have severe environmental consequences, for example when waste water treatment plants or factories holding large quantities of toxic chemicals are inundated. Floods can also destroy wetland areas and reduce biodiversity.

The objective of the proposal is, therefore, to reduce and manage the risks which floods pose to human health, the environment, infrastructure and property.

In order to attain its objective, it provides for preliminary flood risk assessments of each river basin district, flood mapping in areas with a significant flood risk, a coordination mechanism within shared river basins, and flood risk management plans in vulnerable river basins and coastal areas.

The proposal applies to the whole Community territory, and therefore to flood risk in both rivers and coastal zones. Considering that most of the river basins in Europe are shared, concerted action at Community level would bring added value and improve the overall level of flood protection.

The proposed Directive provides considerable flexibility for Member States to determine the level of protection required, the measures to be taken and the timetables for implementing flood risk management plans. A close link with the water framework Directive<sup>1</sup> is provided for.

Legal basis proposed: Article 175 (1) of the Treaty – qualified majority required for a Council decision, co-decision procedure with the European Parliament applicable. The European Parliament delivered its opinion at first reading on 13 June 2006.

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<sup>1</sup> Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy (OJ L 327 of 22.12.2000).

**AIR QUALITY**

Pending the opinion of the European Parliament at first reading, the Council agreed on a general approach on a draft directive on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe.

The agreement was based on a Presidency compromise package, which includes several key elements:

- existing limit values are maintained without any changes
- a binding limit value for PM<sub>2.5</sub> in 2015 will replace a non-binding target value applicable from 2010 (25µg/m<sup>3</sup> for both target value and limit value); Member States have to elaborate air quality plans in order to attain target and limit value.
- an exposure reduction target for PM<sub>2.5</sub> with the aim of reducing air pollution in urban background; a review to be carried out by the Commission until 2013 with a view to replacing the target by a legally binding exposure reduction obligation.
- it follows the Commission's proposals and takes account of Member States' current difficulties in reaching air quality targets and allows for a time-limited extension of attainment dates for limit values under clearly defined conditions; for limit values which are already in force the possibility for postponement is limited to PM<sub>10</sub> until three years after entry into force of this Directive.

As soon as the opinion of the European Parliament is available, the Council will be ready to reach political agreement on this file.

It is recalled that, despite significant improvements in Europe's air quality driven by legislation and other factors, air pollution continues to have serious human health and environmental effects.

In September 2005, the Commission presented a thematic strategy on air pollution (*12735/05 + ADD 1 + ADD 2*) and a proposal for a new air quality directive in the European Union (*14335/05*).

The draft directive aims to revise the current ambient air quality legislation, comprising two main elements:

- the merging of five legal instruments into a single directive (the framework directive <sup>1</sup>, the first <sup>2</sup>, second <sup>3</sup> and third <sup>4</sup> daughter directives and the exchange of information decision <sup>5</sup>; the fourth daughter directive <sup>6</sup> being merged later through a simplified “codification” process).
- introduction of air quality standards for fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2,5</sub>) in the air, because of the large health benefits to be obtained<sup>7</sup>.

At the same time, more flexibility will be given to the Member States. Where they can demonstrate that they have taken all reasonable measures to implement the legislation but still need more time to comply with air quality standards in certain places, it is proposed to allow them to request a time-limited extension to the compliance deadline in the affected zones under certain conditions.

Legal basis proposed: Article 175 (1) of the Treaty – qualified majority required for a Council decision, co-decision procedure with the European Parliament applicable.

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<sup>1</sup> Directive 96/62/EC, OJ L 296, 21.11.1996, p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> Directive 1999/30/EC, OJ L 163, 29.6.1999, p.41.

<sup>3</sup> Directive 2000/69/EC, OJ L 313, 13.12.2000, p. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Directive 2002/3/EC, OJ L 67, 9.3.2002, p.14.

<sup>5</sup> Decision 97/101/EC, O.J. L 35, 5.2.1997, p. 14.

<sup>6</sup> Directive 2004/107/EC, OJ L 23, 26.1.2005, p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> Recent scientific evidence has suggested that the smaller particles (PM<sub>2,5</sub>) are particularly dangerous for human health and should be reduced in Europe.

**WASTE** - *Council conclusions*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"The Council:

1. WELCOMES the Commission's Communication on a Thematic Strategy on the prevention and recycling of waste with its objective of contributing to waste prevention and an efficient, environmentally sound and sustainable management of waste and resources with a view to protecting resources and reducing the overall negative impact of resource use;
2. HIGHLIGHTS the close linkage between the Thematic Strategy and other related Strategies, especially the Thematic Strategy on Resources, the Strategy for Sustainable Development, and the Integrated Product Policy;
3. CONCURS with the Commission that the results of the review of the Strategy shall feed into the final evaluation of the Sixth Environment Action Programme;

**Objectives of the EU policy on waste**

4. STRESSES the substantial aim for waste management of achieving a high level of protection of the environment and human health;
5. STRESSES that account be taken of all environmental impacts irrespective of when or where they will occur, including impacts that occur outside the European Union, considering also socio-economic impacts;
6. UNDERLINES the importance of the general principles of waste management, such as the precautionary principle and the polluter pays principle, the principle of waste generator's responsibility and, for specific waste flows, the principle of producer responsibility, as well as further principles of waste management, such as the principles of proximity and self-sufficiency where they apply;

7. EMPHASISES the key importance of the waste hierarchy
- prevention
  - re-use
  - recycling
  - other recovery operations, for example recovery operations with energy recovery
  - disposal

as a general rule of waste management;

