11.10.2016

OPINION

of the Committee on Transport and Tourism

for the Committee on Fisheries

on the role of fisheries-related tourism in the diversification of fisheries (2016/2035(INI))

Rapporteur: István Ujhelyi
SUGGESTIONS

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

1. Underlines the importance of devising strategies that can help diversify the economy of the local area, provide additional jobs and income to families, and help halt the employment decline in communities dependent on the fisheries sector;

2. Highlights the importance of distinguishing between the various forms of fisheries-related tourism, which include fishing tourism (pesca-tourism and ittitourism), maritime and coastal water-based activities, recreational fishing (including angling tourism), inland fishing, and activities based on heritage and culture that are geared towards creating synergies with marketing initiatives for high-quality primary products, while respecting the natural heritage, animal protection and biodiversity;

Investing in innovative, sustainable and tailor-made products

3. Recalls that the 2010 Tourism Communication laid down the development of sustainable, responsible and high-quality tourism as one of the main objectives for European tourism for the purposes of encouraging job creation and growth;

4. Stresses that, as travellers today are much more informed than they were in the past, if tourism localities are to prosper they need to be more attentive to the need to ensure quality, authenticity and a high price/quality ratio;

5. Believes, therefore, that supply must be adapted to new forms of demand for tailor-made products at popular seaside resorts and unspoilt rural, coastal and island destinations, and that marketing platforms must be developed that are tailored to potential demand of this kind;

6. Highlights the importance of supporting business platforms that are geared towards the type of customer who is looking for a top-quality tourist experience, meaning that skills training in this area and establishing technology infrastructure and digital distribution platforms must be a priority in public initiatives and eligible activities;

7. Believes that responsible and sustainable business models for diversification of fisheries must imply respect for the culture of local fisheries communities and help preserve their identities; emphasises, in particular, that tourism-related recreational fishing should be in line with the interests of small local artisanal fishing enterprises;

8. Believes it important to develop pesca-tourism and ittitourism as forms of ‘activity holiday’ experience with major spin-off benefits, such as the promotion of maritime culture and fisheries traditions, as well as education in matters of environmental awareness and species conservation;

9. Stresses the importance of environment-friendly business models, and therefore recommends that environmental experts should always be closely associated with local action groups (e.g. fisheries and aquaculture local action groups (FLAGS) and rural local action groups (LAGs));
10. Stresses that one of the obstacles facing pesca-tourism, and one that limits the potential benefit for fishermen, is the regulatory burden placed on small-scale commercial navigation together with the high cost of refitting fishing vessels to conform to tourism standards;

11. Recommends establishing common definitions and rules for fishing tourism at national level, so as to avoid a situation in which Member States introduce different forms of legislation and regulation;

12. Points out that the regulatory burden on fishing businesses, in particular as regards safety rules, building legislation and vessel safety, must be simplified in order to facilitate necessary investment;

13. Objects to moves to introduce excessive charges at national or regional level for recreational skippers using public inland waterways, since such charges constitute a bureaucratic restriction and hinder soft pesca-tourism and nautical tourism;

14. Points out the need to look into ways of expanding potential demand as regards converted vessels by broadening what is on offer in order to appeal, for example, to the educational community, which has experience in using the agricultural sector for teaching purposes, as in ‘farm school’ projects;

15. Welcomes proposals at regional and national level to introduce tourist fishing permits, provided that - in line with the legislation on fishing and animal welfare - they guarantee a minimum level of expertise that ensures compliance with fishing provisions and correct rod use and treatment of fish caught;

16. Stresses the importance of fishing tourism for the preservation of cultural and culinary traditions and traditional lifestyles in coastal and waterside areas;

17. Reminds the Commission that boosting fishing tourism can increase the visibility of new tourist areas whose potential has yet to be harnessed.

