

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA
FINANCIAL MECHANISM COMMITTEE

03 November 2008

Conclusions
Financial Mechanism Committee
42nd Meeting - 03 September 2008

1 Meeting agenda

2 Draft Summary Records and Draft Conclusions of the previous Committee meeting

2.1 Draft Summary Records of the Committee meeting 19 June 2008

The draft Summary Records of the Committee meeting of 19 June 2008 were approved

2.2 Draft Conclusions of the Committee meeting of 19 June 2008

The draft Conclusions of the Committee meeting of 19 June 2008 were approved.

3 Grant applications

3.1 Status of the GRD production

As at 2 September 2008, the FMO had received 935 applications (approximately EUR 988 million), 661 (EUR 731 million) commitments had been made, 52 (EUR 56 million) applications had been rejected and 23 applications (EUR 20 million) were withdrawn.

3.2 Projects approved/rejected since 19 June 2008

The Committee took note of the list of projects approved/rejected since 19 June 2008.

4 Status of the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism in the Beneficiary States

4.1 Status of implementation in the Beneficiary States

The FMO briefed the Committee on the status of the implementation in the Beneficiary States.

4.2 Annex C Funds

Annex C Funds were discussed under agenda item 4.1.

4.3 Hungary: Annual meeting 10 - 11 September 2008

The annual meeting with Hungary will take place in Budapest on 10 September 2008 with a site visit on 11 September 2008. The FMO had received the annual reports and given the Focal Point its comments. The FMO briefed the Committee on the status of the implementation in the Hungary.

4.4 *Latvia: Annual meeting 23 - 24 September 2008*

The Latvian annual meeting is scheduled for 24 September 2008 with site visits on 23 September 2008. The FMO had already sent the Annual Reports and the draft agenda to the donors. The FMO briefed the Committee on the status of the implementation in Latvia.

4.5 *Slovenia: Annual meeting 8 October 2008*

Annual meeting is scheduled for 8 – 9 October 2008.

4.6 *Bulgaria: Semi-annual meeting 15 October 2008*

The FMO briefed the Committee on the status in Bulgaria. A semi-annual meeting is scheduled for 15 October 2008.

The Committee decided to act in harmony with the European Commission and suspend the payments within the EEA Financial Mechanism in Bulgaria and to suspend the role of the CFCU in the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism. The processing and appraisal of applications submitted by Bulgaria in August 2008 will continue and the decision to suspend payments does not apply to the NGO Fund, which is implemented directly by the FMO.

4.7 *Romania: Semi-annual meeting 13 October 2008*

The semi-annual meeting with Romania is scheduled for 14 October 2008. The FMO briefed the Committee on the status of implementation in Romania.

5 Co-operation with the European Commission

The National Expert informed the Committee on the status of the screening. The Committee aims at meeting with the DG Regional Policy on 23 October 2008.

6 Administrative issues

6.1 *The work plan for autumn 2008 - spring 2009: status report by the FMO*

The Committee adopted the "Finalisation of the commitment period, Work plan for autumn 2008 - spring 2009".

6.2 *Mid term evaluation*

Norway informed the Committee of the mid-term evaluation report on the EEA and Norwegian financial mechanisms ordered by the NMFA through NORAD.

6.3 *Reporting and evaluation work 2008 - 2009*

The FMO briefed the Committee on the work on the draft Evaluation Manual. The draft will be sent to the Focal Points for feedback and the FMO aims at presenting a final draft for adoption at the October Committee meeting.

6.4 *FMO Budget 2008: Actual figures 1 January 2008 - 30 June 2008 and revised budget*

The FMO presented the report on actual expenses as at 30 June 2008 and the proposal for a revised budget 2008. The Committee approved the FMO's proposal for a revised budget 2008.

6.5 *FMC's delegation of responsibilities under the EFTA Staff Rules and Regulations*

The Committee adopted "Note on the Financial Mechanism Committee's delegation of responsibilities under the EFTA Staff Rules and Regulations".

6.6 *Compliance Audit of the EFTA Secretariat and Financial Mechanism Office, final report*

The Committee took note of the "Compliance Audit of the EFTA Secretariat and Financial Mechanism Office", final report by the EFTA Board of Auditors, July 2008.

6.7 *New eeagrants website*

The launch of the new eegrants website is scheduled for mid-September.

7 Other issues

There were no other issues.

8 Next meeting and meeting schedule for autumn 2008

The next meeting will take place on 22 October 2008.

FMO

FMO, FMO, *Secretary*

Iceland

Mr Bjarni Vestmann, Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Liechtenstein

Mr Thomas Bischof, Mission of the Principality of Liechtenstein to the European Union

Norway

Mr Anders Erdal, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Chairman*

Ms Hilde Berit Eide, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr Steinar Hagen, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr Eirik Bergesen, Mission of Norway to the European Union