8. WELCOMES life-cycle thinking as a useful concept to evaluate the environmental and human health impacts of waste and of the use of natural resources, stresses that this concept can be used to minimise these impacts and to deviate from the waste hierarchy and CALLS on the Commission to provide general guidance on life-cycle thinking in the context of waste policy;
9. AGREES with the Commission's aim to prevent the generation of waste as far as possible;
10. SUPPORTS the EU's long-term vision of becoming a "European recycling society", with positive effects not only for the sustainable use of natural resources, but also for the economy and employment and emphasises the importance of taking specific measures to increase re-use and recycling while ensuring a high level of human health and environmental protection in all Member States;
11. ASKS the Commission to give particular consideration, in the context of the final evaluation of the Sixth Environment Action Programme, to the need for realistic long, medium and short term targets and measures to achieve the overall vision of the EU of becoming a "recycling society";
12. RECOGNISES the objective of the Strategy of minimizing as far as possible the amount of waste for disposal and its environmental impact, while acknowledging that land-filling remains an acceptable option for waste streams that can not be recovered in a sustainable way and providing that land-filling is done in such way that negative impacts on the environment and human health are avoided;

13. TAKES into consideration that a higher degree of recovery must not lead to an increased diffuse dispersion of pollutants;

**Actions**

14. HIGHLIGHTS that measures and initiatives based on the strategy on waste must be sustainable and must make a substantial contribution to an eco-efficient use of resources;
15. SUPPORTS the improvement of the knowledge base and the beneficial use of data, especially on the impacts of resource use, waste generation and waste management, and calls on the Commission to consider appropriate simplification measures in order to avoid duplication and overlapping of reports and information to be submitted;
  - a) *Legislative measures*
16. RECOGNISES that emphasis should be placed on the full implementation of the EC waste legislation;
17. SUPPORTS the Commission's approach to modernizing the existing legal framework by clarifying, simplifying and streamlining the EU waste law with the aim of better regulation, including the promotion of synergies with existing EU law, and stresses the importance of maintaining a high level of protection of human health and the environment;
18. CALLS on the Commission to ensure that its major proposals are fully assessed in terms of their economic, social and environmental costs and benefits and their impact on levels of waste recycling and recovery activities in the EU;
19. ACKNOWLEDGES the Commission proposal for the revision of directive 2006/12/EC on waste and takes note of the Commission's intention to draw up and present proposals for the amendment of the other directives and measures in the field of waste management based on the topics listed in the strategy, but highlights the fact that stability of rules is important for all stakeholders;
20. CALLS ON the Commission to clarify and harmonize corresponding definitions in future proposals of waste management legislation with the definitions contained in the revised directive on waste, as appropriate, in order to ensure that they are practicable and provide the greater certainty and clarity essential for the competent authorities and stakeholders;

21. EMPHASISES the importance of using only for decisions of a technical and scientific nature, concerning non essential elements of a basic instrument, and stresses that this procedure needs a clear mandate in the particular legislation;
  22. CONSIDERS that the new regulation on shipments of waste implements legal obligations from the UN Basel Convention and OECD Decisions and underlines that an objective of regulating shipments of waste is to enhance the re-use and recycling of wastes with a high level of environmental and human health protection;
- b) Prevention
23. CALLS ON the Commission to come forward with concrete measures on prevention of waste in the fields of product policy, chemicals policy and eco-design to minimize both the generation of waste and the presence of hazardous substances in waste, and thereby to foster the safe and environmentally sound treatment of waste, and emphasises the importance of promoting products and technologies causing less harmful environmental effects and products more suitable for re-use and recycling;
  24. REQUESTS the Commission to work towards considering reinforcing the waste prevention aspects of BREF documents according to the IPPC-Directive and to include relevant guidance in these documents;
  25. CALLS ON the Commission to develop guidelines for waste prevention, including indicators, taking into account the different economic conditions and developments of Member States;
  26. STRESSES the role of education and information activities in the waste prevention field especially to promote sustainable production and consumption as well as the importance of green public procurement, and calls on the Commission to ensure that any legislative barriers to green public procurement are removed;
- c) Recycling
27. UNDERLINES the importance of achieving common minimum standards for recovery and recycling where justified at EU level whilst noting that individual Member States can maintain or establish higher standards for recycling with regard to the achievement of a high level of environmental and human health protection;

28. RECOGNISES the need for closer EU cooperation in case of trans-boundary waste management problems;
29. WELCOMES the emphasis on increased levels for recycling for creating a level playing field throughout the European Union for managing waste in the most appropriate way to increase environmental and human health protection and highlights that the production of high-quality compost, particularly compost derived from separately collected bio-waste, constitutes an important component in this field and acknowledges the importance of measures on bio-waste;
30. EMPHASISES the importance of promoting source separation of waste and the important role that the recycling legislation, collection and recycling targets and producer responsibility for specific waste streams continue to play in improving waste management in the Community and increasing the recycling rate of certain waste streams;
31. HIGHLIGHTS that a material-based approach is complementary to the product-based approach and calls on the Commission to carry out an analysis of the long-term feasibility and viability of a material-based approach to waste recycling, including its implications for producer responsibility;

d) *Economic instruments*

32. EMPHASISES that economic instruments can play a crucial role in waste prevention and management and stresses that individual Member States can decide on the use of such instruments;
33. CONSIDERS that external costs which arise from waste management will to a greater extent be included in prices of waste management activities for the purpose of reflecting the polluter pays principle."

