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P7_TA(2012)0461

External dimension of the common fisheries policy**European Parliament resolution of 22 November 2012 on the external dimension of the Common Fisheries Policy (2011/2318(INI))**

(2015/C 419/26)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 13 July 2011 on the External Dimension of the Common Fisheries Policy (the Communication) (COM(2011)0424),
- having regard to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 (UNCLOS),
- having regard to the 1995 Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks,
- having regard to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, adopted in October 1995 by the FAO Conference (the Code of Conduct),
- having regard to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, adopted in June 1998 in Aarhus,
- having regard to the FAO International Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity, endorsed by the FAO Council in November 2000 (IPOA-Capacity),
- having regard to the FAO Report on the State of the World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2010,
- having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008 of 29 September 2008 establishing a Community system to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU Regulation) ⁽¹⁾ and Council Regulation (EC) No 1006/2008 of 29 September 2008 concerning authorisations for fishing activities of Community fishing vessels outside Community waters and the access of third country vessels to Community waters (the Fishing Authorisations Regulation) ⁽²⁾,
- having regard to the Commission proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Common Fisheries Policy (the Basic Regulation) (COM(2011)0425),
- having regard to its resolution of 17 November 2011 on combating illegal fishing at the global level — the role of the EU ⁽³⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 25 February 2010 on the Green Paper on the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy ⁽⁴⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 8 July 2010 on the arrangements for importing fishery and aquaculture products into the EU with a view to the future reform of the CFP ⁽⁵⁾,

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 286, 29.10.2008, p. 1.⁽²⁾ OJ L 286, 29.10.2008, p. 33.⁽³⁾ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0516.⁽⁴⁾ OJ C 348 E, 21.12.2010, p. 15.⁽⁵⁾ OJ C 351 E, 2.12.2011, p. 119.

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- having regard to its resolution of 12 May 2011 on the EU-Mauritania Fisheries Partnership Agreement ⁽¹⁾,
 - having regard to its resolution of 14 December 2011 on the future Protocol setting out the fishing opportunities and financial compensation provided for in the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Community and the Kingdom of Morocco ⁽²⁾,
 - having regard to the conclusions adopted at the meeting of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council on 19–20 March 2012 on the external dimension of the CFP,
 - having regard to Rule 48 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Fisheries and the opinions of the Committee on Development and of the Committee on International Trade (A7-0290/2012),
- A. whereas two-thirds of the world's oceans lie beyond areas under national jurisdiction, where any comprehensive and exhaustive legal regime for fisheries management must be based on the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and relevant legal instruments; whereas sustainable management of fisheries is of strategic importance to coastal communities dependent on fishing and to food security;
- B. whereas 85 % of the few fish stocks globally for which information is available are either fully exploited or overexploited, according to the most recent assessment by the FAO, even though the FAO 2010 report points to progress in the recovery of overexploited stocks and marine ecosystems around the world due to the implementation of good management practices;
- C. whereas the EU is one of the main fishing players with a strong presence and significant activities in all the world's oceans through a combination of fleet activities, investments by EU nationals, bilateral fisheries agreements and participation in all of the major Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) while encouraging good practice and respect for human rights;
- D. whereas the EU is one of the most important markets for fishery products and the biggest importer in the world of fish products, consuming 11 % of the world's fish production in terms of volume and importing 24 % of fishery products in terms of value, even though it only accounts for 8 % of the world's catch (2 % when considering solely foreign waters);
- E. whereas quotas in RFMOs have been primarily based on historical catches, which led to preferential access for developed countries to global fish stocks; whereas they must now take account of fishing by coastal developing countries which have depended upon adjacent fisheries resources for generations, a fact which must be respected by the EU;
- F. whereas the EU has to seek policy coherence for development on the basis of Article 208(1) of the TFEU, according to which 'The Union shall take account of the objectives of development cooperation in the policies that it implements which are likely to affect developing countries';
- G. whereas the EU must equally apply all of its other policies in relation to non-member countries — including fishing, health, trade, employment, environment, common foreign policy objectives and the fulfilment of the 2020 European Strategy — in a consistent and coordinated way;
- H. whereas, in order to ensure sustainable fishing, there is in many cases a need to improve data on fish stocks that the EU is fishing, or which are destined for the EU market, in terms of their status, and to ensure that information on total removals by local fleets and other third country fleets is available;
- I. whereas rigorous scientific studies will be required in order to determine in which fisheries fleet overcapacity is occurring or may occur;

⁽¹⁾ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0232.

