OPINION

of the Committee on Development

for the Committee on Fisheries


Rapporteur for opinion: Caroline Roose
SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Development calls on the Committee on Fisheries, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Points out that European fisheries policy must be consistent with the development objectives set out in Article 208 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and, in particular, the objectives referred to in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 of the 2030 Agenda – to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development;

2. Stresses that access for EU vessels should be genuinely limited to the level of surplus fish stocks in line with the principle of maximum sustainable yield; points out that fishing by European vessels must not compromise food security for local populations;

3. Expresses concern at the lack of reliable scientific data to accurately determine fish stocks; highlights, in this context, the importance of the joint scientific groups responsible for giving scientific opinions on the state of fish stocks in order to avoid overfishing; calls for those groups to be allocated appropriate financial, technical and human resources to enable them to carry out their tasks and work together with the regional fisheries management organisations (RFMOs); strongly recommends stepping up regional cooperation in fisheries research and development;

4. Calls on the Commission and Guinea-Bissau to provide more detailed information on the development of industrial fishing activities in the region; calls on the Commission, in particular, to ensure that the authorities of Guinea-Bissau communicate in a transparent manner information on the signing of other agreements allowing foreign fleets to have access to their exclusive economic zone;

5. Calls for transparency regarding the use of EU funds and publication of the list of funded projects;

6. Calls for concerted efforts to foster local economic development and strengthen coastal communities dependent on marine resources; stresses, in particular, that sectoral support should sustainably assist the development of the artisanal and local fisheries sector, including the processing sector, and should benefit women and young people in particular; calls for the EU to provide technical assistance to enhance the value chains and certification schemes of small-scale fisheries; recommends that part of the multiannual sectoral programme be dedicated to activities to step up monitoring, control and surveillance, notably as a means to prevent illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; recommends, moreover, that local fishing communities be consulted regarding the measures to be taken with sectoral support;

7. Advocates the development of infrastructures for the in situ landing and exploitation of fishery products to ensure that the agreement produces tangible results for local and artisanal fisheries; stresses the importance of making local communities aware of the management, protection and conservation of natural resources in order to achieve the objectives of sustainable development and combating poverty;

8. Recalls the essential role of women in non-industrial fishing, particularly in the
marketing and processing of products; recalls the importance of developing support in the form of training or small infrastructure for the cold chain;

9. Insist that the agreement should be adapted to Guinea-Bissau’s needs and priorities; calls on the Commission, in this connection, to establish a zone closed to coastal trawlers in order to reduce their impact on local fishermen and to prevent species that are important to the local population from being caught in areas where local people fish; calls on the Commission to ensure that trawlers declare their by-catches – by species and by quantity;

10. Recommends measures to ensure that sectoral support complements and conforms to other programmes financed by other international partners in Guinea-Bissau in order to avoid duplication of funding;

11. Points out that according to a report by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the long-term conservation of the natural resources of Guinea-Bissau’s coastal zone makes a major contribution to conserving global biodiversity, inter alia by providing egg-laying areas for the largest colonies of sea turtles on the Atlantic coast of Africa, by receiving a million migratory birds from Europe every year, and by providing nutrition, refuge and spawning grounds for fish and crustaceans;

12. Stresses the importance of the programme of conservation and sustainable use of the renewable natural resources of Guinea-Bissau’s coastal zone; calls on Guinea-Bissau’s political and administrative authorities to step up measures to protect and conserve marine and coastal ecosystems, with a view to ensuring the sustainable management of natural resources and exploitation of fishery resources compatible with the SDGs and sharing best practices in this area;

13. Recalls that Guinea-Bissau, whose mangrove forests cover 8 % of the country’s territory, serves as a climatic buffer and acts as a brake on the expansion of desertification towards the southern countries and coastal erosion; reiterates the importance of prioritising the conservation of mangroves and the resources dependent on them; more generally, recalls the importance of integrated management of the coastal zone, which should be seen as an instrument for the conservation and rational use of natural resources in the context of sustainable development and in order to contribute to the conservation of ecosystems and species;

14. Recalls that marine resources are cross-border in nature; notes that in Southwest Africa it has been estimated, according to a report by the UN Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), that nine fish stocks are overfished, including *Galeoides decadactylus* and those in the *Pomadasys* genus; calls, therefore, for the cumulative impact of the various fisheries agreements concluded with countries in the region to be taken into account, in order to strengthen regional and global strategies for fisheries governance with third countries and to ensure the sustainable management of fishery resources; calls on the governments of the West African States to set up information systems for this purpose and to step up their regional cooperation; recalls the need, moreover, to develop appropriate certification procedures for the export of fishery products to the EU.
### PROCEDURE – COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Protocol on the implementation of the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Guinea-Bissau (2019-2024)</th>
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<td>Date announced in plenary</td>
<td>24.10.2019</td>
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<td>Rapporteur</td>
<td>Caroline Roose</td>
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<td>Date appointed</td>
<td>4.9.2019</td>
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<td>Discussed in committee</td>
<td>7.11.2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date adopted</td>
<td>3.12.2019</td>
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<td>Result of final vote</td>
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<td>Alessandra Basso, Stéphane Bijoux, Marlene Mortler, Caroline Roose, Carlos Zorrinho</td>
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**FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION**

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Key to symbols:
+ : in favour
- : against
0 : abstention