**URBAN ENVIRONMENT** - *Council conclusions*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

The Council of the European Union,

1. RECALLS the 6th Environmental Action Programme and its commitments in particular to develop a Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment with the objective of contributing to a better quality of life and the improved well-being of citizens by encouraging sustainable urban development and by providing a clean and healthy urban environment with high air quality, low noise, clean water, high use of renewable energy and low consumption of space and resources. HIGHLIGHTS that the contributions made by cities and urban areas to combating air pollution and climate change in order to reduce greenhouse gases is essential; this concerns i.a. transport and land use planning as well as the sustainable construction and operation of buildings;
2. EMPHASISES the close link between the TS on Urban Environment and the EU-SDS and the related strategies, especially the TS on Air Quality and the TS on Waste;
3. WELCOMES the Commission's communication on the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment, in particular its focus on integrated environmental management and sustainable transport, as a valuable contribution towards tackling the environmental challenges that still persist today in urban areas, such as poor air quality, high volumes of traffic and congestion, ambient noise, poor building environment, urban sprawl and the loss of green areas and of biodiversity, waste and waste water; NOTES that the policies and measures in the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment are focusing on principles, guidance, support and facilitation for Member States and their cities to improve their urban environment;
4. RECOMMENDS the integrated approach of the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment for cities and their policies in order to achieve a reduction of environmental and health burdens and better environmental quality in our urban areas; CALLS on Member States to strengthen their endeavours to enable cities, by their policies, to achieve high urban environmental and health quality and to consider the possibilities of National Strategic Reference Frameworks (linked to Cohesion Policy) for covering urban environment issues as well as opportunities in the context of the LIFE+ Regulation and funds; ENCOURAGES the Commission to give guidance on how Member States can use these funds to integrate urban environment into their national plans including i.a. innovative and flexible mechanisms for the funding of urban renovation; RECOGNISES the relevance of the 7th FPRD, as well as the importance of promoting eco-innovation through rapid implementation of the ETAP;

5. WELCOMES the approach of the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment to highlighting the importance of public participation in decision-making and the role that existing voluntary initiatives can play; INVITES the Commission to provide support and impetus for public participation, in particular by actively facilitating and promoting Local Agenda 21 and the Aalborg Commitments;
6. APPRECIATES that the Commission will provide technical guidance in 2006 on integrated environmental management, including environmental objectives, measures and instruments, by giving examples of good practice and referring to the relevant EU environmental legislation; CALLS on the European Union, Member States and their cities, within their respective responsibilities to improve the quality of life in cities and urban areas by promoting and implementing integrated environmental management, with a particular focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving energy efficiency and sustainable use of resources in cities, covering in particular environmentally friendly and sustainable transport and land use planning, sustainable urban design as well as sustainable construction and operation of buildings, green public procurement and the promotion of sustainable production and consumption patterns and life-styles among citizens; UNDERLINES the important role of integrated environmental management systems such as EMAS or ISO 14001 for implementation;
7. EMPHASISES that noise, air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions are environmental problems in Europe's cities which especially affect the most vulnerable groups of our society in particular our children; UNDERLINES that synergies should be aimed at highlighting the main commitments on children's health and the environment as well as the EU Environment and Health Action Plan, while implementing the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment and the WHO-Children Environmental Health Action Plan for Europe (CEHAPE); RECOMMENDS that the implementation of the Thematic Strategy at EU and Member State level should take into account the CEHAPE and its Regional Priority Goals in order to improve the environmental and health situation of children in cities and promote the integration of children's needs in urban policies (in particular in planning settlements, housing and transport);
8. STRESSES that transport is a major source of air and noise pollution, land taking and negative impacts on human health in cities. Efforts must be taken to make urban transport sustainable for environment and health; WELCOMES the fact that the Commission will come forward with guidelines on sustainable transport plans including environmental objectives, measures and instruments for environmentally friendly and sustainable urban transport as well as examples of good practice; RECOMMENDS that Member States and cities make use of these guidelines in their urban transport policies and ensure that

sustainable urban transport plans include environmental objectives and measures to improve and promote urban mobility management, public transport, cycling and walking, alternative fuels (e.g. biogas) and propulsion systems, ultra low emission vehicles and car-sharing, as well as intermodal city freight logistics; EMPHASISES the importance of a proper consideration of environmentally friendly and sustainable urban transport infrastructure needs in the EU-infrastructure frameworks.

9. RECOGNISES that the relation between cities and their hinterland is crucial to tackle environmental problems, e.g. as urban sprawl is expanding and commuter transport as well as tourism and leisure traffic between the urban areas and their hinterland is increasing; RECOMMENDS that Member States and cities improve environmentally friendly transport connections and infrastructure links between the cities and their hinterlands by rail, bus and regional public transport within the scope of their sustainable urban transport plans; Furthermore RECOMMENDS an interregional and intersectoral approach in particular to coordinating transport, urban and regional planning policies involving cities and hinterland authorities in order to combat urban sprawl and promote regional and crossborder cooperations between cities and their hinterland, including leisure and tourist destinations.
10. WELCOMES the promotion of exchange of good practice and demonstration projects on urban issues, the establishment of a thematic portal for local authorities in order to promote the exchange of knowledge and transfer of know-how on urban environment among policy makers and stakeholders, the promotion of capacity building and urban research; INVITES the Commission to consider further activities to develop and promote guidance and tools to improve the quality of the urban environment e.g. by focusing namely on sustainable urban design, planning and construction as well as water issues;
11. CALLS on Member States and cities to implement and facilitate the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment and its proposed areas for action, in particular the environmental management and sustainable transport plans. ENCOURAGES the establishment of national focal points on urban environment issues (e.g. European Urban Knowledge Network) and the collection of urban environment data and a core-set of indicators, e.g. in the context of 'Urban Audit', to enable progress and the environmental performance of European urban areas to be monitored; INVITES the Commission to assess the results of the implementation of the TS and - if appropriate -to propose a revised strategy by 2010.
12. RECOMMENDS that synergies and cooperations with international activities in the field of the urban environment like the UNECE WHO Transport Health Environment Pan European Programme THE PEP, the WHO CEHAPE and other relevant initiatives as well as city networks should be aimed at."