18. Stresses that, in order to encourage fishing eco-tourism, dedicated facilities should be created for fishing localities, such as campsites and mooring, parking and recreational facilities;

19. Notes that angling tourism is a well-developed and growing business segment in some Member States, while it remains an unused potential in others; highlights the importance of recreational angling tourism in coastal and rural regions, and of inland fishing as a high-value and sustainable development activity;

20. Highlights the need to assess the impact that tourism-related recreational fishing activities have on fisheries;

21. Calls on the Commission to analyse the socio-economic impact of recreational fishing on inland tourism, in particular in rural areas, and to propose possible measures for regions where the potential for such fishing is underexploited;

Maximising the use of EU financial support
22. Calls on the Commission to analyse the efficiency of EU action taken in the development of fisheries areas, and in the economic diversification of fisheries, including action taken under the European Structural Funds and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) in particular; calls on the Commission to publish regular overviews of what projects have been supported, and with what amounts;

23. Expects in particular that the upcoming evaluation to be carried out by the Commission of the Community Local-led Development (CLLD) approach will help improve understanding of the socio-economic impact of the diversification measures taken under the EMFF, also in the framework of the joint strategies established by the LAGs and FLAGs;

24. Stresses that for the 2007-2013 programming period, the FLAGs had at their disposal EUR 486 million from the EFF, and that approximately 12 000 local projects were supported during that period;

25. Underlines furthermore that in the current financial period, total funding available under the EMFF has increased to EUR 514 million for measures under CLLD;

26. Encourages the Member States and the FLAGs to make the best use of the available funds and also to make use where possible of multi-funding (jointly with the EFRD, EAFRD or ESF);

27. Calls on the Member States to make appropriate use of the funds available under the EMFF for the refitting and modernising of professional fishing vessels and for fishing businesses’ projects, and to set up contact points at regional level to provide adequate information and support;

28. Recommends that FLAGs cooperate closely with tourism experts in order to identify projects and appropriate funding, through Axis 4 of the EMFF, for diversification in fisheries areas;

29. Points out that the EMFF provides specific financial support to initiatives in fishing communities promoted by women;

30. Calls on the Member States to ensure, through the establishment of the selection criteria for operations under the EMFF, that gender equality is well mainstreamed and promoted throughout the actions financed (e.g. by providing preference to actions aimed specifically at women or undertaken by them);

31. Recommends that specific financial support be provided to local authorities in fishing areas for the opening of ‘infopoints’ tasked with presenting, promoting and providing information on fishing communities and traditional products, as well as on tourism objectives in those areas;

32. Recommends that specific financial support be provided for encouraging entrepreneurship and innovation through the financing of activities reliant on the fishing industry;

33. Recommends that the Commission, together with the Member States, adopt a suitable term to designate fishing communities in the Union or in sub-catchment areas, such as the
‘Aldeias do Mar’ (‘Sea Villages’) seaside communities in Portugal, with the involvement of FLAGs; urges that the necessary funding be earmarked for the establishment of a European network for the exchange of best practices and the mapping of fishing activities with information regarding points of interest and the characteristics of each fishing community;

**Promotion of product diversification**

34. Is convinced that a balanced mix of alternative and targeted tourism products, and appropriate promotion and marketing of those products, can help in balancing the problems of seasonality;

35. Stresses that in order to achieve the objective of diversification, all entrepreneurship initiatives must be locally based, with a guarantee that control over companies and cooperatives is retained at that level; points out that social economy initiatives are especially suitable for these purposes;

36. Calls, therefore, for support to be given to marketing platforms run by local entrepreneurs in order to ensure that they retain the highest possible degree of involvement and participation in, and control over, the entire value chain;

37. Underlines that product diversification necessitates suitable promotion, and that a visibility strategy is needed for the target group of fishermen, including cross-border promotional initiatives;

38. Believes, therefore, that fishing localities should consider launching joint marketing campaigns with other destinations in the same region - as was suggested in the EP report on ‘New challenges and concepts for the promotion of tourism in Europe’ - and promoting joint marketing platforms with a particular focus on promotion and online sales, on a basis of international cooperation;