⁽²⁾ Texts adopted: P7_TA(2011)0573.

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- J. whereas the CFP must provide a tool that enables the EU to demonstrate to the world how fishing can be practised as a responsible activity and how to promote improvement of the international management of fisheries applying European fleet management standards;
- K. whereas the EU must assume a key role in mobilising the international community in the campaign against IUU fishing;
1. Welcomes the Commission's Communication and the many positive proposals it includes for encouraging the sustainability of the EU's overall fishing and related activities outside EU waters, including the outermost regions; considers, however, that the scope of the document is not broad enough, being too concentrated on bilateral agreements and multilateral organisations and that it should take an integrated approach to other activities seeking to procure products destined for the EU market;
 2. Insists on the need for the EU to work on the basis that Union policy coherence converges on improving the governance of international fishing;
 3. Considers it of major importance to coordinate foreign policy and cooperation policy for the purpose of establishing sustainable fishing agreements, and to provide the necessary synergies to make a more effective contribution to the development of associated third countries;
 4. Considers that the size of the EU market for fisheries products and the geographical range of activities by EU-flagged and EU-owned vessels impose a high level of responsibility on the Union for ensuring that its fisheries' ecological footprint and socio-economic impact are sustainable, providing high quality fisheries products to consumers in Europe and other countries where European fisheries and related products are marketed, and contributing to the social and economic fabric of coastal fishing communities both inside the EU and elsewhere;
 5. Believes that fishing by EU interests inside and outside Union waters, and fishery products destined for the EU market, should be based upon the same standards in terms of ecological and social sustainability and transparency, and that these same principles must be defended and required of third countries, both bilaterally and multilaterally; and considers that the discard ban should be applied, in parallel to its introduction in EU waters, to the same species, with monitoring by CCTV and observers, with appropriate derogations to avoid price fluctuations for locally consumed produce;
 6. Recalls the need for EU policies to be coherent with the development objectives as set out in Article 208 TFEU; notes that such coherence requires coordination not only within the Commission itself but also within Member States' governments, and between the Commission and the governments of the individual Member States;
 7. Reiterates that for the purpose of improving coherence of its decisions, the actions of the EU must incorporate the aspects relating to its policies on trade, health, employment, neighbourhood, the environment, maritime policy, foreign policy and the fulfilment of the 2020 European strategy;
 8. Recalls that the IPOA-Capacity (International Plan of Action for the Management of Fishing Capacity) committed the EU, no later than 2005, to develop and implement a system for the management of fishing capacity; requests the Commission to explain why it appears to be pursuing contradictory approaches to the management of capacity by proposing a freeze in certain RFMOs while proposing to remove the main regulatory limits to capacity within the EU's fleets; requests the Commission to promote bilateral and multilateral mechanisms for the adjustment of fishing capacity to the available resources, which are identified as necessary for the sustainable exploitation of resources by all fleets that operate in these areas;
 9. Considers that the objectives and principles of the external dimension of the CFP should be enshrined in the Basic Regulation;

General Provisions

10. Underlines that the maintenance of the present fishing agreements and the search for new fishing opportunities in third countries must be a priority objective of external fishing policy, recognising that when the EU fleet ceases to operate in the fisheries of a third country, such fishing rights are normally redistributed among other fleets that have much lower standards of conservation, management and sustainability than those advocated and defended by the EU;