**GMOs**

The Council held an exchange of views on *genetically modified organisms* (GMOs), covering the following issues suggested by the Presidency (9966/06):

- 1) Developments since the last Environment Council meeting and further steps, to be taken;
- 2) Role of the precautionary principle in the authorisation and risk assessment of GMOs and GMO products.

The delegations welcomed the set of measures decided on by the Commission with a view to improving the risk assessment procedures in the context of the current legislation. Certain delegations underlined the importance of applying the precautionary principle in this context.

**BIOFUELS/BIOMASS**

The Council held an exchange of views on the environment aspects of the biofuels/biomass policy covering the following issues suggested by the Presidency (9984/1/06).

The need to ensuring the best synergy between environmental and energy policies was particularly underlined.

It is recalled that the Commission recently adopted an EU strategy on biofuels<sup>1</sup> and a Biomass action plan<sup>2</sup>. Council conclusions on the biomass action plan were adopted by the (Transport, Telecommunications and Energy) Council on 8 June<sup>3</sup>.

In its conclusions of 23/24 March 2006, the European Council called for "*an Energy Policy for Europe, aiming at effective Community policy, coherence between Member States and consistency between actions in different policy areas and fulfilling in a balanced way the three objectives of security of supply, competitiveness and environmental sustainability*". It underlined that, "*to achieve this consistency (...) energy policy has to satisfy the demands of many policy areas*". It, therefore, called for an "*enhanced coordination between the relevant Council formations*".

A strategic energy review will be presented by the Commission by the end of this year, based on preparatory discussions in the later part of 2006.

The outcome of the (Environment) Council's debate will contribute to a prioritised Action Plan to be adopted by the European Council at its 2007 spring session.

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<sup>1</sup> 6153/06.

<sup>2</sup> 15741/06.

<sup>3</sup> See 10042/06

**OTHER BUSINESS**

The Council was briefed by the Presidency on the following items:

- 1) Proposal for a regulation on type approval of motor vehicles with respect to emissions and on access to vehicle repair information (Euro 5) *(10822/06)*
- 2) Conferences:
  - “REACH” (Vienna, 30-31 March 2006) *(10710/06)*
  - “European Sustainable Development Network (ESDN)” (Salzburg, 1-2 June 2006) *(10766/06)*
  - “Green Public Procurement” (Graz, 3-4 April 2006) *(10806/06)*
  - Eighth ordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 8) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (Curitiba, 20-31 March 2006) *(10754/06)*
  - Second Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention on persistent organic pollutants (POPs) (Geneva, 1-5 May 2006) *(10723/06)*

The Council was briefed by the Commission and the Presidency on the following item:

- Third meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (MOP 3) (Curitiba, 13-17 March 2006) *(10751/06, 10767/06)*

The Council was briefed by the Commission on the following item:

- European action on water scarcity and droughts *(10742/06)*

The Council was briefed by the Swedish delegation on the following item:

- Ministerial Meeting within the North Sea Conference (Göteborg, 4-5 May 2006) *(10658/06)*

The Council was briefed by the Spanish, Portuguese, German and Czech delegations on the following item:

- EU legislation for the prevention and management of biowaste (10745/06)

The Council was briefed by the Belgian delegation on the following items:

- Import of wild birds into the European Union (10744/06)
- International Conference on "How to Better Regulate Waste Prevention, Re-use, Recycling and composting at the European Level?" (Brussels, 19-20 June 2006) (10760/06)

The Council was briefed by the Italian delegation on the following item:

- Protected bears

**OTHER ITEMS APPROVED**

**ENVIRONMENT**

**Quotas of hydrochlorofluorocarbons**

The Council adopted, by a qualified majority, a regulation amending Regulation (EC) no 2037/2000 as regards the base year for the allocation of quotas of hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) with respect to the Member States that acceded to the EU on 1 May 2004 (*PE-CONS 3613/06*). The Hungarian delegation abstained.

Regulation (EC) no 2037/2000 on substances that deplete the ozone layer takes 1999 as the base year for allocating quotas of HCFCs. As the HCFCs market in the ten new Member States has changed considerably since 1999 with the arrival of new companies and changes in market shares, average market shares in 2002 and 2003 will be used as the basis for the companies from those Member States.

The regulation will apply from 1 January 2007.

**Financial instrument for the environment - LIFE + \***

Following the agreement on the EU's financial perspectives 2007-2013, the Council adopted a common position with a view to the adoption of a regulation establishing the EU's financial instrument for the environment - LIFE + (*6284/06, 10436/06 ADD 1 REV 1*). The Belgian and Netherlands delegations voted against.

The objective of LIFE+ is to finance the development, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and communication of Community environment policy and legislation, with a view in particular to promoting sustainable development in the EU. LIFE+ will support, in particular, the implementation of the 6<sup>th</sup> environment action programme<sup>1</sup>.

The financial envelope allocated to LIFE+ is of EUR 1,85 million<sup>2</sup>.

The text will be sent to the European Parliament with a view to the second reading.

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<sup>1</sup> Decision 1600/2002/EC, OJ L 242, 10.9.2002, p 1.

<sup>2</sup> At 2004 prices.

### **International river basins agreements**

The Council adopted a decision approving the participation of the Commission, on behalf of the European Community, in negotiations aimed at the conclusion of international river basins agreements to improve cooperation in European river basins shared between certain member states and third countries.

### **Conservation of European wildlife and natural habitats**

The Council adopted a decision establishing the position to be adopted on behalf of the European Community with regard to a proposal for amendments to the Convention on the conservation of European wildlife and natural habitats (Bern Convention) at the annual standing committee meeting, which will take place in Strasbourg (France), on 27-30 November 2006.

