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*Committee on Fisheries*

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# **DRAFT REPORT**

on current and future management of Black Sea fisheries  
(2010/2113(INI))

Committee on Fisheries

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PR\_INI

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## MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

### on current and future management of Black Sea fisheries (2010/2113(INI))

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) and its resolution of 7 May 2009 on Parliament’s new role and responsibilities in implementing the Treaty of Lisbon<sup>1</sup>,
- having regard to its resolution of 20 January 2011 on an EU strategy for the Black Sea<sup>2</sup>,
- having regard to its resolution of 25 February 2010 on the Commission Green Paper on the reform of the common fisheries policy (COM(2009)0163)<sup>3</sup>,
- having regard to its resolution of 21 October 2010 on the Integrated maritime policy – evaluation of progress made and new challenges<sup>4</sup>,
- having regard to its resolution of ... .. 2011 on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and the Council establishing a Program to support the further development of an Integrated Maritime Policy (2010/0257(COD)),
- having regard to the Council Regulation (EU) 1256/2010 of 17 December 2010 fixing the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks applicable in the Black Sea for 2011<sup>5</sup>,
- having regard to the Council Directive 1992/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora<sup>6</sup>,
- having regard to the Council Directive 2008/56/EC of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive)<sup>7</sup>,
- having regard to the Communication from the European Commission “Integrated Maritime Policy for the EU” (COM(2007)0575),
- having regard to the 1992 Convention on the protection of the Black Sea against pollution (the Bucharest Convention) and its protocols,

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<sup>1</sup> Texts adopted, P6\_TA(2009)0373.

<sup>2</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2011)0025.

<sup>3</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2010)0039.

<sup>4</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2010)0386.

<sup>5</sup> OJ L 343, 29.12.2010, p.2.

<sup>6</sup> OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p.50.

<sup>7</sup> OJ L 164, 25.6.2008, p. 19.

- having regard to the 1993 Ministerial declaration on the protection of the Black Sea (the Odessa declaration),
- having regard to the 2007 Black Sea transboundary diagnostic analysis<sup>8</sup>,
- having regard to the 2008 State of the environment of the Black Sea report of the Commission on the protection of the Black Sea against pollution,
- having regard to the 2009 Strategic action plan for the environmental protection and rehabilitation of Black Sea of the Commission on the protection of the Black Sea against pollution,
- having regard to the 1982 United Nations Conventions on the Law of the sea,
- having regard to the United Nations Agreement for the implementation of the provisions of the Convention of 10 December 1982 relating to the conservation and management of straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks,
- having regard to the Agreement relating to the implementation of Part XI of the Convention on the law of the sea,
- having regard to the 1995 FAO Code of conduct for responsible fisheries,
- having regard to the 1992 United Nations Convention on biological diversity,
- having regard to the United Nations Convention on international trade of endangered species,
- having regard to the United Nations Convention on wetlands of international importance especially as waterflow habitats (The Ramsar Convention),
- having regard to the 1979 Convention on the conservation of migratory species of wild animals (Bonn Convention),
- having regard to the Agreement on the conservation of cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area (ACCOBAMS),
- having regard to the 1995 United Nations Fish stocks agreement,
- having regard to the 2008 report “Strengthening the cooperation in Black Sea” of the thirty-second session of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM),
- having regard to the 2009 Regional study of the GFCM on small tunas in the Mediterranean including Black Sea,
- having regard to the Organisation for Black Sea economic cooperation,

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.grid.unep.ch/bsein/tda/main.htm>.