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11. Urges the Commission to support clearly defined principles and objectives for environmentally, economically and socially sustainable fisheries on the high seas and in waters under national jurisdiction at all international forums to which the EU is a party, and to rapidly and effectively implement decisions made there;
12. Stresses that the EU should develop a specific strategy in the field of fisheries and management of living marine resources, involving all non-European Mediterranean coastal states;
13. Urges the Commission to drive forward the global and multilateral agenda promoting sustainable fisheries and the conservation of marine biodiversity, while transforming its dialogues with countries such as the USA, Japan, Russia and China and other third countries with a strong fishing presence in the world's oceans, into effective partnerships to address crucial issues such as the eradication of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, the reduction of both over-fishing and fleet capacity where necessary, and the strengthening of high seas control and governance in line with the principles of UNCLOS and other relevant instruments;
14. Urges the Commission to promote international law, notably UNCLOS and participation in ILO conventions and to monitor compliance with these rules; encourages the Commission to cooperate with third countries in all appropriate forums, especially in RFMOs;
15. Believes that the EU should launch an initiative at UN level to set up a global catch and traceability documentation scheme for all major fish species that enter international trade, founded on the principle of flag State responsibility and compatible with the IUU regulation, as a key tool to strengthen compliance with existing conservation and management measures and combat IUU fishing so as to promote responsible consumption;
16. Calls for the Commission to be more vigorous in applying Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008 on IUU fishing, particularly in relation to the contracting parties of the RFMOs that do not actively collaborate in establishing and applying the principal mechanisms of the campaign against IUU fishing;
17. Considers that the EU should be active within the UN system to explore means for the global community to address:
 - the need for more regionalised and integrated global ocean governance, regarding both living marine resources and other resources,
 - pollution and the impacts of climate change on the oceans, including the protection and rehabilitation of precious blue carbon sinks, and
 - social standards and working conditions;
18. Notes the importance of the negotiations in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) on subsidy discipline in the fisheries sector, and calls on the EU to play a more active role in these discussions;
19. Notes the need to create mechanisms for promoting fishery products that are sustainably sourced from an ecological perspective, and fair from a social perspective, within the EU and beyond;
20. Notes that one of the priority objectives of the external dimension of the CFP must be to guarantee the future of the European long-distance fleet, particularly in so far as it holds fishing rights that have served as the basis for the economic and social development of the countries in which it operates;

Bilateral Fisheries Agreements

21. Considers that bilateral fisheries agreements, or Sustainable Fisheries Agreements (SFA) as the Commission proposes to call them, negotiated between partners and equitably implemented, should be based on responsible and sustainable exploitation of resources by EU vessels and be of benefit to both parties, facilitating the provision of economic resources, technical and scientific expertise and support for improved fisheries management and good governance to the third country, while enabling the continuation of fishing activities that are socio-economically important and a source of supply for the EU and for the markets of certain developing countries, for both fresh and processed products;

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22. Calls for the EU to aim at concluding, as soon as possible, Sustainable Fisheries Cooperation Agreements with neighbouring countries where the EU provides funding and technical support in order to achieve a more concerted and coherent policy, with the aim of achieving a harmonised and sustainable fisheries policy in all shared sea basins, thereby increasing the effectiveness of the CFP in all the regions concerned; calls for these agreements to be concluded in the spirit of fair and equitable cooperation and respect for human rights, and to aim at sharing responsibilities fairly between the Union and the respective partner country;

23. Calls for the EU, in order to improve both cooperation with neighbouring countries and the management of shared stocks, to seek to conclude sustainable fisheries cooperation agreements with these countries which should aim not at obtaining fishing rights for EU vessels but at achieving a situation where the EU could provide funding and technical support with the aim of attaining comparable sustainable management rules as the EU in the third partner country;

24. Recalls that in evaluating the impact of what are now called Sustainable Fisheries Agreements (SFAs), it is important to correctly distinguish between the aid directed at developing the fisheries sector in third countries and that which results from paying for fishing rights;

25. Regrets, however, that EU bilateral agreements have not always achieved the above-mentioned potential benefits, and highlights the need to conduct impact assessments for the outermost regions, whenever these are involved, taking account of Article 349 of the Treaty, while recognising that much improvement has been made since the previous reform; considers that improved scientific stock assessment, transparency, compliance with objectives, benefits for the local population, and improving governance of fisheries are key for successful agreements;

26. Welcomes the intention of the Commission to include several provisions in future bilateral agreements, including: respect for the principle of limiting access to resources that are scientifically demonstrated to be surplus for the coastal State in line with the provisions of UNCLOS; safeguarding human rights in line with international agreements on human rights; and an exclusivity clause, though this must be strengthened and formally recognised through agreements, ensuring in all cases the strictest respect for democratic principles;

27. Considers that EU bilateral agreements must respect not only Article 62 of UNCLOS regarding surplus stocks but also Articles 69 and 70 on the rights of landlocked and geographically disadvantaged states within the region, especially with respect to the nutritional and socio-economic needs of local populations;

28. Takes the view that the clause on human rights must be implemented without discrimination and must apply equally to all countries, not only to fishing agreements but also to trade agreements; considers that through the WTO we must work towards penalising production in countries that have yet to recognise human rights or use child labour in manufacturing production, as well as discriminating against women by not rewarding or recognising their activities and their economic contribution in fisheries and aquaculture;

29. Encourages implementation of integrated ecosystem-based management in new and existing agreements;

30. Considers that the increased contribution made by undertakings to future fishing agreements must be in line with a greater capacity to influence the individual sector under the technical measures and standards that the Commission negotiates in such agreements;