The Bern Convention is a binding international legal instrument in the field of nature conservation, which covers the whole of the natural heritage of the European continent and extends to some states of Africa. It is aimed at conserving wild flora and fauna and their natural habitats and at promoting European cooperation in that field.

### **Alpine Convention - Protocols on Soil Protection, Energy and Tourism**

The Council adopted a decision approving, on behalf of the European Community, the Protocol on soil protection, the Protocol on energy and the Protocol on Tourism to the Alpine Convention <sup>1</sup> (10193/06).

The Protocol on soil protection is aimed in particular at safeguarding the multifunctional role of soil based on the concept of sustainable development. Sustainable productivity of soil must be ensured in its natural function, as an archive of natural and cultural history and in order to guarantee its use for agriculture and forestry, urbanism and tourism, other economic uses, transport and infrastructure, and as a source of raw materials.

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<sup>1</sup> The Alpine Convention (OJ L 061, 12.3.1996, p. 32-36) is a framework agreement for the protection and sustainable development of the Alpine region and aims at preserving and protecting the Alps by applying the principles of prevention, "polluter-pays" and cooperation among its members. The contracting parties to the Convention are Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Slovenia, Switzerland and the European Community.

The Protocol on energy requires appropriate measures to be taken in the field of energy saving, energy production, including the promotion of renewable energy, energy transport, delivery and use of energy to foster conditions for sustainable development.

The Protocol on Tourism is aimed at promoting sustainable tourism, specifically by ensuring it is developed and managed taking into consideration its impacts on the environment. To this end, it provides specific measures and recommendations that can be used as instruments for reinforcing the environmental side of innovation and research, monitoring and training, management tools and strategies, planning and authorisation procedures linked to tourism and in particular to its qualitative development.

## **COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY**

### **Georgia/South Ossetia**

The Council adopted a Joint Action regarding a further contribution of the EU to the conflict settlement process in Georgia/South Ossetia<sup>1</sup>. (10183/06)

By means of this Joint Action, a total amount of EUR 140 000 will be afforded to the OSCE to finance meetings of the Joint Control Commission (JCC) and other mechanisms within the JCC framework, to provide for organisation of conferences under the aegis of the JCC as well as to provide certain costs for the running of the two Secretariats for one year.

## **COOPERATION TO DEVELOPMENT**

### **European development fund**

The Council adopted a Decision fixing the financial contribution to be paid by Member States contributing to the European development fund as the second instalment for 2006. (10651/06)

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<sup>1</sup> On 18 July 2005, the Council adopted Joint Action 2005/561/CFSP regarding a further contribution of the European Union to the conflict settlement process in Georgia/South Ossetia, which expires on 30 June 2006.

**Liberia - Financial aid - Rule of law**

The Council adopted a decision lifting conditional measures adopted in 2003 concerning financial support to Liberia, with a view to helping the new Liberian government to continue strengthening respect for human rights, the rule of law and good governance (10116/06).

The decision includes a letter to be sent to the President of Liberia setting out the EU's reasons.

**Relations with Greenland**

The Council approved a joint declaration establishing an enlarged partnership between the EU and Greenland for the period 2007-2013. (10576/1/06 REV 1).

The signature of the joint declaration by the parties took place today in Luxembourg. (Press release 10928/06)

**TAXATION**

**Code of conduct on transfer pricing documentation for EU associated enterprises - Resolution**

The Council and the representatives of the governments of the member states, meeting within the Council, adopted a resolution on a code of conduct on transfer pricing documentation for associated enterprises in the EU.

The code of conduct contained in the resolution provides EU member states and taxpayers with an instrument for the implementation of standardized and partially centralized transfer pricing documentation in the EU, with the aim of simplifying transfer pricing requirements for cross-border activities.

(The text of the resolution can be found in document 10509/1/06).

## **VAT arrangements for businesses: broadcasting services and e-commerce**

The Council adopted a directive extending the period of application of VAT arrangements for electronic commerce until 31 December 2006 (10272/1/06).

The e-commerce arrangements, provided for in directive 2002/38/EC, require the levying of VAT on the provision of broadcasting services and certain electronically-supplied services from third countries.

Adoption of the directive follows agreement at the Council's meeting on 7 June to continue work with a view to reaching agreement by the end of the year on a package of measures aimed at simplifying VAT arrangements for businesses.

## **JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS**

### **Passenger name records**

Following the Court of Justice's judgement of 30 May 2006, the Council endorsed a letter aimed at denouncing the Agreement between the European Community and the United States of America on the processing and transfer of passenger name records (PNR) data by air carriers to the United States Department of Homeland Security, Bureau of Customs and Border Protection.

It also authorised the Presidency, assisted by the Commission, to negotiate a new agreement on the use of PNR data to prevent and combat terrorism and transnational crime, including organised crime. The Presidency, assisted by the Commission, will inform the European Parliament about the negotiations.

The Court of Justice, in joined cases C-317/04 European Parliament v Council and C-318/04 European Parliament v Commission, annulled on 30 May 2006 the Council Decision of 17 May 2004 on the conclusion of the above-mentioned agreement, as well as the Commission Decision of 14 May 2004 (the so-called Adequacy Decision) which was closely linked to the agreement.

The termination will take effect 90 days from the date of this notification, i.e. on the 30 September 2006.

## **Organised crime - Cooperation between asset recovery offices**

Pending the opinion of the European Parliament, the Council reached a general approach on the draft Council decision on arrangements for cooperation between asset recovery offices of the Member States.

It should be noted that the main motive for cross-border organised crime is financial gain. This financial gain is a stimulus for committing further crime to achieve even more profit. Accordingly law enforcement services should have the necessary skills to investigate and analyse financial trails of criminal activity. In order to combat organised crime effectively, information that can lead to the tracing and seizure of proceeds from crime and other property belonging to criminals has to be exchanged rapidly between the Member States of the EU.

