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**REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL
AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

**ON THE EXPERIENCE GAINED IN THE APPLICATION OF COUNCIL DECISION
97/872 OF 16 DECEMBER 1997, ON THE ACTION PROGRAMME PROMOTING
EUROPEAN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS PRIMARILY ACTIVE IN
THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

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ON THE EXPERIENCE GAINED IN THE APPLICATION OF COUNCIL DECISION 97/872 OF 16 DECEMBER 1997, ON THE ACTION PROGRAMME PROMOTING EUROPEAN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS PRIMARILY ACTIVE IN THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

1. INTRODUCTION

This Report is made by the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council in accordance with Article 12 of Council Decision 97/872 (“the Council Decision”) on the Action Programme promoting European environmental non-governmental organisations primarily active in the field of environmental protection (“the Action Programme”). It is made in the light of the experience gained by the Commission in the implementation of the Action Programme during the first three years, 1998-2000, and the experience gained by the beneficiaries (non-governmental organisations – “NGOs”¹) during the same period.

In order to collect information on the Action Programme in a systematic way, a survey was produced, which was disseminated to all the services of the Environment DG (the Programme co-ordinator) and to external stakeholders (present and previous beneficiaries²). The aim of the survey was twofold:

- To compile information on how the provisions of the Programme and their implementation had been perceived in the past by the Commission and the NGOs in order to produce a Report for the Parliament and the Council in accordance with Article 12 of the Council Decision.
- To compile information on how the provisions of the Programme could be amended to better fit the needs of the Commission and the stakeholders in case of a renewal of the Programme. This would then require a Draft Proposal for a new Council Decision (in co-decision procedure with the European Parliament).

The general objective of the Programme is to promote the activities of NGOs, which are primarily active in the field of environmental protection at a European level by contributing to the development and implementation of Community environmental policy and legislation. The financial contributions granted under this financial instrument (covering both ‘running costs’ and activities) are meant to enable environmental NGOs to carry out a number of activities for the benefit of Europe’s environment and society as a whole. These NGO activities include, among others, bringing the citizens closer to the European Union by making EU policies comprehensible and relevant to everybody as well as the provision of channels for feedback to the Commission of citizens’ views and concerns. Furthermore, NGO activities contribute to the policy making process by their participation in different experts’ groups and committees and by their provision of expertise input according to their different

¹ As defined in the Discussion Paper “The Commission and non-governmental organisations: Building a Stronger Partnership” under point 1.2. “Common characteristics of a non-governmental organisation”, COM (2000) 11, adopted on 18 January 2000.

² Official Journal of the Communities 1999/C 32/14, 2000/C 43/04, 2000/C 293/14.

areas of competence. Awareness raising, by making the general public and decision-makers aware of current and upcoming environmental problems, is also an important activity under the Action Programme, as well as the building and strengthening of civil society³ – mainly within the EU, but also beyond its borders.

Three years have now passed since the Council Decision was adopted on 16 December 1997, and the Programme co-ordinator (the Environment DG) and the NGOs have now had their say on the implementation of the Programme during 1998-2000.

The survey contributions have been compiled and analysed by the Commission and the findings are presented below in accordance with the structure of the Council Decision, article by article, followed by a chapter on General Implementation and a Conclusion.

Budget line B4-3060, under which the Action Programme is financed, has been evaluated by an external contractor during the second part of 2000. The study, which forms part of the Environment DG's programme of evaluations within the framework of the SEM 2000 initiative⁴, has examined the use of B4-3060 over the period 1996-1999 with a view to assessing – and ultimately improving – the deployment of its funds. The findings of this study (the parts, which are relevant to the implementation and performance of the Action Programme⁵) have been duly taken into account in this Report.

2. SURVEY RESULTS

Article 1 of the Council Decision provides the objective of the Programme and defines eligible groups - their field of activity, status and geographical scope. The general objective of the Programme is, as stated above, to promote activities of NGOs, which are “primarily active in the field of environmental protection at a European level by contributing to the development and implementation of Community environmental policy and legislation”. Eligible NGOs are those who are independent, non-profit-making with an environmental objective aimed at the public good.

2.1. Eligible groups

The identification of organisations “primarily active in the field of environmental protection” has not caused any major problems during the first three years of the Programme implementation. In cases of doubt, the Programme co-ordinator and its evaluation team have always consulted the applicant’s official statute, in which the main objective of the organisation is outlined.

The majority of the survey replies show that both the NGOs and the Commission are in favour of keeping the present definition. The main arguments given against expanding the scope of eligible organisations are the limited funds available under the Action Programme, the few available sources within the Commission for providing financial support to European environmental NGOs, the increasing difficulty European NGOs experience in receiving funds

³ For the purpose of this Report, “civil society” is restricted to non-profit activities carried out by citizens (the third sector).

⁴ In 1995, on the initiative of Commissioners Anita Gradin (Financial Control and Fraud Prevention) and Erkki Liikanen (Budget and Administration), the Commission launched a comprehensive initiative called SEM 2000 (Sound and Efficient Management) to change the Institution’s financial and administrative culture. SEM 2000 applies to all Commission services.

⁵ A little less than 40% of budget line B4-3060 has been allocated to the Action Programme annually.

at national and local level, and the fact that other groups (social, development, health, consumer and animal welfare groups, etc) are eligible for funding under other instruments.

But in one of the Commission survey contributions it is argued that NGOs active in Environment & Health issues - a priority area of the Environment DG - are often disqualified for funding. This should be corrected, they state.

It should be noted that some of the present beneficiaries of the Action Programme already have activities in the field of Environment & Health as part of their annual work programmes. But the main objective of these organisations – clearly defined in their statutes – is still to be ‘primarily active in the field of environmental protection’. An inclusion of Health organisations would change the profile of the Programme, as this would mean accepting applications from organisations, which are only partly active in the environmental field (such as Health organisations). This would, of course, also open the door for other NGOs, which are only partly working with environmental protection, such as civil protection groups, consumer groups, etc.

The present situation, in which European environmental NGOs are invited to present their annual work programmes - putting *all* their activities, including salaries, rents, printing costs, etc - in one budget with a view to obtaining a subsidy would then have to be abandoned, as Health organisations could only present *parts* of their work programmes, i.e. their activities in the environmental field. The rest would clearly fall under the domain of ‘social affairs’.

2.1.1. Geographical scope

Only environmental NGOs active “at a European level” (Article 1 of the Council Decision) are presently eligible for funding under the Action Programme. This provision is further specified in the Programme Co-ordinator’s ‘Information Dossier’, which is provided to all applicants together with the application forms (Annex I of this Report). According to this, the Commission invites “European non-governmental organisations whose activities cover all or some of the Member States and countries neighbouring the European Union” to submit applications with a view to obtaining a financial contribution. To be operating “at a European level” means, according to the Information Dossier, that both the structure and the activities of a successful applicant should in principle cover several European countries.

The definition of the geographical scope has given rise to more questions from applicants (and sometimes internally) during the period of 1998-2000 than the definition of eligible fields of activities, but has caused few problems in the actual selection process.

However, greater concern has been raised by external actors (outside the scope of the survey) regarding the geographical *balance* of the organisations selected for funding under this scheme, pointing to the fact that the majority of the beneficiaries in 1998-2000 have been located in Western Europe. Reference to this has also been made within the survey. “A more regional balanced distribution would be needed to secure the implementation of EU policies in all regions within the EU”, an NGO stressed in its survey contribution, as some environmental problems and issues connected to sustainable development (water, agriculture, soil, etc) differ from region to region. A similar concern was also voiced by one of the Commission survey replies, which requested the explicit mentioning of the Mediterranean

area as ‘eligible’ in this context. This concern was also emphasised by the results of the evaluation of budget line B4-3060⁶:

“Although quotas are not recommended, the EC needs to respect diversity and heterogeneity of the NGO community. DG ENV should keep striking the balance between geographical (north/south/east), topics (waste, water, etc.), small/large, European/transboundary, policy/”operational” NGOs”. (Page 193)

It should be noted in this context that a number of European environmental NGOs, which are presently beneficiaries of the Action Programme, have chosen to locate their headquarters in Brussels for the proximity to the European institutions and other important actors in the Environment. This does not mean that they are Belgian organisations. All NGOs selected under the Action Programme have activities in all – or several of the EU Member States, including neighbouring countries.

2.1.1.1. Expansion of the geographical scope

In view of a possible renewal of the Programme, the present geographical scope may have to be reconsidered in light of the Enlargement process and the changes in Europe as a whole (for example, in the Balkans).

The survey results clearly show that, in general, the Commission and the EU environmental NGOs are in favour of including Candidate Countries’ NGOs under the Action Programme – as long as the provisions for being active at a European, multinational level stays (that is, local and national NGOs should still be ineligible) and that an increase of the present budget can be secured. Present and previous beneficiaries of the Programme argue that they are already carrying a heavier financial burden due to increased activities related to Enlargement and for increasing their membership with organisations from the CEECs, which usually have very scarce resources.

The Council Decision as it stands today does not explicitly exclude applications from Candidate Countries’ NGOs, but the requirement for being active (as well as having member organisations) in all – or some – of the EU Member States and neighbouring countries has excluded most of them during the period of 1998-2000.

It should further be noted that the competition between EU-based, multinational organisations with many years of experience in this field is already very tough for the limited funds available under the Action Programme. This makes it even more difficult for fairly new organisations with less ‘know-how’ and less comprehensive work programmes to receive support – an aspect, which was also highlighted by the external evaluation of Budget Line B4-3060 (page 152):

“the choice of larger NGOs working on a European level may mean there is a greater distance between the NGOs and the European citizens or between the Brussels based office and NGOs part of the same network operating at a national level. There are also fears that the new orientations will discourage small (but not necessarily incompetent) organisations while favouring highly-professionalised and well-organised competitors, regardless of which has the better ideas. This is particularly damaging for transboundary projects, covering a small number of member states, for which it is difficult to obtain funding at national level.”

