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Committee on Development

2007/0114(CNS)

29.1.2008

OPINION

of the Committee on Development

for the Committee on Fisheries

on the proposal for a Council regulation concerning authorisations for fishing activities of Community fishing vessels outside Community waters and the access of third country vessels to Community waters
(COM(2007)0330 – C6-0236/2007 – 2007/0114(CNS))

Draftswoman: Marie-Hélène Aubert

PA_Legam

SHORT JUSTIFICATION

There is much fishing by EU vessels fish outside waters under the jurisdiction of the Community. According to information provided by the Commission, 40% of the total EU fleet in terms of vessel tonnage operate on the high seas or in the waters of third countries, though it is EU activities in developing countries that is of interest to this committee. Vessels from other countries also fish in EU waters, notably under the terms of the so-called "northern agreements".

It is thus very important that the EU have a clear system for authorising both types of activities. This legislative proposal is part of the Commission's efforts to "simplify" the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). It sets up general rules and conditions for applying for and issuing licences to fish, clarifies the responsibilities of Commission and the Member States and specifies the reporting requirements of fishing activities.

The Commission introduces a number of innovative ideas that would improve compliance with the terms of fisheries agreements and bring greater transparency to the activities of EU vessels in third country waters.

In particular, it proposes strict criteria for fishing vessels that wish to benefit from the terms of agreements with third countries. Vessels that have committed a serious infringement of the CFP during the previous 12 months, or that have been included on an internationally-established list of vessels that operate illegally, should not be eligible for a licences. These are good ideas, consistent with the fight being waged by the EU against IUU (illegal, unregulated and unreported) fishing.

Another positive proposal covers failure of Member States to live up to their responsibilities. If a Member State fails to report on the activities of its fleet, fails to close a fishery when the quota is exhausted or fails to ensure that other requirements are met (vessel satellite monitoring, logbooks, etc), then the Commission would be entitled to exclude vessels from that Member State from fishing under the agreement. Given that certain segments of the EU distant water fleet, especially the surface longline fleet, frequently disregard the requirement to report their catches, this idea should be welcomed.

Given the very high priority that the Commission and the EU accord the fight against IUU fishing and the significant losses to the fishery resources from IUU vessels operating in Developing Countries, an amendment to the Commission's proposal should be proposed.

A number of international bodies (known as Regional Fisheries Management Organizations, or RFMOs), have adopted lists of vessels that have engaged in IUU activities. The current proposal would prohibit any EU-flagged vessels on these lists from being issued a licence to fish outside the EU. Since this proposal was issued, the Commission has published a further proposal on combating IUU fishing which includes the creation of a specific EU list of IUU vessels, so vessels on the EU list should be treated in the same manner as those on the RFMO lists. An amendment is proposed to that effect.

Discussions in Council are apparently focussing on certain aspects of this proposal that do not apply to fisheries agreements with ACP countries and it is not clear to what extent the

proposal will be modified, and whether certain aspects will end up included in another regulation of general fisheries control. Regardless of which regulation the above measures appear, the draftswoman thinks they are very important to maintain.

AMENDMENT

The Committee on Development calls on the Committee on Fisheries, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following amendment in its report:

Text proposed by the Commission¹

Amendment by Parliament

Amendment 1 Article 2, point (n)

(n) IUU list: list of fishing vessels identified in the framework of a RFMO as having been involved in illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing;

(n) IUU list: list of fishing vessels identified in the framework of a RFMO *or by the Commission under Council Regulation (EC) No...of ... [establishing a Community system to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing]*¹ as having been involved in illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing;

¹ COM(2007)0602.

¹ Not yet published in OJ.

PROCEDURE

Title	Fishing activities of Community fishing vessels outside Community waters and the access of third country vessels to Community waters
References	COM(2007)0330 – C6-0236/2007 – 2007/0114(CNS)
Committee responsible	PECH
Opinion by Date announced in plenary	DEVE 3.9.2007
Drafts(wo)man Date appointed	Marie-Hélène Aubert 17.7.2007
Date adopted	29.1.2008
Result of final vote	+: 32 –: 0 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Thijs Berman, Josep Borrell Fontelles, Marie-Arlette Carlotti, Corina Crețu, Ryszard Czarnecki, Nirj Deva, Koenraad Dillen, Fernando Fernández Martín, Alain Hutchinson, Romana Jordan Cizelj, Madeleine Jouye de Grandmaison, Filip Kaczmarek, Glenys Kinnock, Maria Martens, Gay Mitchell, Luisa Morgantini, Horst Posdorf, José Ribeiro e Castro, Toomas Savi, Frithjof Schmidt, Jürgen Schröder, Feleknas Uca, Johan Van Hecke, Jan Zahradil
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Sorin Frunzăverde, Miguel Angel Martínez Martínez, Manolis Mavrommatis, Atanas Paparizov, Anne Van Lancker, Ralf Walter, Renate Weber
Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote	Catherine Neris