It is therefore necessary that close cooperation takes place between the relevant authorities of the Member States involved in the tracing of illicit proceeds and other property that may become liable to confiscation and that provision be made for direct communication between those authorities.

To that end, this decision will allow Member States to put in place national asset recovery offices with competences in these fields and will ensure that these offices can rapidly exchange information.

## **Surrender procedure between the Member States of the EU and Iceland and Norway \***

The Council adopted a decision approving the signature of an agreement on a surrender procedure between the EU Member States and Iceland and Norway (9644/1/06, 9676/5/06).

The agreement is aimed at improving the surrender for the purpose of prosecution or execution of sentence between, on the one hand, the Member States and, on the other hand, Norway and Iceland, by taking account of, as minimum standards, the terms of the Convention of 27 September 1996 relating to extradition between the Member States of the EU.

In accordance with the provisions of the agreement, the contracting parties will ensure that the extradition system will be based on a mechanism of surrender pursuant to an arrest warrant. An arrest warrant may be issued for acts punishable by the law of the issuing State by a custodial sentence or a detention order for a maximum period of at least 12 months or, where a sentence has been passed or a detention order has been made, for sentences of at least four months.

**Fourth Eurojust Annual Report (calendar year 2005) - Council conclusions**

"The Council,

having examined the Annual Report,

recalling that the Eurojust Decision, based on Articles 31 and 34 (2) (c) of the Treaty, lays down the objectives and tasks of Eurojust:

1. Welcomes the fourth Eurojust Annual Report (calendar year 2005)<sup>1</sup> and notes with appreciation that most of the objectives to be achieved in 2005 and as set out in the Annual Report for 2004 have been successfully attained;
2. In particular, draws the attention to:
  - the progress made in the establishment of a consolidated infrastructure and in the development of Eurojust 's capacity to act as the relevant European counterpart for judicial co-operation and co-ordination of cross-border and serious crime;
  - the significant increase in the caseload, namely the fact that 588 cases were handled, i.e. a 54% increase over the 2004 figures and the fact that these were mainly complex cases;
  - the implementation of the Case Management System (CMS) in accordance with the internal data protection rules and the installation of the secure network for internal communication;
3. Takes note of the figures, the caseload assessment and the case illustrations outlined in the Report, which highlight the increased number and quality of the cases dealt with by Eurojust. It requests Eurojust to continue the development of transparent, reliable and detailed statistics on the nature and quality of cases and casework, so that progress may be adequately monitored in the future. In particular, by endorsing Eurojust's assessment concerning the complexity of cases regardless of their bilateral nature, nevertheless invites Eurojust to continue focussing and giving priority to co-ordination cases and to involve, as far as possible, the EJM for the handling of purely bilateral MLA cases;

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<sup>1</sup> Doc. 7318/06 EUROJUST 11

4. Welcomes the fact that in 2005 Eurojust took action under Article 7 (a) of the Decision in two cases and encourages the Unit to continue with a pro-active approach to judicial co-operation. In this regard the Council endorses Eurojust's assessment concerning the objective of making increased use of its power to ask the competent authorities of the Member States concerned to undertake investigations or prosecutions under Article 7 (a) of the Decision.
5. Notes that despite the positive trends in the casework and the increasing involvement of the countries which acceded to the EU in 2004, significant differences between Member States still exist as regards their use of Eurojust. Hence, reiterates the invitation to Member States to take advantage as much as possible of the facilities offered by Eurojust for dealing with serious trans-border criminal cases;
6. Takes note of the assessment procedures carried out by Eurojust with a view to evaluating the effectiveness of the co-ordination meetings, and underlines the importance of the analysis performed on the legal problems and the barriers which have arisen in cases referred to Eurojust, and also with a view to identifying possible shortcomings and, on that basis, enable Eurojust to make proposals for improving judicial cooperation in accordance with Article 32 of the Eurojust Decision. Such assessment should be carried out in a transparent and rigorous manner, together with the competent authorities concerned. Suggests that any conclusions and recommendations drawn by Eurojust from the operational work should be taken into consideration by national and European authorities with a view to improving the effectiveness of the fight against trans-national serious crime;
7. Expresses satisfaction with Eurojust's commitment in the fight against terrorism and welcomes the appointment of national correspondents on terrorism by all Member States. Asks Member States to ensure that information on terrorist investigations and prosecutions be forwarded to Eurojust. Moreover, calls on Member States to implement by June 2006 the Council Decision 2005/671/JHA of 20 September 2005 on the exchange of information and co-operation concerning terrorist offences quickly and effectively;
8. Underlines the importance of the role of Eurojust as regards joint investigation teams and the European Arrest Warrant. With regard to the joint investigation teams, the Council welcomes the initiatives taken by Eurojust and Europol to host the meetings of the informal network of experts on JITs and to produce a guide on national legislations. Encourages Eurojust and the Member States to take all necessary initiatives with a view to enhancing the use of the JITs. The Council recalls the importance of the legal obligation to inform Eurojust about cases where the time limits of the EAW are exceeded, as well as the possibility of seeking its advice in certain cases and asks Member States to fulfil their obligations. Invites the relevant Council working parties to examine the reasons given by Member States for non-compliance with time limits; and asks that this issue be examined in the course of the ongoing 4<sup>th</sup> round of mutual evaluation on the EAW;