- having regard to the Joint declaration of the Prague Eastern partnership summit of 07 May 2009 (The Prague Declaration),
  - having regard to Rule 48 of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Fisheries (A7-0000/2011),
- A. Whereas the debate on the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) in the EU is still ongoing, and it should take into account the specificities and necessities of this aquatory, because this will be the first reform of the CFP incorporating the Black Sea,
- B. Whereas until today there has been a loose, or even non-existent collaboration and cooperation, a lack of a concrete, harmonized legislative framework and a lack of common legislative act for fishing activities between the Black Sea states, as well as there has been a general lack of sufficient and systematic research and scientific information on the Black Sea basin,
- C. Whereas the management of fisheries in the Black Sea is extremely difficult, due to the fact that only two out of the six countries bordering the basin are Member States of the EU and keeping in mind that they are new Member States having only recently joined the EU in 2007,
- D. Whereas a common policy mechanism should be set up for the six countries bordering the Black Sea in the nearest future in order to ensure, among other, the protection of the environment and facilitate the economic development of littoral areas,
- E. Whereas this new policy mechanism for the Black Sea should aim to preserve and improve biodiversity, which is one of the priorities of the European Union,
- F. Whereas the Black Sea should take its proper place amongst Europe`s major marine areas,
- G. Whereas the Black Sea should take its place in the reformed CFP, in the Integrated Maritime Policy, and the needs of fishermen, and the fishing, producing and processing industries should be adequately taken into consideration in the new financial framework of the European Fisheries Fund after 2013,
- H. Whereas the current report could be taken into consideration not only as a guideline for the reform of the CFP, but it could also become part of a future EU policy on collaboration with its Eastern partners to maximise the use of the existing EC communication on Black Sea Synergy<sup>9</sup> in order to intensify cooperation in the Black Sea region, in which fisheries and the development of the different sectors play a significant role,

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<sup>9</sup> COM(2007)0160 on Black Sea Synergy.

- I. Whereas fisheries management in Black Sea region would benefit significantly from more coordinated scientific cooperation between the littoral states as well as coherent policy for the preservation and the improvement of the state of fish stocks at European level,
- J. Whereas many of the marine ecosystems in general, and the ecosystem of the Black Sea in particular, are seriously affected by dynamic changes directly related to fishing and pollution,
- K. Whereas, the population of the veined rapa whelk (*Rapana venosa*), has a negative impact and is a threat to the ecological balance of the Black Sea as it destroys the natural filters of water like the blue mussel (*Mytilus galloprovincialis*) and the striped white venus (*Chamelea gallina*),
- L. Whereas, the majority of the fishing vessels used in the Black Sea by fishermen of the EU are less than 12 meters long, they have a limited impact on the Black Sea marine environment; should in the meantime respect the efforts and responsibilities for sustainable fisheries,
- M. Whereas illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the Black Sea should be tackled immediately,
- N. Whereas, the lack of a common agreement between the six countries bordering the Black Sea can be replaced by a framework agreement, which could be negotiated, for instance on the basis of a communication by the European Commission, in which the interests of all parties are expressed and taken into consideration,
- O. Whereas, a large part of the problems of the Black Sea are the result of the lack of an appropriate institutional structure that coordinates and carries out the management of Black Sea fisheries at a professional and specialized level; whereas, negotiations have been ongoing between the national administrations involved in fisheries policy implementation for the past ten years on the creation of such an institutional structure as well as on the form and responsibility of this structure and until today these negotiations have not yet been successful; for this reason, no adequate measures have been taken to control catches and in particular cross border fishing,
- P. Whereas, the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), whose mandate covers the area of the Black Sea does not meet the needs and expectations of the stakeholders, and in particular, of fishermen,
- Q. Whereas, the Black Sea differs significantly from the Mediterranean Sea with regards to its fish stocks, levels of pollution, variety of species, dominant species, common biomass and productivity of the basin,
- R. Whereas in January 2011 the European Parliament adopted a report on an EU

Strategy for the Black Sea<sup>10</sup>, which also underlines the need for the application of multiannual management plans for fisheries, as well as the creation of a separate regional body for the management of Black Sea fisheries,

