



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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C(2012) 7631 final

*Dear President,*

*The Commission would like to thank the Czech Senate for its Opinion on the Proposal for a LIFE Programme {COM(2011) 874 final} and apologizes for the delay in replying.*

*In addition to expressing interest in and support for the Programme, the Opinion raises a number of constructive comments that will be considered in the context of the ongoing negotiations with the European Parliament and the Council.*

*As regards the regrets expressed regarding the apparent absence of a link between LIFE and the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security System (GMES), let me reassure you this is not the case. There is a link between the LIFE Programme and GMES, for example through the development of the GMES local land component products in relation to zones adjoining rivers (many being in Natura 2000 sites). The Commission expects that there will be increasing complementarity between GMES output and projects supported by LIFE in the coming years. Let me stress that the Commission attaches great importance to the support for EU environmental policies offered by GMES, e.g. in the fields of air, marine, water, soils, forest, nature and biodiversity. Earth observation provides a very useful complement to ground-based monitoring of changes in the state of the environment.*

*Similarly, as regards your recommendation on incorporating the latest scientific findings into the climate action activities, it is the aim of the LIFE Programme to ensure strong complementarity with other EU funding programmes, in particular Horizon 2020, where new scientific findings may arise during the implementation of the Programme that could be relevant for climate action. In this respect, the Commission will strive to ensure that climate related research and innovation results of Horizon 2020 as well as new scientific findings from other sources are taken up in the climate action activities, for example through pilot and demonstration projects where there is potential for high European added value.*

*As regards your concerns on the role of Member States, it is the Commission's objective, as presented in the explanatory memorandum and the provisions of the Proposal, to increase Member States' participation in particular in the most politically sensitive decisions relating to the implementation of the Programme, such as priorities, allocation*

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PRAGUE 1*

*of funds between different types of projects, different interventions and priority areas. This increased participation will be ensured by the LIFE Committee, composed of representatives of Member States, which will be involved in the adoption of work programmes in accordance with the comitology examination procedure.*

*As regards your comments regarding the focus of the LIFE Programme, the Commission highlights that a specific sub-programme for Climate Action has been created to address the increased political priority of climate change mitigation and adaptation. The introduction of a specific priority area for climate change adaptation will make it possible to earmark funding for activities in this particular area. Similarly, water is one of the sectors selected for implementing Integrated Projects thereby showing the increased attention paid to this sector.*

*I hope that these clarifications address the comments and concerns raised in your Opinion and I am looking forward to continuing our constructive political dialogue in the future.*

*Yours faithfully,*

*Maroš Šefčovič  
Vice-President*