9. Underlines, mindful of its previous conclusions of 12.10.2005 on intelligence-led policing and the development of the Organised Crime Threat Assessment (OCTA), the importance of taking into account the advice of Eurojust on the strategic priorities to be adopted on the basis of the OCTA and expects that Eurojust's role in the process will be of significant and growing importance.
10. Notes with regret that the effectiveness of the role of Eurojust in the improvement of judicial co-operation seems to be weakened by the lack of implementation of a number of legislative EU instruments by all Member States. In particular, urges those countries that did not implement the Eurojust Decision to do so and invites all Member States to take all necessary measures to comply with the Decision in order to provide their national Members with the appropriate powers and means to perform their tasks effectively;
11. Invites the Commission to prepare its second report on the legal transposition of the Council Decision of 28.2.2002 setting up Eurojust, as announced in the Council and Commission Action Plan implementing the Hague Programme on strengthening freedom, security and justice in the European Union;
12. Welcomes the progress made in the relationship with other EU bodies, namely EJM, OLAF and Europol. While underlining the importance of establishing synergies between the relevant European counterparts in the field of judicial and police co-operation, the Council invites Eurojust to keep developing such relationships and advises all the parties concerned to consider any possible initiatives to allow the structural obstacles to co-operation to be overcome;
13. Takes note of the advancement of the relationships with third countries, by means of the appointment of contact points and the negotiations of co-operation agreements, and encourages Eurojust to finalise the negotiations with the priority countries scheduled in the list provided to the Council in September 2005<sup>1</sup>;

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<sup>1</sup> Doc. 12527/05 EUROJUST 68 CATS 55

14. Notes that in 2005, a significant development of Eurojust's caseload and infrastructure occurred namely through the increased number of co-ordination meetings held, the consolidation of its internal infrastructure, the installation of the Case Management System and of a secure internal communication network and the expansion of the administrative staff structure. The Council affirms the importance of providing Eurojust with the indispensable budgetary means to enable the Unit to fulfil its tasks effectively, including the completion of the EPOC-III Project for the secure transmission of information between Eurojust and the Member States, and the tasks of the EJM's secretariat, including the adequate development and translation of EJM information tools, while making cost-efficient use of allocated means;
15. Calls upon the relevant parties to find suitable solutions for stable and permanent premises to accommodate Eurojust and Europol, if possible at least in proximity of each other;
16. Invites the Member States, the relevant Council working parties and the Commission to analyse the progress made and to envisage further developments of Eurojust's role for an effective action against serious and organised crime at European level.
17. Invites Eurojust to report in its next Annual Report on the implementation of these conclusions."

**EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA**

**Amendment to the EEA agreement - European security research**

The Council approved a draft decision of the European Economic Area (EEA) joint committee extending cooperation with EEA - EFTA states in EU programmes and actions in the field of research and technological development related to European security research in 2006 (9791/06).

The EEA joint committee must integrate all Community legislation relevant to the EEA Agreement in order to ensure the necessary legal certainty and homogeneity of the internal market.

**TRADE POLICY**

**Tariff quotas**

The Council adopted a Regulation amending Regulation EC/2505/96 opening and providing for the administration of autonomous Community tariff quotas for certain agricultural and industrial products. (9990/06)

**Tariff duties**

The Council adopted a Regulation amending Regulation EC/1255/96 temporarily suspending the autonomous common customs tariff duties on certain agricultural, industrial products and fisheries products. (9993/06)

**Anti-dumping - Seamless pipes and tubes of iron or steel**

The Council adopted a regulation imposing a definitive anti-dumping duty on imports of certain seamless pipes and tubes, of iron or steel originating in Croatia, Romania, Russia and Ukraine, repealing regulations 2320/97 and 348/2000, terminating the interim and expiry reviews of the anti-dumping duties on imports of certain seamless pipes and tubes of iron or non-alloy steel originating, inter alia, in Russia and Romania and terminating the interim reviews of the anti-dumping duties on imports of certain seamless pipes and tubes of iron or non-alloy steel originating, inter alia, in Russia and Romania and in Croatia and Ukraine (10243/06).

**INTERNAL MARKET**

**Motor vehicles**

The Council adopted a Decision on the position of the European Community regarding the adaptation to technical progress of Regulation N° 51 of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. (10611/06)

## **New legislation on chemicals**

The Council, following its political agreement on 13 December 2005, adopted two common positions (7524/06, 7525/06) on:

- the draft regulation for the registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals (REACH), and establishing a European Chemicals Agency<sup>1</sup>
- the draft directive amending Council Directive 67/548/EEC<sup>2</sup> relating to the classification, packaging and labelling of dangerous substances, in order to adapt it to the draft regulation on REACH.

The common positions will be now forwarded to the European Parliament for a second reading under the codecision procedure.

For further information, see press release 10870/06.

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<sup>1</sup> On the basis of this proposal, a European Chemicals Agency is established for the purposes of managing and in some cases carrying out the technical, scientific and administrative aspects of REACH and to ensure consistency at Community level in relation to these aspects.

<sup>2</sup> OJ 196, 16.8.1967, p. 1–98

**AGRICULTURE**

**Codex alimentarius**

With regard to the forthcoming 29th session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, which will take place in Geneva (Switzerland) on 3-7 July, the Council agreed to send to China a letter supporting China's candidature as host of the Codex Committee on Food Additives.

**Drug precursors**

The Council adopted a decision authorising the European Commission to negotiate a bilateral agreement with China on the control of drug precursors.

**FISHERIES**

**Catch documentation**

The Council adopted a regulation amending regulation 1035/2001 on the catch documentation scheme for *Dissostichus* spp. (6609/06).

The regulation takes into account new amendments to the scheme and to a related resolution introduced by the Commission for the conservation of Antarctic marine living resources, in order to improve the control of landings, imports, exports, re-exports and transshipments of *Dissostichus* spp. and to harmonise the implementation thereof.