⁶ The Evaluation of the Budget Line B4 3060 “Environmental Awareness and Subsidies”, A study for the European Commission (DG ENV.3), Contract n° B4-3060/2000/191820/MAR/H5.

2.2. Eligible activities

Article 2, which should be read in conjunction with the Annex to the Council Decision (see also 2.6.6 of this Report), defines what activities are eligible under the Action Programme. In response to Point 2 of this article - on the provision of financial assistance for activities, which are of Community interest and which “contribute significantly to the further development and implementation of Community environmental policy and legislation” – the major group of NGOs (the Green Group of Seven) have compiled a ‘non-exhaustive list’ of policy areas, in which they argue to have had an impact (Annex II of this Report). Other consulted NGOs have provided similar lists, relevant to their own area of competence.

Evidence of accomplishments of this kind is, of course, quite difficult to give as the impact on political processes is not always easy to measure. The results of lobbying activities may come after many years of struggle and at that point, it may not be possible to identify what actors were crucial for what part of the outcome – and what other external and/or synergetic circumstances had an important impact on the final result. For applications from ‘newcomers’ under the Action Programme this is even more difficult, as the Commission’s evaluators (it is the experts of the Environment DG’s technical units, who evaluate NGO applications in line with their area of expertise) must try and establish what potential impact the activities of an ‘untried’ organisation could have.

However, the Commission services, which frequently consult with NGOs (in committees and experts’ groups, in ad hoc and regular meetings, as well as in international fora, on a wide range of different issues) usually perceive NGO input as very helpful and important to the policy-making process. This conclusion is shared by the external contractor, who carried out the evaluation of budget line B4-3060:

“Strengthening the relationship between the Commission and NGOs can help both parties to be more successful in achieving their respective goals. NGOs are a major partner of the consultative process, and dialogue between the EC and NGOs is an important complement to the institutional process of policy-shaping.” (*Page 137*)

In a couple of Commission survey replies, it has been suggested that Article 2 should more strictly identify activities, which are related to the Environment DG’s on-going policies and priorities. This should also apply to ‘gender mainstreaming’ and women’s activities in the field of environmental protection, where the present link between Community environmental legislation and women is very weak. Some also argue that the Commission should be in a position to require successful applicants to *add* activities to their work programmes in line with Community environmental policy and legislation (standardisation work has been given as an example).

2.3. Selection criteria

Article 3, which should be read in conjunction with the ‘Information Dossier’, details the Programme’s selection criteria. Although the criteria may seem fairly clear – the Commission wishes to target organisations with a wide geographical scope, a high multiplier effect, with solid and financially feasible activities in line with Community environmental policies, in order to reach and involve as many European citizens and actors in the Environment (local and regional authorities, business and industry, other interest groups, etc) as possible – they have not always been easy to apply in practice. How do you assess “a lasting multiplier effect at a European level” or “a contribution to a multinational approach” – especially for an applicant, which is new to the Commission evaluators?

In the survey, one of the consulted NGOs requested the Commission to clarify what “a sound cost-benefit ratio” means in this context and how this ratio is measured. But in reality, there are no fixed indicators to measure any of the above mentioned criteria. On a related theme, one of the Commission services called for more transparency, in general, in the selection procedure – stressing the need for making crystal-clear the reasons for exclusion. The latter furthermore stressed that the present situation, in which quite a small number of beneficiaries were selected for funding with relatively large amounts of money (more or less the same organisations every year), should be justified. In the Evaluation of the Budget Line B4-3060, a similar concern was raised:

“The key question is whether one achieves, through the selection of NGOs receiving Activity Funding, the involvement of the wider public in policymaking. Therefore it has been argued that the EC should seek a balance between NGOs’ knowledge of the European system and their capacity to express people’s concerns and views. The latter is especially relevant since the 6EAP will probably give a lot of importance to mobilising the citizens. In order to achieve this the selection criteria could for instance be adapted to avoid institutionalisation by rotating NGOs to be funded and not repeat funding to the same NGO in consecutive years. This would give others, that may be more grassroots level organisations the opportunity to build up their capacity concerning EU environmental policy and express the view of their constituencies.”
(Page 175)

It goes without saying that the more times you apply under this instrument – the better you get in knowing the procedure and what it takes to become a successful applicant. It should furthermore be noted that many of the organisations, which have been selected for funding several years in a row, have successively worked up a relationship with different Commission services (as well as with other EU institutions).

NGOs have pointed out that some of the selection criteria, which the Commission has added in the ‘Information Dossier’, are not very clear. In fact, one of the consulted NGOs argues that the “commitment to publicise as widely as possible the current environmental policy of the European Union, including the Community Programme of policy and action in relation to the environment and sustainable development” could be interpreted as a requirement for passive and uncritical distribution of EU information. This organisation would like to see a clearer reference to the helping of Europe citizens to a better *understanding* of Community environmental laws and programmes as well as the encouragement to actively comment on them.

From the above observations it would seem that the present selection criteria are imprecise and would have to be re-defined in a new Programme. It has furthermore been made quite clear during the period 1998-2000, that making reference to the selection criteria in rejection letters to unsuccessful applicants has, so far, not been very efficient. Many of the refused NGOs have come back, requesting clarifications and more details. As there are no fixed indicators how to measure this, all evaluations are in this respect somewhat subjective.

2.4. Activity Funding

Article 4 defines the specific features of the Action Programme – financial assistance, which is given for both activities and administrative costs of a selected NGO (sometimes referred to as “activity funding”). The consultation with the NGOs revealed no wish to change this in favour of another funding model. Instead, they requested the Commission to urgently address the bureaucratic procedures and rigorous control systems involved in this exercise, which they find disproportionate to the sums involved. In addition, they wish to make the Programme

compatible with project funding (see 3.1). The Commission, on the other hand, is in favour of a model, which would limit the Programme to cover only the audited expenses of the beneficiaries, as the inclusion of projects/activities, involving third parties, could have a negative effect on transparency and accountability of reporting.

A ‘business as usual’ approach would hardly be possible. A proposed expansion of the Programme to include Candidate Countries’ NGOs and NGOs of the Balkans, an increase of the budget and limited human resources, as well as new measures introduced by the White Paper on Reforming the Commission, would require a Programme, which takes these aspects into account. A fixed auditing scheme would also have to be foreseen – a measure, which is emphasised by the outcome of the Evaluation of the Budget Line B4-3060 (page 182-183):

“Audits examined in the sample clearly show that the network structure of the largest NGOs can potentially facilitate the channelling of funds to other parts or levels of the organisation. This poses difficulties for the transparency and accountability of reporting. -...- What is to some extent excusable for small NGOs, which received subsidies once in the period and are not necessarily aware of EC procedure, is certainly not for big NGOs, which receive funds almost every year and know EU financial rules. Rigorous and transparent accounting is all the more important for large subsidies. Towards this end the EC should impose better guarantees, in terms of accounting rules.”

2.5. Coherence, consistency and complementarity

Article 5 obliges the Commission to ensure coherence, consistency and complementarity between the Action Programme and other Community programmes and initiatives.

By the nature of the selection procedure, as identified in the ‘Information Dossier’, the Commission has mainly focused on coherence and consistency with the Fifth Environmental Action Programme (5EAP) and its overall provisions for the integration of environmental concerns into all major policy areas and the principle of ‘shared responsibility’ (which means that all areas of activity, which cause environmental problems, should form part of the solution to them). In 1998-2000, financial assistance under the Action Programme (“activity funding”) has been granted only to NGOs whose activities meet the principles underlying the 5EAP. In short, these organisations have actively addressed the priority areas of the 5EAP - manufacturing industry, transport, energy, agriculture and tourism - and have actively sought co-operation with other actors in the Environment (local and regional authorities, business and industry, the general public, other NGOs, etc) in the pursuit of sustainable development.

But as for ‘complementarity’ (as opposed to ‘overlaps’), Article 5 has been quite difficult to adhere to. Although the application forms for funding under the Action Programme oblige potential candidates to account for all other funding received from EU institutions, there is no centralised way in which the Programme co-ordinator could possibly eliminate the risk of overlapping funding⁷.

The ‘self-imposed’ rule of not accepting project funding applications from beneficiaries of ‘activity funding’ under the Action Programme (see 3.1) has, at least, stopped the Environment DG from funding overlapping activities.

⁷ The establishment of a Contracts Data Base is presently being discussed by the Commission and such a data base might be introduced during the implementation of a new Action Programme.

2.6. Time frame, budget and the calculation of contributions

Article 6 defines the Programme length, the available budget, the rate of overall Commission assistance and the possibility of accepting in-kind costs – up to a level of 10% of total eligible costs, when assessing environmental NGOs' revenue and costs.

This article has attracted more attention and longer survey replies than any other article of the Council Decision, as it provides – together with the eligibility criteria (Article 1) – the very basis for the Action Programme.

2.6.1. Programme length

In addition to the overwhelming majority for a renewal of the Programme displayed by both NGO and Commission survey replies, there is also a strong desire to increase the Programme duration from 4 years to, at least, 5 years. This would secure the continuation of NGO activities at the European level by providing sufficient time for the NGOs to plan their medium and – to some extent – long term strategic priorities. A decision to extend the Programme period would also take into account the considerable work and time needed for the legislative process to put all elements of a new Programme in place.

- A proposal for a renewed Programme of five years, covering the period 2002-2006, would have the benefit of following the current budget and major political agreements already made within the EU, as well as following the same time period as for all pre-accession funds.
- It would also be aligned with the [Proposal for a Sixth Environment Action Programme]⁸, which sets the political framework for the next five to ten years.