## GENERAL

1. Points out that the Black Sea needs a special policy to preserve and improve the situation of fisheries resources and ensure a stable, sustainable and adapted fisheries sector in the Black Sea basin, bearing in mind the specificities of the Black Sea region, as well as taking into consideration that the Black Sea fisheries policy should be integral part of the upcoming reform of the CFP;
2. Underlines the need for a more accurate analytical and scientific research coordinated at a regional and European level to preserve and improve fisheries resources and ecosystems in the Black Sea basin;
3. Recognizes the European Commission's efforts to promote a more solid and structured dialogue with non-member states bordering the Black Sea and encourage the Commission to intensify its efforts until a common framework covering the whole basin of the Black Sea is agreed;
4. Considers that all decisions or policies related to the Black Sea should be based on solid scientific data and collaboration of all stakeholders to this end;
5. Stresses the need for the continuous analysis of the state of fish stocks, a stable, long-term system for fisheries' observation, and the need for all Black Sea littoral States to participate in the analysis;
6. Underlines the need for a more structured framework, with regards to the regional approach of the management of fisheries in the region;
7. Encourages the European Commission to use all its possible diplomatic and financial tools that help to achieve of concrete results on successful and sustainable fisheries in the interest of the EU, including making the most of the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly and the Eastern Partnership Initiative, as it all comes down to the immediate neighbours of the EU;
8. Considers that fishing techniques for demersal species should be examined carefully and in detail in order to identify the non- or least detrimental ones for the seabed; stresses that the adequate use of fishing techniques for demersal stocks is of great importance in order to prevent excessive populations of veined rapa whelk (*Rapana venosa*), which threaten the natural filter of sea water blue mussel (*Mytilus galloprovincialis*), striped venus clam (*Chamelea gallina*), as well as noble oyster populations (*Ostrea edulis*) and many other shellfish;

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<sup>10</sup> European Parliament resolution of 20 January 2011 on an EU Strategy for the Black Sea (2010/2087(INI)).

9. Considers that the Black Sea should have an appropriate status in Community policies and for this purpose sufficient diplomatic and scientific efforts should be developed and adequate financial resources should be made available for sustainable fisheries in the basin; believes that the EU budgetary resources should be flexible and accessible in transparent terms in order for the EU to ensure the sustainability of the Black Sea fisheries;
10. Stresses that dialogue between different stakeholders is the basis for the successful promotion of the Integrated Maritime Policy in the Black Sea area; the Integrated Maritime Policy should also facilitate the establishment of a conflict and trouble free link between different maritime sectors taking into account the sustainable development of coastal areas;
11. Encourages the European Commission to further to promote the development of coastal areas by means of developing sustainable fisheries, which is particularly important for the Black Sea region affected by high unemployment rates;

#### **SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS**

12. Expresses its satisfaction with the European Commission's efforts to establish working groups in the field of fisheries management with Turkey and the Russian Federation, which give ground for further debate on cooperation; calls on the Commission to extend its efforts and dialogue with all countries bordering the Black Sea; considers that a separate regional fisheries management organisation (RFMO) for the Black Sea could foster and promote communication between scientific institutes and professional organizations of fishermen, producers and processors to settle issues and deepen cooperation in the Black Sea; encourages the European Commission to work with the Black Sea countries at a bilateral level, bearing in mind that many of them are not members of the European Union;
13. Underlines the need to create a RFMO, which would coordinate scientific research, analyze the situation of fish stocks, and carry out special policies for the observation of the endangered species; it could also make suggestions for the level of the fisheries multiannual management plans and distribute the quotas for the Black Sea bordering countries;
14. Urges the EU to use its diplomatic efforts to attract, as much as possible the non-EU littoral countries bordering the Black sea, to the principles of the Common Fisheries Policy of the EU, especially with regards to the creation of a common Black Sea RFMO and the application of the multiannual management plans;
15. Believes that not only collaborative research among European scientific teams should have access to EU funding, but financial support should also be allocated for closer cooperation of European scientists with their counterparts from the Ukraine, the Russian Federation, Georgia and Turkey;