39. Takes the view that within this marketing strategy synergies should be established among marketing initiatives for high-quality fresh or processed products, gastronomy and tourism, grouped into territorial areas that are coherent from a cultural, production-related or environmental point of view and/or synergy-based;

40. Calls on the Commission to actively support and promote investment in the diversification of fisheries in terms of the marketing and processing of local fish products, and to boost the development of local distribution channels;

41. Reminds the Commission of the need to promote and provide certification for traditional fisheries products and establish local brands specific to fishing areas;

42. Calls on the Commission to support investment in the diversification of the fisheries sector through the development of complementary activities, including investment in vessels, training, safety equipment, and cultural and educational activities;

43. Calls on the Commission to actively support investment in the diversification of fisheries in the area of culture and art as part of the traditional heritage, and to support investment in the promotion of tradition and fishing heritage in general (techniques and fishing
gears);

44. Calls on the Member States, and on regional and local authorities, to share best practices in order to create greater awareness, across broader regions, of innovative fisheries-related tourism products that have proved to be economically, socially and environmentally successful;

45. Calls on the Commission to promote, in the framework of the European Fisheries Areas Network (FARNET) and the FLAGs, a pan-European dialogue with ports and tourism stakeholders and environmental experts;

46. Calls on the Commission to promote, through the European Travel Commission and its portal visiteurope.com, sustainable recreational fishing tourism destinations in Europe, and, by means of a targeted information campaign, to make fishing businesses aware of the potential of these new and sustainable business models and of the growth opportunities they afford;

Knowledge and skills

47. Calls on the Member States, and on regional and local authorities, widely to disseminate information about the Commission’s European Job Mobility Portal EURES, which provides information for jobseekers and employers about job opportunities, skills and training needs in the ‘blue jobs’ section, and to promote open online courses aimed at upgrading or reorienting skills relating to tourism management and innovative pesca-tourism;

48. Calls on the Commission to include a dedicated section in the European Small Business Portal aimed at helping entrepreneurs/fishermen obtain funding for activities in the field of fisheries-related tourism.

49. Emphasises the need to raise awareness among local entrepreneurs, and provide them with training, on new joint online platforms for the promotion and sale of tourism-related products, including experience-based tourism, and to encourage them to hardwire these elements into their businesses so as to ensure that the profits of diversification remain in the local communities.
RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<table>
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<th>Date adopted</th>
<th>11.10.2016</th>
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| Result of final vote | +: 38  
| | −: 4  
| | 0: 2  |
| Members present for the final vote | Daniela Aiuto, Lucy Anderson, Marie-Christine Arnautu, Inés Ayala Sender, Georges Bach, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Deirdre Clune, Michael Cramer, Luis de Grandes Pascual, Andor Deli, Isabella De Monte, Jacqueline Foster, Dieter-Lebrecht Koch, Merja Kyllönen, Miltiadis Kyrikos, Boguslaw Liberadzki, Peter Lundgren, Marian-Jean Marinescu, Georg Mayer, Gesine Meissner, Cláudia Monteiro de Aguiar, Renaud Muselier, Markus Pieper, Salvatore Domenico Pogliese, Tomasz Piotr Poręba, Gabriele Preuß, Christine Revault D’Allonnes Bonnefoy, Dominique Riquet, Massimiliano Salini, David-Maria Sassoli, Claudia Schmidt, Jill Seymour, Claudia Țapardel, Keith Taylor, Pavel Telička, Wim van de Camp, Roberts Zile, Kosma Złotowski, Elżbieta Katarzyna Łukacijewska |
| Substitutes present for the final vote | Knut Fleckenstein, Maria Grapini, Werner Kuhn |
| Substitutes under Rule 200(2) present for the final vote | Olle Ludvigsson |