2.6.1.1. Multi-annual funding

The possibility of introducing a multi-annual funding scheme has been discussed both within and outside the scope of the survey and has quite a large number of advocates both among the NGOs and within the Commission. Such a Programme would save administration work and time both for the Commission (and thus reduce the overhead costs of running the Programme) and the NGOs, as well as ensuring continuity. But it would also have other implications. A multi-annual scheme would imply a variable annual budget, as the Commission would be obliged to commit the full amount the first year. The Commission could, of course, elaborate a 2 or 3 year payment schedule combined with an enhanced monitoring/assessment system, based on interim reporting. If the Commission is not satisfied with the interim reports, it could stop the contract and de-commit the money, but the appropriations would be lost.

Bearing in mind the limited funds available to the co-ordinating DG (the Environment DG) on budget line B4-3060 (around 7 Million EUROS per year) for covering a wide range of different information and communication activities (that is, not just NGO funding), a multi-annual NGO funding scheme with, for example, two-year contracts, would require almost the whole budget allocation of B4-3060 for the first year of implementation just to cover the subsidies of the main NGOs.

⁸ Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the sixth environment action programme of the European Community, 'Environment 2010: Our future, Our choice', COM (2001) 31.

2.6.2. Available budget

It is quite clear that the competition for the limited funds available under the Action Programme has increased considerably during the period 1998-2000. In 2000, the Commission received 66 applications (for a total amount of 8,424,406 EURO) compared to 1999 when it received 44 applications (for a total amount of 5,375,999 EURO). This represents a 50% increase in the number of files and a 56.7% increase of the amount requested. 18 were subsequently selected for funding in 2000 at a total of 2.56 Million EURO.

But besides the increased competition, the demands placed on the NGOs during the period 1998-2000 have also increased. The consulted NGOs highlight three main areas – in order to support their request for a substantial increase of the budget - in their survey replies:

- **European Governance.** In the Commission Communication Strategic objectives 2000-2005 “Shaping the new Europe”, the Commission has set itself the task of promoting new forms of European Governance. This means, in short, giving people a greater say in the way Europe is run and the building of new forms of partnership between different levels of governance in Europe to make the institutions work more effectively and transparently. In the Communication, the Commission also acknowledges that “European citizens have little sense of ownership over the structures that govern their lives”. The NGOs thus highlight that they play an increasing role in bridging this gap and in assisting the EU institutions to reach European citizens – a task, which requires additional funds.
- **EU Enlargement.** All European environmental networks have increased their membership, as NGOs from the Candidate Countries have joined. This has increased the need for additional activities and co-ordination, which – in terms of costs – can seldom be balanced by newcomers’ contributions as many of them still have very scarce resources.
- **Integration Process.** The integration of environmental protection and sustainable development into all policy areas of the EU is a key demand of the EC Treaty (cf. “Cardiff process”). This means, in short, that environmental NGOs today deal with nearly all aspects of European policy. While welcoming this development, the NGOs stress that the integration aspect has put an increased demand on the NGOs for a widened expertise as they are now contacted by almost all DGs for input – and this entails costs both for additional staff and preparation.

The reference amount for the present Programme is 10.6 Million EURO for the full Programme Period (1998-2001). In light of the above – the increased competition for funding, an increased workload placed on the NGOs and the fact that the first Candidate Countries are programmed to join as full EU Members between 2003-2005 – an increase from today’s average of 2.65 Million EURO per year may have to be considered.

2.6.3. The rate of overall financial assistance

Article 6 provides for an overall Community assistance, which should not – in principle – exceed 50% of the budgeted activities and the administrative costs of a successful applicant. This article has not been an easy one to adhere to for the NGOs during the period of 1998-2000 – in fact, many of them have had difficulties in finding the 50% of ‘matching funds’, which is required.

One of the Commission survey contributions stresses that the phrase “in principle” leaves room for interpretation and that it should be made clear when the 50% could be exceeded. An example of a case where they believe that the 50% ‘cap’ should be lifted is for funding NGOs involved in European standardisation work - as these groups would have difficulty finding 50% of ‘matching funds’ for this kind of activity.

In the survey replies, the major NGOs (G7) make reference to the discussions, which took place before the Action Programme was adopted, highlighting the fact that the Commission and the European Parliament agreed to go for a 60% ‘ceiling’ - but then the Council decided unanimously to reduce it to 50%.

All NGOs (including the G7) are in favour of trying to raise the ceiling again - to 60, 75 or even 100%. The ones in favour of a 100% ceiling stress that this is not to say that the Commission should be obliged to give support of 100% to selected NGOs, but it would give the Commission “the opportunity and obligation to look at the real situation, which NGOs face and to understand their opportunities as well as their constraints better.” Other NGOs argue that a 60% ‘cap’ would suffice, to allow for more flexibility for environmental groups without compromising their integrity.

A flexible percentage up to 100% would in theory have been feasible up to 13 December 2000⁹. But such a funding policy would, no doubt, raise questions of integrity and independence. It could furthermore be argued that instead of making a 100% contribution, the Commission could equally well launch a Call for Tenders for a business contract, by which the Commission could specify in detail what it is looking for as well as be the ‘owner’ of the end result. The question of independence has also been raised by the external evaluator of budget line B4-3060:

“The sustainability of most European NGOs is generally weak. Most NGOs receiving Activity Funding are extremely dependent on the EC and receive little from their members to whom they should be finally accountable as they are supposed to represent them.” (*The Evaluation of the Budget Line B4-3060, page 106*), and

“core-funding to NGOs is indispensable to the EC to feed the policy process: expertise, information channel, participation, etc. But, in no circumstance should NGOs take those subsidies for granted and consider that they will continue endlessly. As a general rule NGOs should in future secure more financial independence, requesting higher contribution from their network of members.” (*The Evaluation of the Budget Line B4-3060, page 184*)

Any decision on a ceiling for financial assistance under this Programme would have to take into account such aspects as the inclusion or exclusion of ‘in kind’ contributions, transfers of funds to partners/subcontractors, and the eligibility or ineligibility of Candidate Countries NGOs and NGOs of the Balkans.

2.6.4. In-kind contributions

Voluntary work is the core of all NGO activities, and consulted NGOs are thus in favour of keeping it as one of the provisions of a new Programme. In the present Action Programme, unpaid work or donations in kind, if properly documented, may be taken into account, up to a

⁹ According to the new norms for internal control (Action 78 du Livre Blanc) adopted on 13 December 2000, all Commission grants must henceforth involve co-financing. Financing up to 100% is thus no longer an option.

level of 10% of total eligible costs, when assessing environmental NGOs' revenue and costs (Article 6, point 3 of the Council Decision). If possible, many of the consulted NGOs would like to see this level increased.

“The restrictions on unpaid work or donations in kind are crippling for small, effective NGOs, especially in the way in which they are interpreted. As noted for (*Question 13 of the Survey*), it is very difficult for bodies working at the EU or European scale to secure local or national funds, and commercial sponsorship now tends to favour local causes. One of the few areas in which it is still possible to secure significant support is by donations in kind, staff secondments, donated time etc.” (*NGO survey contribution*)

But according to the financial service of the Programme co-ordinator, unpaid work or donations in kind usually create more problems than they solve, as they are difficult to account for and therefore do not provide a sound basis for eligible costs. They would instead suggest a stricter definition of eligible costs and allow a higher EU contribution rate (See 2.6.3).

2.6.5. Programme management

Article 7 provides details on the timing of the Call for Proposals (the announcement must be made in the Official Journal before 31 January every year) and the deadline for the Commission's decision of organisations to be financed (31 May).

All consulted NGOs unanimously state that it would make much more sense for the Commission to launch the Call for Proposals in the early autumn of the year *preceding* the grant year, and to announce the list of beneficiaries before the start of the grant year. This would mean that the annual work programmes presented by the NGOs in their applications would actually be funded by the grant from the Commission (thanks to an alignment with the calendar year). As it stands now, the Commission decision is not taken until the end of May, which usually means that funds do not arrive until August or September of the year for which the subsidy is intended. This can create quite serious cash-flow problems for NGOs.

Such an alignment with the calendar year would also be welcomed by the Programme co-ordinator.

Article 8 defines the Commission's obligation of ensuring the success of activities carried out by NGOs under this Programme. This involves keeping a proper monitoring system, which allows for the Commission to make on-the-spot checks and gives it the right and duty to recover sums, which have been improperly used. The article also defines the obligations of beneficiaries to keep supporting documents regarding expenditure incurred during the co-financed year for a period of five years following the last payment.

Consulted NGOs argue that the current system is too focused on accounting reports and inspections, and too little on the evaluation of the impact of NGO activities. The control system is too rigorous and does not correspond to the relatively small amounts of money that are allocated to the NGOs. A reflection should be made on how to reduce the administrative burden on the Commission in the management of this Programme, they argue.

However, in this context it should be noted that Action 81 “Strengthening the role of the DG's control function” (A White Paper on Reforming the Commission – Part II, Action Plan) rather provides an *increase* of systematic ex-post evaluations than a decrease:

“An Audit Capability will be created in each DG.... This function will undertake an independent review of the use made of the budget by the DG, and undertake systems, programme and performance reviews, and ex-post checks on activities in the field.”

The need for improved ex-post evaluations is further stressed by the results of the study of budget line B4-3060:

“However, *ex-post* evaluation in case of ...Activity Funding is still deficient, due to lack of staff time invested. *Ex-post* evaluation is not currently regarded as a priority. Co-operation with technical units should be more systematic and could be significantly improved.” (Page 131)

Article 9 provides the measures that the Commission may take against a beneficiary in case of irregularities or failure to respect the details of the contract. The article also provides the obligation of the beneficiary to repay any undue payment.

No grave irregularities have been detected during the examined period 1998-2000. But in light of ex post evaluations (final reports and internal audits), NGOs have been requested to reimburse any discovered surpluses or ‘ineligible costs’. The calculation of eligible costs has sometimes caused disagreement between the Commission and NGOs – quite often related to ‘in-kind contributions’ (Point 2.6.4.) – but issued reimbursement orders have always been duly paid by the beneficiaries.

