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## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to Questions for Oral Answer B7-0306/2011, B7-0307/2011, B7-0308/2011, B7-0310/2011, B7-0311/2011 and B7-0313/2011

pursuant to Rule 115(5) of the Rules of Procedure

on the European fisheries sector crisis due to the rise in oil prices

**João Ferreira, Patrick Le Hyaric, Jacky Hénin, Willy Meyer, Elie Hoarau**  
on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

**European Parliament resolution on the European fisheries sector crisis due to the rise in oil prices**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to Rules 115(5) and 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. having regard to the strategic importance of the fisheries sector in terms of supplies of fish for the public, the food balance in the Member States and the Union, the development and socio-economic well-being of coastal communities, local development, employment, the preservation and creation of economic activities and jobs both upstream and downstream, supplies of fresh fish and the preservation of local cultural traditions,
- B. having regard to the insecure situation of fisheries workers in terms of incomes and wages, arising from a number of factors, including irregular rhythms of activity, the organisation of marketing in the sector and the nature of price formation at the initial point of sale, which point to the need to maintain certain forms of national and Community public aid,
- C. whereas in view of the relationship between wages, revenue from initial catch sales and certain production costs which are directly deducted from revenue before calculating wages, higher fuel prices have a direct negative impact on fishermen's incomes,
- D. whereas current sales trends make it impossible to pass on fluctuations in production costs, including the price of fuel, to consumers through fish prices; whereas average prices at the initial point of sale have in many cases stagnated or fallen since 2000, but this has not been reflected in lower prices for the end-consumer of fresh fish,
- E. whereas the economic situation of numerous fisheries enterprises has deteriorated in recent years, with some of them even disappearing, and there is a real risk that thousands of such enterprises could be wiped out and thousands of jobs could be destroyed as a result of higher fuel prices,
- F. whereas the sharp rise in fuel prices has significantly worsened the crisis in the fisheries sector, affecting its operating margins and economic viability and significantly reducing fishermen's incomes; whereas in the last six months alone, between October 2010 and April 2011, oil prices (Brent barrel) have risen by more than 48%, resulting in similar increases in the prices of petrol and diesel,
- G. whereas in certain cases the existing common organisation of the market (COM) in fisheries products has not made a sufficient contribution to improving prices at the initial point of sale or to the more effective distribution of value added across the sector's value chain,
- H. whereas the measures encouraging the indiscriminate scrapping of vessels irrespective of fleets' specific characteristics or of the state of fish stocks and consumer needs in

individual Member States has been the driving force behind the so-called adaptation of fleet size to existing fish stocks; whereas this option has had enormous economic and social repercussions, but without bringing about any significant change as regards the state of conservation of fish stocks,

- I. whereas the crisis in the fisheries sector is running in parallel with the severe economic and social crisis which is affecting various Member States, especially those with more vulnerable economies, with harsh consequences in terms of worsening living conditions and levels of public well-being, declining economic activity and rising unemployment and job insecurity, for example,
- J. whereas the Community must respond to this crisis, given that in a moment of crisis such as this failure to respond will only worsen the existing and growing inequalities between Member States,
  - 1. Deplores the EU's inertia on the matter and its refusal to take the necessary decisions on modernisation and sustainable development in the fisheries sector, its socio-economic viability, the sustainability of stocks, ensuring food sovereignty and security, supplies of fish to the public, job preservation and the improvement of fishermen's living conditions;
  - 2. Stresses that the encouragement of indiscriminate vessel scrapping and the permanent withdrawal of vessels from service do not represent a genuine response to the sector's problems and do nothing to ensure its economic, social or environmental sustainability;
  - 3. Deplores a policy which tries to exploit the socio-economic deterioration of the sector arising from spiralling fuel price increases by encouraging the scrapping or permanent withdrawal of vessels, thus leading to ever greater concentration of ownership in the sector, rising unemployment, damage to an industry and worsening food and trade balances;
  - 4. Calls for the adoption of emergency measures as an immediate and appropriate response to the sector's socio-economic needs, above all in the face of rising fuel prices (petrol and diesel);
  - 5. Stresses that the measures to be implemented should also aim to safeguard the interests of vessel crews and small-scale fisheries and to respond to their problems, especially in the case of small-scale fishermen using petrol-powered motors;
  - 6. Calls for the creation of a guarantee fund with Community co-participation which would ensure stable fuel prices, and for transitional compensatory payments to be made to the fisheries enterprises affected;
  - 7. Favours coordinated action at Member State level with a view to introducing, for each Member State, maximum fuel prices (for petrol and diesel) or an additional discount for fuel used for fisheries;

8. Insists on the need to use all possibilities and financial margins available under the Community budget in order to finance extraordinary support measures in the sector and enable it to recover from the problems arising from higher fuel prices, pending the implementation of other types of measure;
9. Calls for the creation of a system of guaranteed public insurance at national and Community level in order to deal with unexpected developments in the fisheries sector;
10. Calls for the establishment of a tripartite dialogue at European level, bringing together all stakeholders - public authorities, trade unions and fishermen - in order to examine the structural problems in the sector (which are not limited to the oil-price crisis), prioritising fishermen's working conditions;
11. Stresses the need to take account of production costs as a variable when setting guide prices;
12. Advocates introducing mechanisms for improving prices at the initial point of sale and encouraging a fair and appropriate distribution of value added across the sector's value chain;
13. Reiterates the need to consider other forms of intervention, along the lines of guarantee prices or maximum levels of profit, as a means of ensuring the more effective distribution of value added, reducing the middlemen's margins, ensuring more satisfactory producer prices and curbing prices for the final consumer;
14. Stresses that the EFF must grant aid for the renewal and modernisation of fishing fleets, thus ensuring a more sustainable sector, with a view, in particular, to taking a more selective approach as regards tackle and the replacement of motors, on grounds of safety, environmental protection and/or fuel economy, especially for small-scale and coastal fishing, and replacing vessels with more than 20 years' service which can no longer operate safely;
15. Reaffirms the need for the CFP to recognise the specific characteristics of small-scale and coastal fishing and to analyse to what extent the existing instruments are suited to the sector's needs, adapting them accordingly;
16. Reaffirms its proposal that there should be a Community support programme for small-scale and coastal fishing, with a view to coordinating actions and channelling funds from other existing instruments in order to respond to the specific problems of that part of the sector;
17. Urges the Commission to examine mechanisms – such as aid for consumption - for promoting the marketing of high value-added processed fisheries products, especially canned products, along the lines of those applying to certain agricultural products;
18. Stresses the need for the Structural Funds to contribute to the modernisation and creation of marketing infrastructures for the fisheries sector;
19. Insists on the vital need to strike a balance between the socio-economic situation and

environmental sustainability, while also stressing the need to implement a mechanism for subsidising or compensating fishermen affected by the economic and social repercussions of the recovery plans for fish population units or other measures for the greater protection of ecosystems, especially in the case of the less-favoured regions;

20. Considers it essential that imported fisheries products and those placed on the internal market should be governed by the same standards and requirements, e.g. in terms of labelling, plant health rules, a ban on access to the Community market for fisheries products of a size smaller than the minimum authorised for Community production, and the ban on imports of the products of IUU fishing;
21. Advocates the adoption by individual Member States of fiscal measures aimed at fighting speculation in fuel prices;
22. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.