The same Article stipulates that the Commission is to submit within a given period all proposals ‘it may deem necessary in order to enhance the effectiveness of this Directive’. This provision therefore makes it possible to ensure that the Directive is applied correctly and, where necessary, to put forward additional provisions. Such proposals would not affect the field of taxation inssofar as this Directive is intended as a measure to harmonise intellectual property rights and does not impinge upon the tax regimes of the Member States.


WRITTEN QUESTION E-0266/01
by Richard Corbett (PSE) to the Commission
(8 February 2001)

Subject: Comitology


1. How many instances have there been, under the codecision and other legislative procedures, of new legislation incorporating each of the types of committee procedure provided for in the Decision?
2. Under these new procedures, how many implementing measures have been adopted by the Commission and how many referred to Council under each procedure?


Answer given by Mr Prodi on behalf of the Commission
(4 April 2001)

The Commission would inform the Honourable Member that the data requested are being collected with a view to drafting the first annual report provided for in Article 7(4) of Council Decision 1999/468/EC of 28 June 1999 laying down the procedures for the exercise of implementing powers conferred on the Commission.

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0308/01
by Konstantinos Hatzidakis (PPE-DE) to the Commission
(13 February 2001)

Subject: Desertification threatens Greece

In recent years the speed of desertification of Greece’s territory has been accelerating. According to data from the National Committee to Combat Desertification, 30% of Greece’s territory is at risk of becoming desert in the immediate future. The problem is particularly serious in eastern regions of Central and Northern Greece (Thessaly, Macedonia, Thrace), in Southern Greece (the Peloponnese), in the Aegean islands and in most of Crete.

1. What data does the Commission possess on desertification in Greece?
2. What are the factors which are causing this phenomenon?
3. What are the consequences of the disturbance of the ecological equilibrium by desertification?
4. Has the Commission been notified by the Greek Government of the steps it intends to take to tackle the problem of desertification?
The Commission realises that the problem of desertification is a threat in certain regions of the Member States, and more particularly Greece.

Desertification is a complex problem involving, at one and the same time, physical, chemical and biological processes in interaction with human activity. According to certain climate models climate change is likely to intensify this phenomenon, more especially around the Mediterranean Basin.

Several Community research programmes have helped in studying the deterioration of soils and desertification in the southern regions of Europe since the 1990s; At the moment, as part of the Fifth framework programme for research and technological development (RTD), the programme for environmental research and sustainable development (key activity relating to global change) includes a specific topic on this subject in support, in particular, of the United Nations Convention on the fight against desertification. The results of research are regularly presented at, for example, the International Conference held in Crete (Greece) in October 1996. This was intended to provide the link between research results and political implications (see publications EUR 17782 and 19303). Other RTD publications upgrading project results also help better to understand the problems involved, and more especially in Greece where the Greek scientific Community is, moreover, maintaining a presence in several European projects. Report EUR 18882 (Manual of key indicators of desertification and mapping areas that are environmentally sensitive to desertification) puts forward an approach methodology that has been tested, inter alia, throughout the island of Lesbos. As part of this group a ‘concerted action – Medrap (Concerted action to support the northern Mediterranean regional action programme to combat desertification)’ that is currently being funded by the Commission, is aimed at building bridges between science and action on the ground. The countries set out in Annex 4 to the Convention, thus including Greece, are represented in this.

In general terms, the activities of the European Community under the United Nations Convention are set out in a publication (Fighting desertification and soil deterioration) introduced at the most recent Parties’ Conference held in Bonn in December 2000.

Moreover, at national level, the Greek National Action Plan required by the abovementioned Convention, also provides pointers as to the direction being taken by the activities selected by that country.

In addition during the 1994-1999 programming period roughly €17 million were committed under the Community’s Interreg IIC ‘Drought’ for Greece in order to conduct studies on the prevention of desertification and for water supply and management products. The Community’s contribution was €10,374 million.

As part of the new programming period for the Structural Funds this problem was recognised as being an area where Greece will have to take remedial action; Thus as part of the Community support system for Greece covering 2000-2006 provision is made in Chapter 2.3.5 (‘quality of life’), sub-chapter ‘water’ for more priority to be given in certain regions suffering from desertification such as the Argolis Valley and certain Greek islands. A range of measures directly or indirectly linked with desertification is provided for in the regional programmes, the operational programme (OP) for the Environment and in agri-environmental measures in the rural development programming document jointly financed by the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) – Guarantee Section.

Subject: Shipbuilding

The Commission has recently announced its intention of putting forward a temporary mechanism to protect the European shipbuilding industry against the unfair competition from Korea to which it has been exposed for years; this mechanism might possibly be in operation from 1 May 2001.