Very little has been said by the NGOs on Article 9. One NGO has requested the Commission to respect the provisions of the Vademecum on Grant Management on allowing beneficiaries to carry over any surplus of maximum 5% of the total income to the following grant year.

Article 10 defines the monitoring obligation of any co-financed activity by the Commission. In order to comply with this provision, the Commission makes random visits to selected NGO meetings, workshops, conferences and other activities during the Programme period to see that proposed activities are really carried out. Furthermore, the beneficiaries must provide – at the end of the contract period – evidence of all activities carried out under this period. These could be, for example, copies of magazines, newsletters, press releases, reports, books, CD-ROMs, videocassettes, etc.

“Overall the rate of achievement in the activity funding sample examined is fairly good and activities are in general well accounted for. In general, beneficiary NGOs have accomplished most of foreseen activities and final reports clearly specify the output of their work.” (*The Evaluation of the Budget Line B4-3060, page 104*)

Under its Audit Programme, the Programme co-ordinator also carries out annual audits on co-financed NGO programmes, chosen at random from the list of beneficiaries.

Article 10 has given rise to no particular concern of the NGOs or the Commission.

Article 11 obliges the Commission to publicise the results of the selection of beneficiaries under the Action Programme. This article has been well adhered to during the period 1998-2000, and the results have been duly published in both the Official Journal of the Communities as well as on the Environment DG’s web site. No comments have been made to this article in the survey replies by either the Commission or the consulted NGOs. But an earlier Call for Proposals and an earlier decision by the Commission on what organisations to co-finance (as suggested in the survey) would, consequently, result in an earlier publication of the beneficiaries – more in line with the calendar year.

Article 12 defines the obligation of the Commission to report to the Parliament and the Council on the implementation of this Programme. No comments have been made to this article in the survey replies by either the Commission or the consulted NGOs.

2.6.6. Annex – definition of areas of eligible activities

With reference to **the Annex**, the NGO survey replies displayed an overwhelming call for it to be reconsidered - or even deleted. This detailed, quantified description of eligible activities creates a difficult framework for the “programme of activities”, as there are numerous overlaps. In an oral consultation session on 16 October 2000, the NGOs described their difficulties in placing their activities in any one group. Most activities undertaken by the NGOs cover all – or many of - the indicated priority areas and therefore the Annex does not help in drawing up the work programme. It should be stressed that the Annex has caused the same difficulties for the Programme co-ordinator in evaluating applications under this Programme, as it has been almost impossible to measure and place the activities proposed by the NGOs under any one heading.

It has furthermore been requested in Commission survey contributions that “eligible activities” should be more strictly related to the Environment DG’s on-going policies and priorities.

3. GENERAL IMPLEMENTATION

From the survey results it is clear that few of the articles of the present Council Decision have been perceived as ‘difficult to understand’ or as too ‘theoretical’. Where there have been discussions between the Commission and the beneficiaries, they have been related to the Programme co-ordinator’s interpretation and implementation of the articles.

3.1. Incompatibility with project funding

The rule introduced by the Programme co-ordinator not to accept project funding applications from those organisations, which are receiving ‘activity funding’ under the Action Programme, has been heavily criticised by some of the NGOs. The Programme co-ordinator introduced the rule of “one NGO, one budget” in 1998 in order to secure the financial management of the Programme, to increase transparency and to adhere to budgetary constraints. The experience gained by the Commission in the years preceding the introduction of the rule (when ‘activity funding’ and ‘project funding’ were still regarded as compatible) led to the decision to invite European environmental NGOs to present *all* of their activities in one budget once a year, which then excluded them from applying for project funding and ‘ad hoc’ funding. Prior to the introduction of the ‘exclusion rule’, funds for different NGO projects had been granted in a decentralised way, which led to a situation where the sound financial management of funds was no longer secured. The Commission ran the risk of funding overlapping activities and the justification for this concern was later confirmed.

The NGOs, on the other hand, argue that the accounting systems of the NGOs have improved and there is no reason to believe that beneficiaries of both ‘activity funding’ and ‘project funding’ could not account for these sources separately and in an adequate and transparent way. This is already being done, they say, as many beneficiaries of the Action Programme also receive funding from other DGs and still manage to keep the different accounts separated.

They furthermore argue that the ‘exclusion rule’ goes against the Vademecum on Grant Management as the latter does not exclude ‘core funding’ beneficiaries from applying for project grants, which is true.

However, it should be noted that the Action Programme is not a ‘core funding’ instrument in a strict sense, as it covers both running costs and activities of a selected NGO. That is why it is referred to as “activity funding” (see 2.4).

And as the Vademecum provides minimal Commission standards for grant management – and thus allows individual DGs to impose stricter rules – the Programme co-ordinator has taken this stance with reference to the above reasons.

A few Commission survey contributions have revealed that they are in favour of abolishing the ‘incompatibility rule’ as they argue that it causes “managerial difficulties”. What happens is that national members of co-financed European NGOs submit project applications in order to avoid this rule - although the projects may be more closely connected to the activities of the umbrella organisation than its national members and could be better run at a European level.

3.2. Late payments

A regular complaint by the beneficiaries of the Action Programme is related to late payments (not only related to the timing of the Call for Proposals as described in 2.6.5.).

After the completion of a contract, NGOs are requested to provide a Final Report (accounting for activities carried out, expenditure incurred and income received during the funded period). This Report is usually due at the end of March. One of the reasons why final payments are sometimes late is due to the fact that the Commission receives the final reports for the past year during the same period as it is evaluating the applications for funding in the present year. All Final Reports are scrutinised for any deviations to the agreed contract and the final instalment depends on the outcome of this evaluation.

This evaluation process – covering both activities and the financial side of all completed NGO programmes – is quite time consuming and demands the attention of a number of officials. It is correct that the Commission during the period 1998-2000 has not always been able to adhere to the 60 days delay foreseen in the contract.

In this context, it should be noted that the deadline set for the Final Reports has not always been respected by the NGOs.

3.3. Transfer of funds

Another NGO concern is the strict rules governing what is actually recognised as ‘matching funds’. The beneficiaries of the Action Programme are umbrella organisations or European co-ordination offices for a number of national, regional and local member organisations. These members implement activities in the framework of the (co-financed) work programme of the European organisation. They then raise matching funds for the contribution, which comes from the Commission. But if the matching funds are not transferred to a bank account in the name of the Action Programme beneficiary (that is, the European organisation), it is not taken into account.

This is, however, regulated by the Vademecum on Grant Management under 1.2 General terms and conditions applicable to European Community operating grant agreements (Part B on Financial Provisions, Article 7 – Eligible costs): “To be considered eligible, costs must - ... - have actually been incurred, be recorded in the **beneficiary**’s accounts and tax documents, and be identifiable and controllable.”

4. CONCLUSIONS

The collective experience gained by both the Commission and consulted NGOs (including all present and previous beneficiaries), as outlined in the survey replies, indicates that the Programme should be renewed, preferably for a period of 5 years – but with certain modifications, such as an expansion of the geographical scope in order to include Candidate Countries’ NGOs and NGOs of the Balkans. The evaluation of budget line B4-3060 (under the SEM 2000 initiative), which comprises an in-depth analysis of the efficiency and justification of this financial instrument, has been duly taken into account and the results of this study support the conclusions of this Report for a renewal:

“Notwithstanding some inevitable failures, the completion rate of expected activities is good overall. The usefulness of Activity Funding is evident as it better enables European NGOs to participate in and contribute to the decision making process.” (*The Evaluation of the Budget Line B4-3060, page 10*)

A renewal of the Action Programme is also supported by the [Proposal for a Sixth Environment Action Programme], which provides for a continuation of NGO funding to environmental NGOs in order to facilitate participation in the dialogue process.

The strategic approach of the [Proposal for a Sixth Environment Action Programme] recognises the need for empowering citizens, and the measures proposed include extensive and wide-ranging dialogue with stakeholders in environmental policy-making. The Programme also foresees co-operation with environmental NGOs in the Candidate Countries in order to raise awareness.

ANNEX I

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

Recommendations for the presentation of proposals

The European Commission published a Call for the submission of proposals under the above-described programme in the Official Journal no. **C 319 of 6.11.99**. The following recommendations are designed to help potential candidates in deciding whether to apply and in formulating their applications.

1.Context and objectives

Under the terms of Council Decision No. 97/872/EC of 16.12.97 (see Annex D), the Commission invites European non-governmental organisations whose activities cover all or some of the Member States and countries neighbouring the European Union to present proposals with a view to obtaining a financial contribution. This contribution would be towards costs inherent in carrying out the activities provided for in their annual work programme (maximum 12 months). Applicant organisations should be operating at a European level. This means that their structure and activities should in principle cover several European countries.

Application for funding under this Call for Proposals excludes any other application for funding to the Environment Directorate-General.

Financial assistance under this Call for Proposals (subject to the availability of funds) may be provided for activities which are of Community interest, contribute significantly to the further development and implementation of Community environmental policy and legislation and meet the principles underlying the Fifth Environmental Action Programme.

The areas of activity eligible for Community financial assistance are defined in the Annex to the Council Decision, which also indicates the proportion of funding which will be assigned to each area of activity.

Beneficiaries will be selected on the basis of the criteria set out in this call for the submission of proposals and the availability of funds. Moreover, the decisions taken will concern 2001 and in no way represent a commitment for subsequent years.

2. Eligibility criteria

Consideration will be given only to proposals from organisations:

- which are independent and non-profit-making, primarily active in the field of environmental protection, with an environmental objective aimed at the public good;
- which are active at a European level, (i.e. not simply at national level)
- which have an administrative and financial management structure,

- whose financial resources are not exclusively made up of subsidies from European Union institutions.

