COUNCIL DECISION

of 29 June 1988

revising the multiannual research programme for the European Economic Community in the field of biotechnology

(88/420/EEC)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, and in particular Article 130Q (2) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission (1),

In cooperation with the European Parliament (2),

Having regard to the opinion of the Economic and Social Committee (3),

Whereas the framework programme for Community activities in the field of research and technological development (1987 to 1991) was adopted by Decision 87/516/Euratom/EEC (4);

Whereas Article 130K of the Treaty provides that the framework programme is to be implemented through specific programmes developed within each activity; whereas the Council, when adopting the framework programme of Community activities in technological R&D (1987 to 1991), recognized the interest of exploitation and valorization of biological resources, and particularly biotechnology;

Whereas Decision 85/195/EEC (5) introduced a multiannual research action programme for the European Economic Community in the field of biotechnology; whereas Article 3 of that Decision makes provision for the programme to be reviewed as from its second year of implementation;

Whereas the review which has been undertaken and the results of which were transmitted to the Council on 21 May 1986 has led the Commission to present a proposal for the revision of the programme motivated by the need to ensure its adequacy for the objective assigned to it;

Whereas the implementation of the research and training programme for the Community in the field of biotechnology has proved to be insufficient as yet for setting up, on a scale commensurate with the multiple implications of biotechnology in agriculture, industry and the environment, of transnational cooperation networks addressing the various levels of risk and their evaluation;

Whereas any application involving the large-scale planned release of organisms created by genetic engineering must be preceded by experimental research and conducted in accordance with existing safety rules;

Whereas the area of bioinformatics involves the requirement both to ascertain the constitution of integrated networks for the storage, circulation and treatment of biological data, and to stimulate further computer-aided approaches in biotechnological research;

Whereas it is necessary to step up training activities and to evolve training schemes, including in particular the organization of short intensive workshops, allowing research scientists in all the Member States to benefit from all the research facilities and scientific expertise in the Community, thus helping to reduce the disparities in development in the field of biotechnology between the various Member States, while being consistent with the pursuit of scientific and technical quality;

Whereas it is essential to increase the involvement of Community industry in the activities and results originating from the research work under contract;

Whereas it is necessary to step up the concertation activities carried out, alongside the Community research and training effort, to improve national and Community activity in the field of biotechnology, strengthen dialogue with appropriate groups and make as much information available to the public as possible;

Whereas the recent emergence of certain critical areas of biological sciences (e.g. genome mapping and sequencing, and the exploitation thereof) means that the Community effort in biotechnology is relatively weak unless exploratory activity can be rapidly initiated in this field

(1) OJ No C 15, 20. 1. 1988, p. 13.
(2) OJ No C 94, 11. 4. 1988, p. 85 and OJ No C 187, 18. 7. 1988.
(3) OJ No C 80, 28. 3. 1988, p. 7.
(4) OJ No L 302, 24. 10. 1987, p. 1.
(5) OJ No L 83, 25. 3. 1985, p. 1.

before a new programme in biotechnology R&D 1990 to 1994 is prepared;

Whereas it is necessary to enable participation by Spain and Portugal in as many as possible of the activities envisaged by the programme;

Whereas the Scientific and Technical Research Committee (Crest) has expressed its opinion,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

The research action programme for the European Economic Community in the field of biotechnology (1985 to 1989) is hereby revised on the basis of the specifications in the Annex.

Article 2

The funds estimated as necessary for the execution of the programme will be increased from 55 million ECU to 75 million ECU. This increase of 20 million ECU will be used to intensify and expand the activities in biotechnological research as indicated in the Annex and includes expenditure on an additional staff of five.

Done at Luxembourg, 29 June 1988.

For the Council

The President

H. RIESENHUBER

ANNEX

Revision of the multiannual research action programme for the European Economic Community in the field of biotechnology (1985 to 1989)

— Extension to Spain and Portugal of the activities envisaged by the programme.

— Intensification of the current research effort in the sector of the programme that concerns the assessment of risks associated with modern biotechnology, and particularly with the deliberate release of genetically engineered organisms.

— Intensification of the current research effort in the area of information technology with emphasis upon processing data related to culture collections, genome sequences and protein modelling.

— Increase in the volume of current activities (visits, publications, electronic networks, meetings, summer workshops, etc.) aiming at a timely dissemination of information on the programme and of research results to all appropriate groups; involvement of Community industry in the research activities and in the utilization of the data, materials and methods stemming from the research work under contract.

— Studies and feasibility pilot projects for the preparation of future Community R & D activities in biotechnology during the period 1990 to 1994.

— Increase in training activities in all parts of the current programme.

— Matching of resources (manpower) for the concertation activity to the requirements defined in the programme.