31. Considers that the Fishing Authorisations Regulation should be amended so that EU-flagged vessels which have temporarily left the register of a Member State to seek fishing opportunities elsewhere are not allowed to benefit for a period of 24 months from fishing opportunities under the SFA or the protocols in force at the time when they left the register if they subsequently return to an EU register; considers that the same should apply to temporarily reflagging while fishing under RFMOs;

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32. Considers that the currently used social clause should be strengthened to include respect for International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention 188, ILO Recommendation 199 on work in fishing, as well as the eight ILO Fundamental Conventions⁽¹⁾, and ensure that working conditions for crew members domiciled outside the EU and working on board vessels flying an EU flag should be equal to those of workers domiciled in the EU;

33. Believes that SFAs should contribute to sustainable development in third partner countries and encourage the local private sector, with a particular emphasis on small-scale fisheries and SMEs, and to this end calls for the increased employment of local fishermen and the development of local, sustainable processing industries and marketing activities;

34. Encourages the Commission in its endeavours to obtain increasingly complete and reliable data from the coastal state on the total amount of fishing, including catches, occurring in its waters, as a requirement for the difficult task of identifying surplus and preventing over-exploitation; notes that the EU fisheries and development policies could promote the necessary improvements in the capacity of third countries to provide such information;

35. Calls, furthermore, on the Commission to promote greater transparency in establishing the scale of exploitation of fish stocks in waters under the jurisdiction of coastal states;

36. Reaffirms that, in accordance with the principle of respecting the traditional link between coastal communities and the waters they have historically fished, EU vessels should not compete with local fishermen for the same resources or on the local markets, and that cooperation between local and EU operators should be facilitated, hence stressing the need for an accurate calculation of the surplus;

37. Believes that the EU must make increased efforts to help provide third countries with which it negotiates bilateral agreements with sufficient data and information for reliable stock assessments, and that providing European funding for a scientific research vessel in regions where the EU fleet is active would considerably strengthen scientific analyses on fish stocks, which is a prerequisite for any SFA;

38. Requests that the research campaigns conducted by vessels of different Member States in areas that are fished by the EU fleet be encouraged as much as possible and conducted in cooperation with the coastal states concerned, including providing access for local scientists; calls for greater cooperation among the Member States and the Commission in this regard, and for increased funding to expand scientific research in waters outside the EU;

39. Believes that, at the same time, efforts should be increased to obtain the necessary data from third countries with which the EU has bilateral fishing agreements, in order to assess the effectiveness of the agreement and whether conditions are met, e.g. that it should benefit the local population;

40. Highlights the importance of the joint scientific groups responsible for providing scientific opinions on the state of fishing resources on the basis of the best information available in order to avoid overfishing, given that the fishing sector, and particularly the artisanal fishing sector, plays a major role in safeguarding food security in many developing countries; insists that those groups should have appropriate financial, technical and human resources to enable them to carry out their tasks and work together with the RFMOs;

41. Calls upon the Commission to promote the strengthening of targeted scientific and technical cooperation in general in SFAs, including by enhancing the role of the Joint Scientific Committees; also calls for efforts to be made to create harmony among the sanitation and hygiene conditions of the EU and third countries;

42. Fully supports the concept of decoupling financial compensation for access to fisheries resources from sectoral support for development; firmly insists that shipowners should pay a fair and market-based portion of the costs when acquiring access rights in the framework of a bilateral fisheries agreement; requests that a detailed analysis be made of the portion to be paid by shipowners for a fishing authorisation, including potential catches and operating costs; believes that improved supervision of sectoral support is imperative, including the possibility of suspension of payments in cases of failure to fulfil commitments by the coastal state;

⁽¹⁾ The Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No 29), the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No 87), the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No 98), the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No 100), the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No 105), the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No 111), the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No 138), the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No 182).

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43. Insists that the financial item intended to provide sectoral support must be more effective and achieve increased, improved-quality results, in particular by focusing on scientific research, data collection and the monitoring and management of fishing activities;

44. Calls on the Commission to ensure that allocations for sectoral support in the framework of the SFAs are aimed at supporting the administrative and scientific capacity of third countries and assisting small and medium-sized enterprises, strengthen the EU's development cooperation objectives, and are in line with the signatory country's national development plan; calls for such allocations not to replace the cooperation on fisheries provided for in other agreements or cooperation instruments, but, rather, complement it in a coherent, transparent, effective and better targeted fashion;