3. Selection criteria

When the proposals are examined, the beneficiaries will be selected on the basis of the following criteria:

- A sound cost-benefit ratio
- a lasting multiplier effect at European level,
- an effective and balanced co-operation among any partners with regard to: planning of activities, carrying out of activities and financial participation,
- a contribution to a multinational approach and in particular to cross-border cooperation within the Union, and, if appropriate, extending beyond its frontiers with neighbouring countries,
- the capacity to promote dialogue and co-operation between the partners identified in the Fifth Action Programme such as NGOs, small and medium-sized enterprises, local and regional authorities, etc. in order to encourage lasting changes in the behaviour of the parties concerned,
- the extent of representativity within the movement concerned,
- the capacity to favour a multisectoral approach to the environment,
- the quality of co-operation and dialogue between the association and its members through regular exchanges of information,
- the capacity to demonstrate the financial feasibility of the annual programme of activities by means of a realistic, reasonable and balanced budget,
- the commitment to publicise as widely as possible the current environmental policy of the European Union, including the Community programme of policy and action in relation to the environment and sustainable development.

4. Financial conditions

Annex B sets out the financial conditions applicable to all types of financial assistance given by Environment Directorate-General of the Commission. They are to be read in conjunction with the conditions set out in the Council Decision establishing the action programme for promoting environmental NGOs which provides that the Commission may finance in principle up to 50% of the budgeted activities and administrative costs. If the application is successful the Commission will co-finance a percentage of the total eligible expenditure in accordance with the attached financial conditions (Annex B).

These conditions will form an integral part of the agreement concluded with each beneficiary.

Applicants' attention is drawn in particular to the following provision of the Council Decision:

“In order to be able to receive a grant in excess of ECU 150,000 an NGO's accounts for the preceding two years must be certified by a registered auditor, and the accounts for the period in which the grant is used must also be certified by a registered auditor. To receive a grant of less than ECU 150,000 an NGO's accounts must be available in a form recognised by the Commission for the preceding two years and maintained in this form for the period in which the grant is used.”

This means in practice that each applicant must be prepared to make its accounts available in the required form to the Commission at very short notice once their application has been shortlisted for funding.

5. Presentation of a request

The request must be drawn up in one of the official languages of the European Union, preferably English or French, to facilitate processing the volume of requests expected, and accompanied by an official letter explicitly requesting the subsidy. It should include Annex A to this document, duly filled by machine (not handwritten), as well as full details of the applicant's bank account.

Applications should include a description of the activities of the organisation in Point 2 of Annex A. Please enclose a detailed and accurate programme of anticipated activities for the organisation's 2000 financial year. This should cover all activities such as: participation in co-ordination actions between member associations, annual meetings, information measures for members (newsletters), preparation of reports, publications etc.

Each activity will be the subject of a separate descriptive sheet including a description of the activity in question, its objectives and target audience, indicative timetable and the anticipated results. When drawing up applications, applicants should bear in mind the schema set out in the annex to the Council Decision, which defines the areas of activity eligible for Community financial assistance and indicates the proportion of funding which will be assigned to each area.

Although the financial assistance will be granted only on the basis of the programme planned for 2000, please also enclose a summary of activities carried out during the previous year for guidance.

6. Procedure for the submission and appraisal of requests

Proposals must be submitted (postmarked) by 17th January 2000 at the latest to the following address:

European Commission
Environment Directorate-General
Saturnino Munoz Gómez
Head of Unit ENV.5
TRMF 00/74
Rue de la Loi 200
B-1049 Brussels
Tel. (0032) 2/2999332

All the documents required for a proposal must be sent in triplicate to the above address. They should be presented in A4 form.

The complete proposal must be sent, in the form indicated in point 5, by registered letter. Faxes, delivery by hand, incomplete or insufficiently detailed dossiers or dossiers sent in several parts will not be accepted.

The procedure for the appraisal of a request is as follows:

- receipt, recording and acknowledgement of receipt by the Commission,
- examination by the services of the Commission,
- formulation of the final decision and communication of the result to the applicant.

The decision of the Commission is final.

The entire procedure is strictly confidential. In the event of approval by the Commission, a single contract covering all the activities to be co-financed (expressed in EURO) will be concluded between the Commission and the party submitting the proposal.

Applicants should note that due to the volume of applications expected the evaluation process will probably take several months. However, it should be completed by 31 May 2000. The expected volume of applications also means that the Commission must be very strict in applying the selection criteria and in eliminating applications which are not presented according to the specifications set out above. Please read carefully all information supplied and check that you have fulfilled all the requirements. Any omissions or mistakes could lead to your application being refused.

- ANNEXES:
 - A. Administrative information
 - B. Legal and Financial conditions
 - C. Model of Contract
 - D. Text of the Council Decision 97/872 of 16.12.1997. Official Journal L354 of 30.12.1997.

Supporting documentation to be annexed to the request for subsidy

Documents to be annexed systematically to the request for subsidy

- (1) **Duly completed annex A (the fields indicated in bold-type are obligatory, all incomplete requests will be systematically rejected)**
- (2) **Annual accounts of the applicant of the previous accounting period**
- (3) **Official statute and certificate of legal registration**
- (4) **Curriculum vitae of the people who will complete the tasks connected to the activities to be subsidised.**
- (5) **Annual activity report of the organisation for the previous year**
- (6) **Official letter of request of subsidy**

Documents to be annexed if they exist

- (1) List of the members of the administration or executive board (names, title or function within the applicant organisation)
- (2) Audit certificate less than two years old from an agreed auditor
- (3) Financial guarantee
- (4) References concerning (in addition to references requested at point 1.5) projects which benefit (or have benefitted) from other international organisations or Member States of the European Union

ANNEX A ACTIVITY FUNDING

Standard form for request of subsidy *(to be completed if possible in English or French)*

1. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION RELATIVE TO THE APPLICANT

1.1 Identity of applicant

Organisation name (full legal name):

Abbreviated name (if applicable):

Acronym (if applicable):

Legal registration number (if applicable):¹⁰

Legal status of applicant :

Name and Title (Function) of the person entitled to enter into legally binding commitments on behalf of the applicant organisation:

Name and Title (Function) of the person responsible for the technical aspects:

Address of the applicant

Street:

N°:

Post Code:

Town:

Country:

Tel :

Fax :

e-mail :

NB : All areas indicated in bold-type must be completed, incomplete applications will systematically be refused.

¹⁰ The eventual approval of applicants by Member States may constitute an alternative to the request for this information. p/ghu/docs/kitzmanen.doc (Rev. 3 of 10 Nov. 1998 at 12.00 hrs)

1.2 Banking reference of applicant (please include a document from accounting service or bank of applicant, signed by the person authorised to legally commit the applicant organisation)

NB : The bank account must be open in the country of the head office of the applicant :

Name of the bank:

Street:

N°:

Post code:

Town:

Country:

Bank codes, sort code etc...

Number of bank account:

Bank account holder :

1.3 Summary of general activities and aims of applicant

1.4 Group(s)/society(ies) share holders of applicant organisation (if applicable):

indicate the name (i.e. the full legal name) of each organisation:

1.5 Subsidies, contracts or community loans obtained directly or indirectly in the course of the three preceding accounting periods from any European Community institution.

For each subsidy, contract or loan indicate:

-the Community programme concerned:

-the title of the project and reference n° of the contract:

-the year of attribution by the Commission:

-the amount of the subsidy, contract or loan:

1.6 Requests for subsidies presented (or which will be presented) in the course of the current year to the European institutions.

For each subsidy/contract, indicate:

-the Community programme concerned:

-the title of the project:

-the amount of the contract or subsidy:

2. Detailed description of the activities of the organisation to be subsidised (the information given here will serve as the technical annex to the contract in case of agreement to the proposal, all information essential to the realisation of the activities of the organisation must be included). *to be drafted, if possible, in either English or French.*

2.1 Summary description of the activities of your organisation for which the subsidy is requested.

Please enclose a detailed and accurate programme of anticipated activities for the organisation's 2000 financial year. This should cover all activities such as: participation in co-ordination actions between member associations, annual meetings, information measures for members (newsletters), preparation of reports, publications etc.

Each activity will be the subject of a separate descriptive sheet including a description of the activity in question, its objectives and target audience, indicative timetable and the anticipated results. When drawing up applications, applicants should bear in mind the schema set out in the annex to the Council Decision, which defines the areas of activity eligible for Community financial assistance and indicates the proportion of funding which will be assigned to each area. Please also indicate tasks related to the activities of the organisation which the applicant intends to sub-contract to another third (third party) organisation/company/association:

2.2 Results expected from the activities of your organisation for which the subsidy is requested (please indicate the measurable elements through which the impact of the subsidy can be evaluated in relation to the defined general objectives. Also, the target population and methodology, in addition to the final product that the applicant intends to deliver to the Commission on completion of the activities of your organisation).

2.3 Summary schedule of the activities of your organisation for which the subsidy is requested

Date of the start of work¹¹

Date of the end of work¹²

Number of months necessary to complete the activities of your organisation (12 months maximum).

Other information relevant to the schedule of the activities of your organisation.

Would you wish to receive an eventual agreement for financing in:

English

French

¹¹ The dates of the start and end of work determine the period of eligibility of any expenditure.
¹² All expenditure incurred after this date will not be eligible except where express authorisation has been approved by the competent services.