16. Believes that EU activities related to Black Sea fisheries, and in particular the Integrated Maritime Policy, should focus mainly on small-scale fishing, which is crucial for the region and the economic status of coastal areas;
17. Underlines that the EU's Common Fisheries Policy should encourage the establishment of professional fishermen organizations in the Black Sea where they are lacking or are very underdeveloped;
18. Believes that the principle of annual TACs and quotas currently applied by Member States in the Black Sea does not give a long-term perspective for the development of fisheries in the basin and puts those Member States in a very disadvantaged position compared to the non-member states bordering the Black Sea; believes that multiannual management plans, as opposed to the current principle of annual TACs and quotas, will provide clarity on the EU's objectives in the field of fisheries in the Black Sea region and on the EU's vision for the future of the basin;
19. Stresses that there should be a shared and coordinated long-term method among all stakeholders in the region in order to pursue sustainable fisheries from all parties in the Black Sea;
20. Believes that the multiannual management plans are of a much greater interest for both the economic situation of the fishing sector and the environmental situation of the Black Sea ecosystems; believes that the approach of multiannual management plans should be accompanied by effective control of catches;
21. Underlines the need to encourage scientific research on Black Sea thematic, so that the decisions taken by responsible European, regional and national authorities should consider economic, social and ecologic consequences of these decisions; believes it is necessary to conduct detailed and coordinated research in order to give a clear and unequivocal answer to the question concerning the impact fishing methods such (i.e. trawling on the seabed) might have, since, in the absence of studies on the effects, no serious conclusions should be drawn; considers that research programs and projects in the field of Black Sea fisheries, like SESAME, KNOWSEAS, WISER and BlackSeaFish, should be further encouraged, and to achieve this, a special budget line for the Black Sea should be established in the new framework of the European Fisheries Fund after 2013;
22. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of Member States and the governments and parliaments of the Ukraine, the Russian Federation, Georgia and Turkey.

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

This report aims primarily to set the framework for the medium and long term development of fisheries in the Black Sea region. The report is of great importance, because until now the Black Sea has lacked coordinated action among all actors in the field of fisheries.

Institutionalised coordination could provide tangible results to protect the livelihood of fishermen, ensure economic development in coastal areas, and protect the ecological balance and fish resources in the basin. This applies not only to EU Member States, but also to all other Black Sea countries.

The Black Sea is an enclosed basin whose resources are, to some extent, shared among the six Black Sea states. The area is also of major economic, social and political importance. The rapporteur therefore believes that fisheries cooperation among the countries in the Black Sea region will be a considerable step forward in managing preservation and tackling issues effectively in the Black Sea basin.

The in-depth analysis of fisheries in the Black Sea shows a need for finding the most efficient way of cooperation among all countries in the region. The special nature of its biodiversity also necessitates a common approach in managing this unique basin. To effectively address the problems of the Black Sea region, it is essential to deepen cooperation among all stakeholders in the fisheries sector, including the representatives of the industry, scientists, and policy makers from fishing regions to stimulate the investments in scientific activities and research.

The partnership model in the Black Sea region must be based on the implementation of common and long-term management plans, as well as on the cooperation among stakeholders and the coordination of their efforts in various areas, such as:

- the scientific assessment of resources and the factors, which threaten them,
- the creation of a regional data base gathering available information,
- the cooperation among national and non-governmental organisations in the Black Sea region,
- the launch of common initiatives for data collection,
- and finally, the strict control of fishing activities, including the close cooperation among the six Black Sea States with regards to the prevention, obstruction and the elimination of illegal, unregistered and undeclared fishing.

This model will ensure the balance of the Black Sea's ecosystem, allowing for improvement in the state of its fish stocks without damaging the fisheries sector in the region.

Prior to formulating, implementing and endorsing any policy on the Black Sea fisheries, it should be clear that any efforts, measures or strategies will only be beneficial if such measures or strategies are deemed attractive by non EU States. This is due to the fact that Romania and Bulgaria have a relatively small share of the fishing fleet and catches in the Black Sea, especially in comparison to Turkey and the Russian Federation. It is therefore particularly important for Member States to find an alternative approach to the principle of annual quotas and TACs, which put them in a particularly disadvantaged position compared to their Black Sea neighbours. Instead, the rapporteur suggests that they should be replaced with multiannual management plans for fish stocks - a principle whose future application

Black Sea countries outside the EU are willing to discuss and adopt. This recommendation is one of the key elements of the report.

Particular attention should be paid to the dangers of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. Both EU and non-EU countries in the Black Sea basin should take strict measures to fight IUU fishing. This could only be achieved through the active cooperation of the European Commission and the Black Sea countries.