45. Urges the Commission, during the negotiations on SFAs, to seek to ensure that the coastal state dedicates a minimum part of the sectoral support for development granted under the SFA to projects which have as their objective the recognition, promotion and diversification of women's role in the fisheries sector, ensuring the application of the principle of equal treatment and opportunities for women and men concerning in particular training and access to funding and loans;

46. Believes that sectoral support for development must be taken into consideration when taking the relevant decisions for the future;

47. Insists that the Commission closely monitor the implementation of bilateral agreements, with annual reports being sent to Parliament and the Council, and that evaluations performed by external, independent experts be sent to the co-legislators in due time prior to the negotiation of new protocols, all of which should be in the public domain, subject to the relevant data protection rules and available in at least three official languages of the EU;

48. Underlines the need for Parliament to be adequately involved in the preparation and negotiating process and the long-term monitoring and assessment of the functioning of bilateral agreements according to the provisions of the TFEU; insists that Parliament be immediately and fully informed on an equal footing with the Council at all stages of the procedure related to FPAs, pursuant to Articles 13(2) and 218(10) TFEU; recalls its conviction that Parliament should be represented by observers at the Joint Committee meetings envisaged in fisheries agreements, and insists that civil society, including both EU and third country fisheries representatives, also attend as observers in those meetings;

49. Supports the introduction of scientific audits to evaluate fish populations prior to negotiating agreements and calls for the third country to provide notification of the fishing effort of the fleets of other countries in its waters in order for these objectives to be effective;

50. Is convinced that full transparency on catches, payments and implementation of sectoral support will be an indispensable tool for developing responsible and sustainable fishing based on good governance, the fight against the improper use of EU support and against corruption;

51. Emphasises, too, the need to improve transparency both during the negotiation and the lifetime of the Fisheries Agreements, on behalf of both the EU and third countries;

52. Insists that Member States report catches to coastal states on a daily basis and comply fully with rules applicable in the waters of partner countries;

53. Strongly believes that the Commission should make sure that negotiations with third countries envisaging new agreements or protocols to bilateral fishery agreements are initiated well in advance of the expiry date of such provisions; in this context, underlines the importance of the early involvement of Parliament to avoid the provisional application of such provisions which lead to irreversible *faits accomplis* which do not serve the interest of the EU or of the third country;

54. Believes that the European fishing industry should take over a considerable financial share of the costs when acquiring access rights to non-EU fishing zones in the framework of a bilateral or multilateral fisheries agreement;

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55. Believes that there should be a regional approach to the negotiation and implementation of the EU's bilateral agreements, particularly in those concerning the tuna boat fleet, and, where appropriate, a clear link between the terms they contain and the management measures and performance of the relevant RFMOs;

56. Feels compelled to express its unease to the Commission, at regional level, regarding the clear reversal of policy in measures concerning the hiring of seafarers, since in the majority of cases there is a reversion to the unsustainable policy of contracting these crew members by their nationality, rather than by their origin in ACP countries in general;

57. Takes the view that bilateral conventions should be introduced to encourage Union fisheries investments in countries where at present there are no association agreements, because there are no excess fishing opportunities, and to contribute as a result towards sustainable fishing; also considers that, in these cases, coordination between European development funding and the funding of bilateral agreements should be a top priority;

Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs)

58. Urges the EU to take the lead in strengthening RFMOs in order to improve their performance, including through regular reviews by independent bodies of the extent to which they achieve their objectives, and to ensure that the recommendations made in such reviews are rapidly and fully implemented; urges that the EU work to ensure that all RFMOs have an effective compliance committee, and believes that proven cases of lack of compliance by states must lead to dissuasive, proportionate and non-discriminatory sanctions, including reductions in quotas, effort, capacity allowed, etc.;

59. Calls on the Commission to allocate greater funding to the RFMOs, since they have a crucial role to play in combating illegal, undeclared and unregulated fishing;

60. Considers that the EU should work towards an improved system of decision-making in RFMOs so as to move beyond the 'lowest common denominator' approach that can result from consensus, while recognising the need for debate before resorting to voting where no consensus is achievable; considers that multiannual plans should be promoted;

61. Takes the view that the Union must coordinate its fisheries and development policies better and engage in systematic, long-term and in-depth dialogues and partnerships with other flag, market and coastal states in order to achieve improved fisheries management and food security worldwide;

62. Calls on the Commission to take the lead to promote the creation of a comprehensive network of coverage of RFMOs so that all high seas fisheries are effectively managed with the ecosystem and precautionary approaches that foster the conservation of resources; to that end, recalls its support for the establishment of new RFMOs where none exist and an increase in the competence of existing RFMOs by a revision of their conventions;