3. Provisional budget of the activities of the organisation to be subsidised (the information included here will serve as the financial annex to the contract in the case that the proposition is accepted). *To be drafted if possible in English or French*

3.1 Summary of the provisional budget for which the subsidy is requested, a precise breakdown of costs and the method of calculation established with the aid of the following tables must be attached to this summary. The provisional budget must be balanced between receipts / expenditures;

The applicant certifies that the expenditure mentioned here is necessary for the implementation of the activities of the organisation to be subsidised and will be both effectively incurred and registered in the organisation's official accounts (art. 10.1.5 of the general conditions)

Part A eligible expenditure/costs	(in Euros)	Part B Financing Plan	(in Euros)
a) Costs of personnel assigned to the activities of the organisation	a) direct receipts resulting from the activities of the organisation	
b) Travel and subsistence costs of personnel participating in the activities of the organisation		b) contribution of the applicant	
c) Equipment costs (depreciation only)		c) contributions from other organisations (please specify)	
d) Durable equipment and stationary costs		d) contribution requested from the Commission by the present application	
e) Printing, publication, translation, interpretation costs (including subscription, CD rom, distribution...)		e) estimation of bank interests generated by the requested subsidy during the execution period of the activities of the organisation	
f) Sub-contracting and/or transfer of funds to partners		f) other contributions, if applicable, by the Commission to the same activities of the organisation (please specify)	
g) Other direct costs if applicable (heating, lighting, rent etc. please specify) :			
TOTAL ELIGIBLE COSTS		TOTAL	
Estimation, if applicable, of "in kind" contributions (1)		Estimation, if applicable, of "in-kind" contributions ¹³	
TOTAL		TOTAL	

¹³ Relates to contributions which do not generate invoices, eg :voluntary work, or free use of materials or premises.

3.2 Breakdown of eligible costs by category

A. Personnel costs (ref:financial conditions art. 10.2 annexed)

Name	Function	Status ¹⁴	Monthly salary cost ¹⁵	Duration (in months)	TOTAL
TOTAL I.1					

B. Travel and subsistence costs

Destination of the mission	Travel costs	Hotel Costs	Other	Number of days	TOTAL
Total					

C. Costs of purchase of durable equipment (depreciation)¹⁶ (REF.ART.10.2 of the financial conditions)

Type of equipment	Unit cost	Quantity	Eligible cost (depreciation)	TOTAL
Total				

D. Costs of purchase of office supplies and materials (if not included in indirect costs)

<i>Nature of costs</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Unit cost</i>	<i>Total cost</i>
<i>Total</i>			

¹⁴ Permanent personnel or personnel recruited for the duration of the project

¹⁵ Monthly gross salary including social security charges, excluding all other expenses.

¹⁶ Please attach the method used for the calculation of depreciation to this request

E. Costs of printing, publication, translation, interpretation (including subscription fees, CD Rom, distribution,)

<i>Nature of costs</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Unit cost</i>	<i>Total cost</i>
<i>Total</i>			

F. Subcontracting and/or transfer of funds to partner(s) (art 10.2 financial conditions).

Please indicate :

- The precise name and address of any sub-contractor/partner¹⁷
- The precise nature of the tasks that will be entrusted to that person/organisation
- The amount and the method of calculation (fully detailed estimate) .

TOTAL

G. Other direct costs not specified in other categories mentioned above (heating, lighting, rent etc. please specify)

<i>Nature of costs</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Unit cost</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
<i>Total</i>			

GRAND TOTAL

¹⁷ These documents must enable the relevant services to establish the eligibility of the expenditure.

3.3 Details of other sources of financing, if applicable (to the exclusion of community subsidies),

(Please complete the following information for each co-financing company/association/organisation)

- Company or organisation's name (complete legal name) :
- Address:
- Person responsible in the co-financing organisation (name, title or grade, tel, fax, e-mail):
- Amount which the co-financing organisation agrees to commit to the activities of the organisation under consideration:
- Comments if the co-financing decision is not yet definite:

Declaration of the applicant :

I, the undersigned, confirm that the information contained in the present request is correct

Name:

Title or function , representing :

tel:

fax:

e-mail:

signature:

date:

ANNEX B

General terms and conditions applicable to grant agreements of the European Communities

PART A - LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

Article 1 - Performance

1.1 Subject to cases of *force majeure*, the beneficiary shall do everything to ensure that the operation is carried out in accordance with the conditions and arrangements specified in Annex I to the agreement.

1.2 Any unforeseeable and insurmountable eventuality shall be considered a case of *force majeure*.

Article 2 - Liability

2.1 The European Communities may not, under any circumstances or for any reason whatsoever, be held liable in the event of complaints deriving from the agreement concerning damage or injury sustained by the staff or property of the beneficiary while the operation is being carried out. Consequently, no claim for compensation or repayment accompanying such a complaint shall be accepted by the European Communities.

2.2 Except in case of *force majeure*, the beneficiary shall be required to indemnify the European Communities for any damage resulting from the operation or from failure to carry it out properly.

2.3 The beneficiary shall assume sole liability towards third parties, including for damage of any kind caused to them by the operation.

Article 3 - Termination of the agreement

3.1 The beneficiary may terminate the agreement at any time by serving two months' formal written notice, without being required to pay compensation. In this event, the beneficiary shall be

entitled to payment of the grant only for the part of the operation carried out.

3.2 The Commission may terminate the agreement should the beneficiary, for no valid economic or technical reason, fail to honour one of the obligations under the agreement and, after being given notice by registered letter to comply with these obligations, has still failed to do so one month after receiving that letter.

In that event the Commission shall pay only the costs actually borne by the beneficiary at the time of termination, and no costs related to contracts already concluded but for performance after the date of termination.

3.3 The Commission may terminate the agreement, without giving notice and without paying compensation of any kind, where the beneficiary:

is declared bankrupt, is wound up or is the subject of any similar proceeding;

makes false or incomplete statements to obtain the grant provided for in the agreement.

In that event the Commission may demand full or partial repayment of amounts already paid under the agreement.

3.4 Termination of the agreement for financial irregularities shall be without prejudice to the application of other administrative measures or penalties which may be imposed in accordance with Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95 of 18 December 1995 on the protection of the European Communities' financial interests.

Article 4 - Confidentiality

The Commission and the beneficiary undertake to preserve the confidentiality of any document, information or other material communicated to them in

confidence whose disclosure could harm the other party.

Article 5 - Publicity

5.1 Unless the Commission requests otherwise, any notice or publication by the beneficiary about the operation, including at a conference or seminar, must specify that the action has received funding from the European Communities.

Any notice or publication by the beneficiary, in whatever form and by whatever medium, including the Internet, must specify that it reflects the author's views and that the Commission is not liable for any use that may be made of the information contained in that notice or publication.

5.2 The Commission shall be authorised to publish, in whatever form and by whatever medium, including the Internet, the following information:

- the name of the beneficiary, except where this may jeopardise the beneficiary's security,
- the purpose of the grant,
- the amount granted and the proportion of the total cost of the operation accounted for by the funding,
- the geographical location of the operation,
- whether the action has been publicised before.

Article 6 - Ownership/use of results

6.1 Unless provided otherwise in the agreement or its annexes, ownership, title and industrial and intellectual property rights in the results of the operation and the reports and other

documents relating to it shall vest in the beneficiary.

6.2 Notwithstanding the provisions of the first paragraph, the beneficiary grants the Commission the right to use freely and as it sees fit the results deriving from the operation, subject to any confidentiality arrangements agreed between them and the industrial and intellectual property rights already existing.

Article 7 - Evaluation of the operation

Where the Commission undertakes an interim or *ex post* evaluation, the beneficiary undertakes to provide it and/or the persons designated by it with any document or information, which will assist with this evaluation.

Article 8 - Amendment of the agreement

8.1 Any amendment of the agreement, including its annexes, must be set out in a written agreement to be concluded in the same way as the original agreement. The parties shall not be bound by any oral agreement on such matters.

8.2 Where the change does not affect the basic purpose of the operation and the financial impact is limited to a transfer between headings of the budget involving an increase of less than 10% of a heading for eligible costs, the beneficiary may apply the change and shall inform the Commission without delay.

8.3 Any transfer between budget headings involving more than 10% of the amount of the heading to be credited shall be subject to the prior written agreement of the Commission.

Article 9 - Jurisdiction

The beneficiary may bring a complaint against decisions by the Commission concerning the application or interpretation of the provisions of the agreement, including its annexes, before the Court of First Instance of the European Communities and, in the event of appeal, the Court of Justice of the European communities.

PART B-FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

Article 10 - Eligible costs

10.1 To be considered eligible for the operation, costs must satisfy the following criteria:

- be directly linked to the subject matter of the agreement and be provided for in the agreement (Annex III);
- be necessary for carrying out the operation covered by the agreement;
- be reasonable and comply with the principles of sound financial management, and in particular of value for money and cost-effectiveness;
- have been incurred during the lifetime of the operation as defined in the agreement;
- have actually been incurred, be recorded in the beneficiary's accounts or tax documents and be identifiable and controllable.

10.2 The following direct costs shall be eligible:

- the cost of staff assigned to the project, corresponding to real salaries plus social security charges (and other costs

making up remuneration), excluding staff expenditure, office expenses and other indirect administrative expenditure to be charged against indirect costs. Time spent on the project shall be recorded on timesheets filled in by the staff throughout the project and certified at least once a month by the project head.

- travel and subsistence costs for staff taking part in the operation, at the rates and under the terms normally applied by the beneficiary;
- purchase costs for equipment (new or used), provided that these correspond to normal market costs and that the value of the items concerned is written off in accordance with the tax and accounting rules applicable to the beneficiary. Only the proportion of depreciation of the item corresponding to the duration of the operation may be taken into account by the Commission, except where the nature and/or use of the item justifies different treatment by the Commission;
- the costs of consumables and supplies (insofar as these are identifiable and are not assigned to another item of the budget in the agreement);
- expenditure on subcontracting, provided that the Commission has given advance written agreement for subcontracting. In this case the beneficiary shall ensure that the terms applicable to it under the agreement are

- also applicable to the subcontractors;
- costs deriving directly from the requirements of the agreement (dissemination of information, specific evaluation of the operation, translation, reproduction, etc.), including, where appropriate, financial service costs (in particular the cost of financial guarantees), but not including exchange risks unless these are expressly provided for in the agreement;
- a “contingency reserve” of no more than 5% of eligible direct costs.

