



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Plenary sitting

6.3.2015

B8-0235/2015

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Commission

pursuant to Rule 123(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on sustainable exploitation of sea bass
(2015/2596(RSP))

Alain Cadec

on behalf of the Committee on Fisheries

B8-0235/2015

**European Parliament resolution on sustainable exploitation of sea bass
(2015/2596(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the motion for a resolution of the Committee on Fisheries,
- having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the scientific information on the stock status of sea bass is insufficient, in particular the data available on precise boundaries, stock migration paths and the places of reproduction of the sea bass;
- B. whereas the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) identifies four kinds of sea bass stocks: Celtic Sea/Channel/North Sea, Bay of Biscay, Western Iberian waters, and West of Scotland/Ireland;
- C. whereas various studies show that the stock status of sea bass is worrying, notwithstanding the emergency measures previously taken by the Commission;
- D. whereas, owing to the fact that mortality is still very high and that the sea bass is a late-maturing and slow-growing species, the sea bass requires a long period of time to recover in population size;
- E. whereas the sea bass is a noble species very much in demand by the fishing industry for its significant economic value;
- F. whereas a considerable number of vessels are involved in fishing sea bass, and it is a heterogeneous fishery in terms of vessel size, fishing seasons and gear used;
- G. whereas catches in recreational fisheries are significant and contribute to at least a quarter of catches of this species;
- H. whereas Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of 11 December 2013 on the Common Fisheries Policy¹ provides that stocks shall be brought up to or maintained at levels above the maximum sustainable yield;
- I. whereas the sea bass is not a species subject to total allowable catches (TACs);
- J. whereas the Commission has taken emergency measures prohibiting sea bass fishing using pelagic trawls in the Celtic Sea, the Channel, the Irish Sea and the southern North Sea until 30 April 2015;
- K. whereas national management measures taken to date are insufficient to maintain the species and do not solve the problems of sharing and access to resources;

¹ OJ L 354, 28.12.2013, p. 22.

- L. whereas the exploitation of sea bass during spawning periods must be particularly limited as this visibly slows down renewal of stock and prevents its recovery;
 - M. whereas Ireland has reserved sea bass fishing for recreational fishermen;
 - N. whereas the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) recommends a reduction in fishing mortality of sea bass of approximately 60 %;
 - O. whereas the work of the Inter-AC Working Group on sea bass recommends European management measures;
 - P. whereas the sustainable exploitation of sea bass entails political choices, which should be made with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders;
1. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to evaluate the status of the stock of sea bass and its delimitation, migration of the species and the exact places of reproduction; calls on the Commission and the Member States to build on the European Fund for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, which provides substantial funding for the collection of scientific data;
 2. Stresses the importance of evaluating in a precise manner the segment of various sea bass fishing activities and the segment of the percentage of recreational fishing in catches;
 3. Considers that measures to manage the operation of the sea bass fishery at European level are needed in order to safeguard this species; considers, furthermore, that these measures should take scientific knowledge sufficiently into account and favour proximity management and the regionalisation principle;
 4. Calls on the Commission to propose a multiannual management plan on sea bass in order to bring the stock to a level above the maximum sustainable yield; stresses the need to involve professional and recreational fishermen and advisory councils in the preparation of this management plan;
 5. Recalls that multiannual management plans should be prepared in accordance with the codecision procedure;
 6. Considers that, in order to develop a multiannual management plan for sea bass it is important to evaluate different management measures for commercial fishing, in particular the setting of a TAC and the need for a scientifically sound decision on minimum landing size and spatio-temporal closures in order to protect breeding and other technical measures;
 7. Recognises the problems that the introduction of a TAC would generate, particularly as regards the calculation of historical catches, the distribution of quotas at national level between the different activities and the difficulty of covering recreational fisheries, but, in the light of the absolute necessity of dealing with the state of sea bass stocks, stresses that such a measure must be considered;

8. Believes that EU measures are necessary for recreational fisheries in the form of quantitative limitations, the shape of which remains to be defined;
9. Considers that measures for commercial fisheries and recreational fisheries must be coherent with each other in order to maintain the stock above the maximum sustainable yield, in line with the objectives of the common fisheries policy;
10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission and to the governments and parliaments of the Member States.