

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA
FINANCIAL MECHANISM COMMITTEE

21 January 2008

Conclusions
Financial Mechanism Committee
35th Meeting - 28 November 2007

1 Meeting agenda

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

2.1 Draft Summary Records Committee meeting 19 October 2007

The Draft Summary Records were approved with a correction to the list of participants.

2.2 Draft Conclusions Committee meeting 19 October 2007

The Draft Conclusions were approved with the correction to the list of participants.

3 Grant applications

3.1 Status of the GRD production

As at 27 November 2007, the FMO had received 586 applications (approximately EUR 721 million), 361 commitments had been made (EUR 437 million), 28 (EUR 38 million) projects had been rejected and 8 (EUR 3 million) had been withdrawn.

3.2 Projects approved/rejected since 19 October 2007

The Committee took note of the list of projects approved/rejected since 19 October 2007.

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 Poland: High-level meeting 29 November 2007

The FMO briefed the Committee on the status of implementation in Poland. The agenda for the high-level meeting on 29 November 2007 had been agreed with the Focal Point.

5 Co-operation with the European Commission

5.1 *Screening*

The National Expert outlined the status of screening process and informed the Committee on the discussions on the screening procedures.

5.2 *State Aid*

The National Expert briefed the Committee on the status of the work on the state aid.

6 Guidelines and policy issues

6.1 *Monitoring and evaluation*

The FMO presented a memo on the external project monitoring for 2007 and pilot phase and plans for evaluation 2008. For 2008 the monitoring plans are being prepared. A mid term evaluation initiated by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs is under way. The Committee took note of the FMO's memo.

6.2 *Delegation of signature of Grant Agreement Addenda to the FMO*

The FMO presented a Recommendation for Decision on Delegation of authority to sign addenda to Grant Agreements to the FMO Director.

The Committee decided the following:

(a) The FMC agrees with the FMO assessment that the FMO Director has the authority to sign addenda to grant agreements when needed due to amendment of projects, when the amendment falls within the delegated authority of the FMO.

(b) The authority to sign addenda to grant agreements when needed due to amendments to projects which are outside FMO's delegated authority following to amend is delegated to the FMO Director following the FMC/NMFA approval of the amendment.

7 Administrative issues

7.1 *Disbursement forecast*

The Committee took note of the FMO's forecast.

7.2 *Budget 2008*

The Committee approved the FMO's proposal for administrative budget for 2008.

7.3 *Update on the web development*

The new website is scheduled to be ready in two to three months.

8 Other issues

8.1 Reconfirmation of the Block Grant guideline and Co-financing Guide amendments

The Committee reconfirmed the amendments made to the Block Grant Guideline and Co-financing Guide in May 2007.

Block Grant Guideline

The following is added to 1.3, c:

In exceptional cases, the Financial Mechanism Committee and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs may agree to apply this grant rate to block grants funded from both financial mechanisms, if they deem that the objectives of such a block grant are of high relevance to the aims of the EEA and the Norwegian Financial Mechanism.

Co-financing Guide

The following is added to 3. A (ii):

The FMC and the NMFA can, in exceptional cases agree to apply this grant rate to other block grants funded from

both mechanisms, provided that the objectives of the block grant are of high relevance to the aims of the financial mechanisms.

8.2 State Aid

The Committee gave guidance to the FMO on the handling of the projects with state aid issues.

9 Next meeting and meeting schedule spring 2008

The next meeting will take place on 16 January 2008. The Committee will revert to the meeting schedule for spring 2008 at the January meeting.

FMO

FMO, FMO, *Secretary*

Iceland

Mr Bjarni Vestmann, Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Mr Angantýr Einarsson, Icelandic Ministry of Finance

Liechtenstein

Mr Pascal Schafhauser, Mission of the Principality of Liechtenstein to the European Union

Norway

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

Mr Steinar Hagen, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ms Torill Johansen, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Other

Jan Edoey, European Commission