10.3 As a rule, a fixed percentage of the total amount of eligible direct costs shall be eligible as indirect costs.

- Indirect costs shall be eligible provided they do not include costs assigned to another item of the budget in the agreement.
- Indirect costs shall not be eligible where the grant agreement concerns the financing of an operation conducted by a body which is already receiving an operating subsidy from the Commission.

10.4 The following costs shall not be considered eligible:

- capital investment costs;
- provisions for possible future losses or debts;
- interest owed;
- debts;
- doubtful debts;

- exchange losses, except where the agreement makes explicit provision for them;
- contributions in kind. (However, contributions in kind may be taken into account when the maximum amount of the grant is set);
- inordinate or ill-considered costs;
- travel expenses, living expenses and any form of remuneration paid to permanent staff employed by the European Institutions;
- expenditure incurred outside the agreed period of eligibility;
- salaries of staff employed by a public authority.

Article 11 - Statements of costs and repayment arrangements

11.1 The beneficiary shall, within the agreed deadline, present a final statement of all expenditure and revenue actually incurred in the course of the operation, accompanied by an exhaustive list of the supporting documents used to produce the statement. These documents must be certified by the authorised representative of the beneficiary.

The beneficiary shall be required to present interim statements of eligible costs only if the agreement expressly provides for this.

11.2 On the basis of an examination of the final statement, and without prejudice to the provisions of Article 13 of this annex, the Commission shall pay the balance of the grant as provided in the agreement. Under no circumstances

may the total amount paid by the Commission to the beneficiary exceed the maximum amount of the grant set in the agreement, even if the total real costs exceed the estimated total budget as set in Annex III to the agreement.

11.3 The maximum amount of the grant to be paid by the Commission shall be reduced proportionately if examination of the final statement in relation to the total budget as estimated in the agreement reveals that:

- the beneficiary has obtained interest on the part of the grant paid as an advance;
- total revenue exceeds total expenditure;
- revenue generated by the operation exceeds the total revenue shown in the budget estimate;
- eligible real costs are less than shown in the budget estimate.

11.4 The amount of the grant to be paid by the Commission shall be reduced by means of:

- a reduction in the balance of the grant payable on completion of the operation;
- a request for repayment of overpayments made to the beneficiary, if the total amount already paid by the Commission exceeds the final amount actually due.

Article 12 - Interest on late payment

12.1 The Commission undertakes to pay the amounts due under this agreement within sixty days of the date of the event, giving rise to payment up

to the date on which the sum is debited to the Commission's account.

12.2 At any time during the sixty days following the date of the event giving rise to payment, the Commission may suspend this payment period by informing the beneficiary that the request for payment is not admissible, either because the debt is not due or because the necessary supporting documents have not been produced or because the Commission considers it necessary to carry out further checks. The sixty-day period shall begin to run again from the date on which a correctly presented request for payment is registered.

12.3 On expiry of the time limit specified in the first paragraph and without prejudice to the second paragraph, the beneficiary may, within two months of receiving the late payment, claim interest at the rate applied by the European Monetary Institute to its operations in euros plus one and a half percentage points.

Article 13 - Technical and financial control

13.1 The beneficiary undertakes to allow Commission staff and persons authorised by the Commission appropriate access to the sites or premises where the operation is being carried out and to all documents concerning the technical and financial management of the operation. Access by persons authorised by the Commission may be subject to confidentiality arrangements to be agreed between the Commission and the beneficiary.

13.2 The beneficiary agrees to the Commission and the Court of Auditors of the European Communities verifying the use to which the grant is put in accordance with the Financial Regulation of 21 December 1977

applicable to the general budget of the European Communities, as amended, throughout the duration of the agreement and for five years after the date of completion of the operation.

13.3 The beneficiary undertakes to ensure that any subcontractors accept the same obligation.

13.4 Controls by the Commission or the Court of Auditors of the European Communities may be carried out on the basis of documents or on the spot and shall consist of an examination of the accounts and of all supporting documents relating to the costs of the operation.

Article 14 - Repayment of the grant

14.1 In the cases referred to in Articles 3.1, 3.2 and 11 of this annex, the beneficiary undertakes to repay to the Commission, in the manner and within the time limits set by the Commission, any amounts which have been paid in excess of the real eligible costs of the operation.

14.2 In the event of termination of the agreement in the cases specified in Article 3.3 of this annex, the Commission may request full or partial repayment of sums paid to the beneficiary. The Commission shall determine the manner and the time limits for such full or partial repayment.

14.3 Should the beneficiary fail to repay such amounts within the time limit set by the Commission, the Commission may increase the sums due by adding penalty interest at the rate applied by the European Central Bank to its operations in euros plus one and a half percentage points.

14.4 Bank charges involved in the repayment of sums due to the

Commission shall be borne entirely by the beneficiary.

14.5 The recovery decision drawn up by the Commission and transmitted to the beneficiary owing a repayment to the Commission shall be enforceable within the meaning of Article 192 of the EC Treaty, Article 92 of the ECSC Treaty and Article 164 of the Euratom Treaty.

14.6 Amounts to be repaid to the Commission may be set off against amounts due to the beneficiary under any heading.

1.2 Financial Guarantee

(For the application of options 1 or 2 of Article 4.1 of the grant agreement, model letters of guarantee will be inserted here by DG XIX, in agreement with the Legal Service and Financial Control.)

ANNEX C

GRANT AGREEMENT

between

The European Community/European Atomic Energy Community/European Coal and Steel Community (“the Community”), represented by the Commission of the European Communities (“the Commission”), itself represented by,

of the one part,

and *[full legal name of beneficiary] [acronym]* with its registered office at (*address [of registered office - for companies and associations; of main office - for public bodies and universities], VAT number and official registration number where appropriate*),

(“the beneficiary”), represented by (*name and position of the signatory [in the case of legal persons, the person duly authorised to act legally on behalf of the beneficiary body in relations with third parties: Chairman, Director-General, Rector, Head of administrative or financial department]*)

on the other part,

have agreed as follows:

Article 1 - Subject matter

1.1 The Commission has decided to award a grant on the terms and conditions set out in this agreement and its annexes, which the beneficiary hereby declares it has taken note of and accepts, for the operation entitled: “”(“the operation”).

1.2 The beneficiary accepts the grant and undertakes to carry out the operation under its own responsibility.

A detailed description of the operation is given in Annex I, which is an integral part of this agreement.

1.3 The operation shall be carried out mainly at []

Article 2 - Duration

2.1 The operation shall last for *[insert number]* months from *[first day of [month]after the agreement has been signed by the last of the contracting parties or insert date]* ("starting date").

2.2 The agreement shall end on *[insert date]* ("date of completion").

2.3 The beneficiary undertakes to keep all supporting documents justifying payments made under this agreement for a period of five years for inspection purposes.

Article 3 - Financing the operation

3.1 The eligible real costs to be paid directly by the beneficiary are estimated at €. The detailed budget of the operation is set out in Annex III, which is an integral part of this agreement, and comprises only costs eligible for Community funding, as defined in Annex II. [A flat rate of [no more than] 7% of the total amount of eligible direct costs shall count as eligible indirect costs.]¹⁸ [The terms are set out in Article 10.3 of Annex II]

- The total cost of the operation does not include contributions in kind by the beneficiary, which are specified separately in Annex III.
- However, as contributions in kind were taken into account by the Commission when it set its contribution to the operation, the beneficiary undertakes to supply these contributions on the terms laid down in this agreement. Failure to honour this undertaking may entail termination of the agreement as specified in Article 3 of Annex II.]¹⁹

3.2 The Commission shall provide a maximum amount of € equivalent to % of the eligible real costs (see Art. 3.3).

3.3 Should the actual eligible costs on completion of the operation, be lower than the estimated total cost specified in paragraph 1, the Commission's contribution will be limited to the amount calculated by applying the above percentage to eligible costs. The beneficiary undertakes to repay to the Commission any sums already paid in excess of this amount.

3.4 The beneficiary agrees that the grant may in no circumstances give rise to profits and that it must be restricted to the amount required to balance revenue and expenditure for the operation.

3.5 The beneficiary accepts that the grant does not constitute a claim on the Commission and may not therefore be assigned to another body or transferred to a third party in any way.

Article 4 - Payment arrangements

4.1 The Commission shall pay the grant to the beneficiary as follows:

- € [] [% of the amount specified in Article 3.2] by way of an advance within 60 days of receipt and acceptance of this signed agreement and upon production of an invoice [and a financial guarantee for an equivalent amount];
- EUR [.....] [...% of the amount specified in Article 3(2)] within 60 days of receipt and acceptance of an interim report and [an interim financial statement of the operation and] a request for payment;
- The balance within 60 days of receipt and approval of the documents referred to in point 5 and **a request for final payment.**

¹⁸ Standard clause for overheads.

¹⁹ Paragraph to be inserted where the beneficiary makes contributions in kind.

4.2 Payments due from the Commission shall be made to the following bank account of the beneficiary:

– [Insert details of beneficiary's bank account]

4.3 The Commission shall make payments in Euro. Real costs shall be converted into Euros at the rate published in the C series of the Official Journal for the first working day of the month in which payment is effective.

– Exchange losses are not covered by this agreement and shall be borne by the beneficiary.

Article 5 - Reports and other documents

Following completion of the operation, the beneficiary undertakes to forward to the Commission within three months of the date referred to in Article 2.2 of this agreement:

- A certified copy of the final statement of expenditure and revenue actually incurred in connection with the project, presented in the same form as the initial estimate, as well as an exhaustive list of the supporting documents used to draw up the final financial statement. These documents must be certified by the authorised representative of the beneficiary;
- 3 copies (including at least one printed on paper) of the final report on the use made of the above-mentioned grant.