The report also highlights the need to establish a regional Black Sea fisheries management body, separated from the GFCM. The strongest argument for the establishment of such a body is the different characteristics of the two basins that require different approaches to be taken in managing fisheries resources and fisheries in the Mediterranean and Black Seas. The Committee on Fisheries has repeatedly stressed the importance of taking into account regional specificities when shaping future policies. This position is reflected in numerous documents adopted by the EP, including the own initiative report on the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy prepared by the Committee on Fisheries (Patrão Neves report). Evidently, any policy that is applied to Black Sea fisheries should take into account the general principle of sustainability that the European Union applies for its seas. The challenges this new separate Black Sea management body will face are numerous, but the rapporteur believes that it is a good starting point for the EU. In this context, the rapporteur welcomes the active dialogue that the European Commission has recently launched with key players in the Black Sea region like the Russian Federation and Turkey. In particular, the rapporteur considers that the European Commission is on the right track in establishing working groups with these two countries in order to discuss the form and details of their cooperation. The European Commission and DG MARE face a challenging task to bring Turkey, Georgia, Russian Federation and Ukraine as close as possible to the principles of the Common Fisheries Policy of the EU, while balancing this with their interests in the Black Sea. However, it is essential for the future of the basin, the development of coastal areas and the ecology of fisheries that these efforts bring concrete results within acceptable and reasonable period of time.

European fisheries have a strongly established regional structure, where every separate region has its specificities; this requires a regional approach with regards to the management of fisheries. For this reason, the rapporteur recommends a two level approach in the decision making process, organised as follows:

- at a European level (accepting the common principles, framework and long term goals, as well as the roadmap to achieve them)
- at a regional level (identifying and setting the appropriate way to achieve these goals. For instance, local decision makers should have the power to determine how to manage the fisheries in the region, without deferring from the common norms).

Applying this two level approach and making decisions at an appropriate political level will make policies simpler and economically more justified.

As a consequence, a regional fisheries management organisation (RFMO) for the Black Sea should be established, based on the example of the body that exists in the Baltic Sea. All Black Sea States as well as the EU should be contracting parties in this RFMO. The regional committee should monitor the state of stocks in the entire Black Sea, and determine the TACs and quotas for all countries in the region on the basis of scientific advice. Fisheries

management would be much more effective if restrictive measures concerning endangered species were applied to all Black Sea countries and not only to Bulgaria and Romania.

The rapporteur believes that the creation of a regional organisation for fisheries management in the Black Sea is strongly justified. This body will allow the co-existence of fishing practices with the single aim to recover and preserve the Black Sea's fisheries resources. Up to now, fisheries management in the Black Sea has lacked the necessary coherent coordination among bordering countries. Due to their EU membership, Bulgaria and Romania have to apply certain measures to the preserve fish stocks in their waters. However, these measures cannot bring the maximum effect without being also applied in the rest of the Black Sea States.

This requires the institutionalised cooperation among these countries on the preservation of fish stocks. Through this initiative, the measures laid out in the EU's Common Fisheries Policy will be applied across the entire Black Sea basin. This argument is underpinned by scientific research showing that institutionalised cooperation is vital for the sustainable exploitation of living marine resources in the context of sustainable development.

It is important to underline that the establishment of such an organisation will affirm the EU's engagement in the region with regards to the sustainable development of fisheries, because it will have beneficial effects for all Black Sea States on the long run.

At the same time, by institutionalising regional cooperation in the field of fisheries, this regional organisation would allow the EU to put its principles set out in the Common Fisheries Policy at the heart of international fisheries cooperation with Turkey, the Ukraine, Georgia and Russia.

The rapporteur considers that the European Union should use all its diplomatic and financial resources, such as the Eastern Partnership Initiative, Euronest Parliamentary Assembly and various forms of European funding to achieve its priorities while negotiating with countries outside the EU.

The report insists on the need for science-based decisions. Moreover, the EU must develop the widest possible cooperation between research institutes in all Member States, which is not entirely limited to research teams. Adequate EU funding should be ensured for this purpose. Otherwise it will be impossible to get a full picture of the actual situation of fish stocks and decisions on the management of Black Sea fisheries will be subjected to serious doubts.

The report focuses on the importance of research to define the safest fishing techniques for demersal stocks, particularly the veined rapa whelk (*Rapana venosa*). This is of particular importance for the ecosystem of the Black Sea, as it has been revealed that Rapa whelk is in the position of "a predator without enemy" thus exercising great pressure on natural filters of sea waters like blue mussel (*Mytilus galloprovincialis*) and striped venus clam (*Chamelea gallina*), and seriously endangering the ecological balance of the Black Sea.