

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Committee on Fisheries

2008/2010(INI)

14.4.2008

OPINION

of the Committee on Fisheries

for the Committee on Regional Development

on a strategy for the outermost regions: achievements and future prospects
(2008/2010(INI))

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PA_NonLeg

SUGGESTIONS

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

- A. whereas, despite the improvements observed, there is still a need for fresh investment in order to improve working conditions for those operating in the fisheries sector, as well as infrastructures and port equipment for fisheries, and to renew and modernise the fleets of the outermost regions (ORs),
- B. whereas the fleets consist for the most part of ageing vessels, more than 30 years old in some of the ORs, while the elimination of Community aid for fleet renewal will make it difficult to remedy a situation in which they are lagging behind the fleets from the European mainland,
- C. having regard to the ORs' dependent situation, in social and economic terms, with regard to the fish stocks in their Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) and to the biological vulnerability of their fishing zones,
 1. Stresses how important the fishing industry is in the socio-economic situation, in employment and in promoting economic and social cohesion in the ORs, whose economies suffer from permanent structural constraints and limited possibilities for economic diversification;
 2. Considers that the Commission must ensure positive discrimination for the ORs' fleets in terms of access to their own fish stocks, and also, specifically, safeguard the sustainability of traditional fisheries;
 3. Considers it necessary to maintain and step up Community support for the fishing industries in the ORs, with particular reference to the programme for compensating the additional costs arising from their remote status vis-à-vis the disposal of certain fisheries products in a number of outermost regions (POSEI - Fisheries); in this connection, believes that this programme should continue in force indefinitely, since outermost status is a permanent factor, and appreciates the increase in appropriations for the programme in the Community budget for 2008;
 4. Considers it necessary to adopt new, more effective measures, not based on transitional criteria or circumstantial wealth trends, to promote the ORs' capacity to cope with the conditions and permanent structural handicaps facing them, particularly in the fishing industry;
 5. Calls on the Commission, recognising the specific characteristics of and differences between ORs, on the one hand, and considering their role in the EU's integrated maritime policy, on the other, to include in its plan support measures for the fishing industries in these regions that are aimed, in particular, at:
 - considering the area corresponding to the EEZs of ORs as an 'exclusive access zone' in order to guarantee the sustainability of marine ecosystems, fishing activity and the

local communities concerned;

- undertaking a scientific assessment of the potential of the marine resources in those waters, and, in line with the precautionary principle as defined under the CFP, reserving the EEZs adjoining the outermost regions for the local fleets;
- evaluating, on the basis of the principle of relative stability, the socio-economic impact of an increased fishing effort and the use of certain tackle by vessels with greater fishing capacity in the EEZs adjoining the outermost regions in terms of the sustainability of the local communities concerned;
- ensuring Community support for the renewal and modernisation of the ORs' fishing fleets, and especially the traditional fleet, since this is a sine qua non for improving the conditions of conservation of fish and safety standards for fisheries workers in those regions;
- reinforcing Community support for scientific fisheries research and the gathering of information, in such a way as to promote the protection and recovery of fish stocks and the biodiversity of the outermost regions, while paying special attention to the specific characteristics of those regions in the context of the programmes under the Seventh Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration activities;
- improving fishing gear and banning the use of fishing gear that destroys marine ecosystems;
- introducing socio-economic measures to compensate fishermen for the impact of measures, voluntary or otherwise, to conserve fishery resources;
- creating a Community programme to support small-scale inshore and artisanal fishing, taking account of its specific characteristics and its social and economic importance in the regions concerned;
- supporting improvements to professional training and qualification, working conditions (including conditions ensuring hygiene, safety and comfort) and the economic situation for fishermen, with a view to renewing the industry's age profile;
- boosting support for the processing, marketing and promotion of fish products from the ORs;
- modernising and creating port infrastructure and facilities to support fishing, recalling that these are now insufficient to meet the needs of the fisheries sector in certain outermost regions;
- boosting support for the sustainable development of aquaculture and aquaculture production, in the context of the specific needs of each of the ORs concerned;
- support for the installation and modernisation of specific means of prevention, rescue, monitoring, checks and controls (taking account of their extensive EEZs), combating

illegal fisheries, reinforcing maritime safety and preserving the marine environment;

6. Welcomes the creation of an island subdivision under the umbrella of the South Western Waters Regional Advisory Council, in the interests of a more objective treatment for the particular fisheries of the outermost regions.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	3.4.2008
Result of final vote	+: 22 -: 1 0: 3
Members present for the final vote	Elsbeth Attwooll, Marie-Hélène Aubert, Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos, Paulo Casaca, Zdzisław Kazimierz Chmielewski, Emanuel Jardim Fernandes, Carmen Fraga Estévez, Duarte Freitas, Ioannis Gklavakis, Alfred Gomolka, Pedro Guerreiro, Heinz Kindermann, Rosa Miguélez Ramos, Philippe Morillon, Seán Ó Neachtain, Willi Piecyk, Catherine Stihler, Margie Sudre, Daniel Varela Suanzes-Carpegna, Cornelis Visser
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Ole Christensen, Josu Ortuondo Larrea, Raül Romeva i Rueda, Thomas Wise
Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote	Ilda Figueiredo, Willem Schuth