Article 6 - General administrative provisions

Any information supplied in connection with this agreement shall be in writing and shall be sent to the following addresses:

For the **Commission**

European Commission
Directorate-General [..]
Attention...
[Address]

For the **beneficiary**

[..]

Article 7 - Final provisions

7.1 The following documents are annexed to this agreement and are an integral part of it:

- Annex I: Description of the operation
- Annex II: General terms and conditions applicable to grant agreements of the European Communities
- Annex III: Budget for the operation

7.2 Should the provisions of the annexes and those of the agreement differ, the provisions of the agreement shall apply. Annex II shall take precedence over the other annexes.

Article 8 - Specific terms and conditions applying to the operation

Done at Brussels, in duplicate,

For the **beneficiary**

For the **Commission**

[name of legal representative specified on the first page]

[name of the authorising officer by delegation or subdelegation]

[signature]

[signature]

[date]

ANNEX II

The Revision of the Action Program
Promoting European Environmental NGOs

General Comments by:

BirdLife International (European Office)

Climate Network Europe

European Environmental Bureau

European Federation for Transport and Environment

Friends of the Earth Europe

International Friends of Nature

World Wide Fund for Nature (European Policy Office)

Brussels, October 2000

Contribution to the Community environmental policy and legislation

The Green-8 (BirdLife, CNE, EEB, FoEE, Greenpeace, NFI, T&E, WWF) have been involved in numerous policy areas to the further development and implementation of the Community environmental policy and legislation. Among these are²⁰:

Type of activities

- Raising awareness of EU decision makers (Commission, European Parliament, Council)
- Raising awareness among internal networks and partners (NGOs and civil society organisations)
- Analysis and provision of expertise to the EU institutions
- Representation to the EU institutions
- Co-ordination and development of policy positions
- Identification of key policy issues
- Information to the internal networks on main EU policies and their development.

²⁰ This list gives only a first impression and is by no means complete. It would be much longer if one would list all relevant activities of all environmental networks or groups.

Fields of work

Trade, Economics and Environment

- EC Trade policy and EU regional trade agreements effects on sustainable development in developing countries related to sustainable management of natural resources
- Definition and promotion of Strategic Impact Assessment in the implementation of the EC trade policy
- Involvement in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and MFTZ: civil forum (Stuttgart) and parliament hearing
- Participation to the Commission initiative Contact group with DG trade
- WTO: Trade and Environment
- Communication on Environment and Employment
- EU Employment strategy

EU Development policy and External Affairs

- Communication on A new EC development policy
- Integration of environment into EC development co-operation, north south relations.
- Communication on environment integration into the EC development policy
- Communication on Tropical Forest conservation in developing countries.

- Communication on Climate change in developing countries
- Communication on Coherence
- Promoting EC co-operation development policy
- Participation in the Group inter sector NGOs for co-ordination on the EC communication on Partnership with NGOs.
- Participation to the EC working group on "Grant management" conducted by the Secretariat general.
- RIO + 10 conference: Joint initiative with EPE, European Movement, UNEP, ETUC, GLOBE, ICDA,ICLEI,WBCSD
- Co-operation with development NGO networks to work with the working group of the Development Council.
- Internal co-ordination of network policy work on EU Development policy
- Balkan Sustainability Pact (Regional Environmental Reconstruction Programme)

Mediterranean policy

- Euro Mediterranean Partnership
- SMAP: Assessment and proposals for strengthening its environmental components
- Environmental integration within the Euro Mediterranean strategic partnership.
- Effects of EU foreign direct investment

- Co-ordination of the internal networks policy work in the Mediterranean.
- Monitoring the development of the Mediterranean Free Trade Zone

Water

- EU freshwater policy
- Greening EU funding for hydrologic projects in the EU Member States and CEECs
- Water Framework Directive: adoption and implementation
- Promotion of water pricing.
- Communication on Water pricing (input to EC conference and EU debate, discussion paper)
- Commission proposal on a list of priority substances and selection of priority hazardous substances
- Mine waste/mine waste management and its impact in the freshwater environment.
- Conservation and wise use of wetlands
- Organisation of seminars on EU freshwater policy and the implementation of the Water Framework Directive.
- Internal co-ordination of European freshwater policy work.

Habitats, bio-diversity and biotechnology

- Promotion of the implementation of the Habitats Directive

- Promotion of the establishment of the Natura 2000 ecological network
- Observer to the Habitats Scientific Working Group
- Secretariat of the European Habitats Forum (International Conservation NGOs)
- Implementation of EC nature conservation legislation in CEECs.
- EC Biodiversity Action plan on natural resources
- Role of the EEA and the European Topic Centre for nature conservation.
- Environmental liability
- Internal co-ordination of the policy work related to habitats and species.
- Revision of the 90/220 directive on the deliberate release of GMOs into the environment
- Publication "Important Bird Areas

Agriculture and land use

- Reform of the CAP
- Agenda 2000
- Cross compliance (Common rules Regulation 1259/1999)
- Rural development Regulation 1257/1999
- Integrated rural sustainable development
- Principles for rural sustainable development
- Reform of CAP in 2006
- Agriculture and trade (WTO)

- Capacity building in CEECs and Mediterranean countries on EU agriculture and rural development policy
- Putting Urban and Spatial Development stronger on the Agenda
- Internal co-ordination of the policy work related to agriculture.
- Participation in DG AGRI advisory Committees

Forests

- EU forest certification discussions
- EU rural development Regulation on forest
- Revision of the EC Regulations on forest fires and air pollution
- Impact of enlargement policy on forest
- Eco-labelling (tissue paper and furniture)
- Public procurement Regulation
- EC Biodiversity Action Plan for implementation of the Convention of Biological Diversity and forest
- Pan-European process (Helsinki process)
- Forest protected areas (Natura 2000)
- Climate change and forest (negotiations on Sinks)
- Monitoring implementation of EU forest policy

- EU Forest and cork Advisory Committee
- FBI Committee (DG Enterprise)
- Coordination for European Forest NGOs.

Fisheries

- Integration of environmental policy in the Common Fisheries policy
- Common Fisheries Policy review (tax, quotas, etc)
- Biodiversity Action Plan on Fisheries
- Reform of the Fisheries subsidies including fuel tax and state aids
- Structural Funds (FIFG) Regulation
- Evaluation of the operational programmes for the implementation of the Structural Funds for Fisheries (FIFG)
- Access to information on subsidies: Transparency
- Subsidies reform in FAO, OECD and WTO
- Internal co-ordination of the policy work related to marine and fisheries issues.

Climate change and energy

- Promotion of co-generated heat and power (Co-generation), the most efficient and environmentally friendly of all conventional power production technologies
- Support to the Commission White Paper on Renewable Electricity

- "Monti Directive" on minimum taxes on energy products
 - Promote the agreement of a Directive on Renewable Electricity with the aim of doubling the share of renewables by 2010
 - Definition of a European-wide policy for reducing residential and office space heat consumption
 - Increasing energy efficiency and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions post Kyoto in selected sectors of European countries (not only EU) together with Utrecht University and the Fraunhofer Institute.
 - Promotion of fuel cells in both transport and the stationary power (and heat) production sector
 - Promote solar thermal electricity implementation as a supplement to decentralised photovoltaic technologies.
 - Participation in global partnership in the transport sector – probably on mass production of a car with a maximum of petrol consumption of no more than 3 liter per 100 km.
 - Promotion of a clean energy label based on third party certification;
 - Green electricity and later other green energy products
 - Promotion of Climate change policy work in developing countries.
 - Energy Consultative Committee of DG TREN
 - European Climate Change Programme working groups (attendance at all and co-ordination of the NGO participation)
 - Green Paper on an EU emission trading programme
 - Directive on renewable energy sources in the internal electricity market
 - Communication for an energy efficiency action plan for the EU
 - Guidelines on state aid for environmental protection
 - Green Paper on security of energy supply for the EU
 - Dilemma Report (DG TREN)
 - SAVE and ALTENER (DG TREN) (response to cuts)
 - Input to the EU ad hoc group on climate change
 - Paper on the safety of nuclear power plants in the accession countries
- Transport, traffic and tourism**
- Commissions communication on environment and aviation
 - Common Transport Policy review
 - TENS guidelines
 - Air quality - for example the auto-oil programme and the daughter directives
 - Building up an effective EU Noise Policy
 - Advisory input - for example, expert contribution to the GNSS advisory forum

- Sustainable urban transport
Green paper
- Road to rail, a project on encouraging the transfer of goods from the roads onto the rails - not a Commission project, but closely related to the Community's stated goal of saving the railways and improving the railways
- Sustainable Tourism Policy, Tourism and Employment

Sustainability Processes, Dialogues and Instruments

- Papers and presentations on the assessment of the 5th EAP.
- 6th Environmental Action Program
- Europe's environmental responsibility and impact of EU policies on the world's carrying capacity.
- Commission's 5 year programme priorities.
- Integration Strategy
- Sustainable development Strategy
- Transparency and Public Participation – Aarhus Convention
- Access to Justice, Chart of Fundamental Rights
- Environment for Europe
- Promoting the use of Structural Funds, Cohesion Funds and Pre-Accession Aid for Sustainable Development (EU legislation and implementation on national level)

- Transatlantic Environmental Dialogue
- CSD, Agenda 21
- Precautionary Principle
- OECD Liaison

EU Institutional Issues

- Reform of EC Institutions
- Greening the Treaty, part III: proposals for the 2000 Intergovernmental Conference (treaty of Nice)
- Greening the EU budget
- Enlargement policy and Environment
- Agenda 2000

Business and Industry

- Strategic Environmental Assessment
- Public Procurement
- Environmental Liability White Paper
- Reducing the Environmental Impact of Industry
- Participation and Contribution to the European Forum for Recycling
- Ecological Product Policy
- Developing European Eco-Labels
- Phase-out of Hazardous Chemicals
- Waste Prevention and Sound Management
- Technical standards, setting up an environmental standardisation bureau