



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

COMPETITIVENESS AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS



16.11.09

GMES

COM (2009) 589 – Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES): Challenges and Next Steps for the Space Component

In 2005, the EU made the strategic choice of developing an independent European Earth observation capacity to deliver services in the environmental and security fields, called Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES).

Following the development of GMES at pre-operational stage on the basis of combined EU and ESA investments, further steps need to be taken to ensure that the investment taken so far pays off and that GMES becomes fully operational in the most cost-conscious way. In this Communication the Commission analyses the challenges being faced by the system and proposes steps to be taken to tackle these challenges.

Genetically modified maize MIR604 (SYN-IR6Ø4-5)

COM (2009) 613 - Proposal for a Council Decision authorising the placing on the market of products containing, consisting of, or produced from genetically modified maize MIR604 (SYN-IR6Ø4-5) pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council

In December 2004 Syngenta Seeds S.A.S. submitted a request for placing on the market of genetically modified maize MIR604 to the competent authority of the UK. In July 2009 the European Food Safety Authority ('EFSA') gave a favourable opinion in accordance with Articles 6 and 18 of Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003¹ and concluded that it is unlikely that the placing on the market of the products containing, consisting of, or produced from MIR604 maize as described in the application will have any adverse effects on human or animal health or the environment in the context of their intended uses.

A draft Commission Decision authorising the placing on the Community market of products containing, consisting of or produced from genetically modified maize MIR604 was

¹ on genetically modified food and feed



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subsequently submitted to the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health for a vote: 11 Member States (141 votes) voted in favour, 10 Member States (96 votes) voted against and 6 Member States (108 votes) abstained. Consequently, pursuant to Article 35, paragraph 2 of Regulation (EC) No 1829/2003 and in accordance with Article 5 of Council Decision 1999/468/EC2, the Commission is required to submit to the Council a proposal relating to the measures to be taken, the Council having three months in which to act by a qualified majority, and inform the Parliament.

Taxation to motor fuels - France

COM (2009) 609 - Proposal for a Council Decision authorising France to apply differentiated levels of taxation to motor fuels under Article 19 of Directive 2003/96/EC

Pursuant to Article 19(1) of the Energy Taxation Directive the Council may, acting unanimously on a proposal from the Commission, authorise any Member State to introduce further exemptions or reductions in excise duties for specific policy considerations.

The objective of this proposal is to allow France to apply, within defined limits, differentiated levels of taxation to gas oil and unleaded petrol, with the exclusion of commercially used gasoil. This differentiation is meant to reflect the decentralisation of certain specific powers previously exercised by central government and to adapt the tax regime to the regions' different economic situations.

COMMISSION CONSULTATION

Commission consults on draft guidance for Single Euro Payments Area (SEPA) Direct Debit scheme

The European Commission has invited comments on a Commission working document that aims to provide further guidance to participants in the SEPA Direct Debit (SDD) scheme to ensure that collective financing arrangements applied within this scheme comply with EC Treaty competition rules.

The questionnaire is available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/competition/sectors/financial_services/SEPA_working_document.pdf

Responses should be sent by 14th December 2009 by post to the following address:

European Commission
Directorate-General for Competition
For the attention of the Antitrust Registry
Ref. HT2282 – SEPA DD
B - 1049 Brussels

² This lays down the procedures for the exercise of implementing powers conferred on the Commission