

## AUTHORISATION OF NEW GMO FOOD PRODUCTS

The Danish delegation, supported by the French, Italian, Austrian, Portuguese and Luxembourg delegations, drew the attention of the Council and the Commission to the conditions for further approval of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) since a political agreement had been reached at the Council on 28 November 2002 (14350/02) on the proposal for a Regulation on food and feedstuffs for animals genetically modified.

Some of these delegations supported in particular the view that no new procedure of authorisation for placing on the market new GMOs should be granted as long as this Regulation had not yet entered into force.

Commissioner BYRNE recalled that political agreements had been reached on a proposal for a Regulation on genetically modified food and feed at the Council (Agriculture and Fisheries) on 28 November 2002 and on a proposal for a Regulation concerning the traceability and labelling of GMOs and of food and feed products produced from GMOs at the Council (Environment) on 9 December 2002. He noted that the application for an authorisation regarding a GM product would be managed under either of these two Regulations. He mentioned that current applications were managed under current EC rules prior to the approval of these two texts by the European Parliament in second reading.

## WESTERN WATERS: CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS

The Irish delegation, supported by the Portuguese and the United-Kingdom delegations, drew the attention of the Council and the Commission to the urgent need to seek for a satisfactory solution for all parties concerned on the western waters issue and briefed the Council on the situation on the spot since 1 January 2003. The Irish delegation emphasised that such a solution should not include an increase of the fishing effort and requested the Presidency to put this issue as a priority on its Agenda.

The Spanish delegation reminded the Council its position on this issue (15636/02).

This request followed the presentation at the last Council (16-20 December 2002) by the Commission of a proposal for a Regulation on the management of the fishing effort in Western waters (15636/02).

Commissioner FISCHLER called upon all parties concerned to act reasonably before the adoption of the proposal and the establishment of a clear legal framework on this issue.

The Council took note of the position expressed by these delegations on this issue as well as the information provided by the Irish delegation, and invited the Permanent Committee of representatives to continue its examination of the proposal with a view to finding a solution as soon as possible.