**Improving Council's Working Methods as regards the adoption of the annual Regulation on fixing the fishing opportunities and associated conditions for fish stocks - *Council Conclusions***

"The Council:

1. ACKNOWLEDGES that over recent years progress has been made in the working methods of Council as regards the adoption of the annual Regulations fixing TACs and quotas. The introduction of frontloading and the presentation of the Baltic Sea fishing opportunities as a separate proposal have contributed in a constructive manner to the legislative process. The introduction of more multi-annual decisions and long term plans, which the Council approved in December 2002, has also made a positive contribution to reducing ad hoc annual decision making.
2. NOTES the Commission's Communication on improving consultation on Community fisheries management<sup>1</sup>.
3. RECOGNISES the need to ensure the availability of scientific advice in good time for the preparation of appropriate proposals at an earlier stage, where this can be done without reducing the quality of the advice, allowing adequate time for the Council, Member States and all stakeholders including RACs to examine and consider the Commission's proposals.
4. UNDERLINES the importance to formally adopt and publish the Regulation in good time in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure, and to allow adequate time for Member States to implement appropriate follow-up measures and for fishing enterprises to plan their fishing operations for the next calendar year.
5. RECALLS its commitment to respect the general principles on the quality of drafting of Community legislation and on better law-making set out in interinstitutional agreements of 22 December 1998 and 16 December 2003.

In order to improve the Council's working methods

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<sup>1</sup> Doc. 9898/06 PECHE 180.

6. INVITES the Commission:
- to examine the timetable of STECF and ICES work with a view to presenting this advice at an earlier stage where appropriate, if possible starting from 2007;
  - to present a policy statement, in April every year, on the general approach to setting TACs and quotas and on associated conditions, in order to conduct a discussion with Member States and stake-holders on the approach on TACs and Quotas and on associated conditions prior to the preparation of legislative proposals;
  - to present its proposals by the first week of September, after consulting the relevant RACs, on stocks where the scientific advice from ICES is available in June (Baltic stocks, deep-sea stocks and some pelagic stocks);
  - to present its proposals as early as possible in November on remaining stocks where the scientific advice from ICES is available in October;
  - for that purpose, to consult the relevant third countries with a view to advancing the timetable for the conclusion of annual consultations;
  - to continue to develop a multi-annual management plan approach;
  - to further explore other possibilities, such as the use of multi-annual TACs and quotas and a separation in different proposals of TACs and quotas from conditions which are not directly associated.
7. INVITES future Presidencies to programme their work so that the Council can conclude its deliberations and reach political agreement on the proposals based on the June advice by the end of October and on the proposals based on the October advice by the end of December, at the latest.
8. REQUESTS the General Secretariat to ensure that the necessary preparatory work is undertaken so that the Regulations can be formally adopted and are published in the Official Journal as soon as is practicable thereafter.

**EDUCATION**

**"Youth in action" programme for 2007-2013**

Following the agreement on the EU's financial framework for 2007-2013, the Council reached a political agreement on a draft decision establishing the "Youth in action" programme for the period 2007-2013. The text agreed will be adopted as a common position at a forthcoming Council meeting and sent to the European Parliament for a second reading.

"Youth in action", successor to the current "Youth" programme, is aimed at providing young people in the 31 participating countries with opportunities for group exchanges and voluntary work, as well as supporting a range of activities and reinforcing cooperation in the youth field.

The main objectives of the programme are the following:

- to promote young people's active citizenship in general and their European citizenship in particular;
- to develop solidarity and promote tolerance among young people, in particular in order to reinforce social cohesion in the EU;
- to foster mutual understanding between young people in different countries;
- to contribute to developing the quality of support systems for youth activities and the capabilities of civil society organisations in the youth field;
- to promote European cooperation in the youth field.

The financial envelope allocated to the programme amounts to EUR 785 million.

## **Lifelong learning**

Following the agreement on the EU's financial framework for 2007-2013, the Council reached a political agreement on a draft decision establishing an action programme in the field of lifelong learning, aimed at providing financial support for the European education sector for the period 2007-2013.

The text agreed will be adopted as a common position at a forthcoming Council meeting and sent to the European Parliament for a second reading.

The new programme will comprise four sub-programmes already existing within the current Socrates programme: Comenius (school education); Erasmus (higher education); Leonardo da Vinci, (vocational education and training); Grundtvig (adult education). It will also include a “transversal” programme incorporating four key activities (policy development, language learning, innovative approaches and dissemination of project results), plus a Jean Monnet programme to support action related to European integration and European institutions and associations. A single programme should permit greater synergies between the different fields of action as well as more coherent, streamlined and efficient modes of action.

The aim of the new programme is both to contribute through lifelong learning to the development of the Community as an advanced knowledge society and to foster interaction, cooperation and mobility between education and training systems within the Community, with the aim of becoming a world quality reference

The financial envelope allocated to the programme is set at EUR 6 200 million.

**APPOINTMENTS**

**Chairman of the EU Military Committee**

The Council adopted a Decision appointing General Henri BENTEGEAT (France) as Chairman of the Military Committee of the European Union (EUMC) for a period of three years as from 6 November 2006.

General Henri BENTEGEAT will replace General Rolando Mosca MOSCHINI (Italy) who took up office as Chairman of the EUMC on 9 April 2004.

The EUMC is the highest military body set up within the Council. It is composed of the Chiefs of Defence of the Member States, who are regularly represented by their permanent military representatives. The EUMC provides the Political and Security Committee (PSC) with advice and recommendations on all military matters within the EU.

**Director-General of the EU Military Staff**

The Council adopted a Decision appointing General David LEAKEY (United Kingdom) as Director-General of the European Union Military Staff (EUMS) as from 1 March 2007.

General David LEAKEY will replace General Jean-Paul PERRUCHE (France) who was appointed Director-General of the EUMS in March 2004.

The EUMS is a Directorate General of the Council General Secretariat. Directly attached to the Secretary General/High Representative, the EUMS performs early warning, strategic planning and situation assessment.