63. Notes that as a consequence of climate change and shifts in distribution of species, new fishing grounds are opening up in Arctic waters; considers that the EU should take initiatives to ensure that fishing operations are effectively managed (by existing RFMOs or the creation of a new one) for sustainable management and conservation of stocks in these waters; believes that fishing should initially be restricted to allow for scientific assessments of Arctic stocks and the fisheries they can sustainably support;

64. Notes that the Black Sea would profit from a new RFMO, and urges the Commission to propose its creation;

65. Believes that RFMOs must develop sustainable management systems, aiming to keep stocks above MSY, that provide for a transparent and equitable resource allocation using incentives based upon environmental and social criteria, as well as historical catches, to obtain fishing opportunities, thus including both the legitimate rights/aspirations of developing states as well as the expectations of fleets that have sustainably fished in those waters, while ensuring that management and conservation measures are fully implemented by all members;

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66. Is firmly opposed to the EU promoting the adoption of Transferable Fishing Concession (TFC) schemes in RFMOs; considers that any system of rights-based management adopted in RFMOs should not jeopardise the livelihood of dependent fishing communities in developing countries;

67. Believes that good governance will be brought about through the involvement of all parties concerned, from preparing the policies through to their introduction;

68. Requests that a detailed assessment be conducted of the fishing capacity of EU fleets authorised to fish outside EU waters, using reliable indicators of the ability of vessels to catch fish, considering advances in technology and taking as their basis the recommendations of the 1999 FAO Technical Consultation on the measurement of fishing capacity ⁽¹⁾; believes that the EU should identify the RFMOs where there are problems of overcapacity, and ensure freezing and adjustment of fleet capacity with special consideration for the rights of coastal countries;

Other Aspects of the External Dimension

69. Believes that even though the external activities of EU businesses may exceed the external dimension of the common fisheries policy, trade activities and the private agreements between EU shipowners and third countries, including those conducted under the framework of bilateral cooperation policies, must be legitimately respected and protected as long as they are conducted within the framework of international law;

70. Considers that European fisheries investments should be included as a third component in the external dimension of the CFP, together with fishing agreements and the RFMOs, and that the CFP must encourage sustainable external fisheries investment;

71. Believes that the CFP must promote strategies for Corporate Social Responsibility, in order to fully assume our social responsibilities in line with the EU Strategy 2011–2014 for Corporate Social Responsibility;

72. Believes that information on private agreements between EU shipowners and third countries, as well as on joint ventures in third countries, including the number and type of vessels operating under such agreements and joint ventures, as well as their catches, should continue to be provided by the Member State to the Commission and made publicly available, subject to individual and commercial data protection rules, as laid down by the Fishing Authorisations Regulation;

73. Calls on the EU to promote a global and multilateral agenda that will incorporate responsibility as part of developing sustainable fisheries activity;

74. Calls upon the Commission and the Member States to give serious consideration to methods for creating strong incentives for EU-flagged vessels to remain on the EU register unless they are to be reflagged to states in good standing in all relevant RFMOs; considers that the best way to achieve this is to ensure that there is fair competition between EU flags and the flags of non-EU states by requiring the same standards in terms of ecological and social sustainability from third countries, both bilaterally and multilaterally, as well as by the use of market-related measures;

75. Expresses its impatience with the Commission for not having added vessels to be included on the EU IUU list other than those listed by the RFMOs, nor having proposed a list of non-cooperating countries, despite the IUU Regulation having been in force for over two years, and urges it to do so as soon as possible; insists on the need to seek support from our principal partners in order to eradicate IUU fishing in all oceans;

76. Insists that the Commission, rather than third countries, be the authority to grant phyto-sanitary certificates to third country vessels that allow the direct export of fishery products to the EU;

77. Points to the need to adopt an individually tailored approach to management of EU external fleet capacity ceilings, working together with the RFMOs, and to take into account the different context in which this segment of the fleet operates;

⁽¹⁾ <ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/007/x4874e/x4874e00.pdf>

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78. Encourages banks and other lending institutions to incorporate assessments of the economic, social and environmental sustainability of activities, and not simply their short-term profitability, prior to granting access to capital;

79. Believes that the EU's trade policy should also contribute to ensuring sustainable fishing worldwide through promoting adherence to the relevant international conventions and agreements relating to fisheries governance in the framework of preferential trade agreements;

80. Calls on the Commission to ensure that fair, transparent and sustainable trade in fish is strengthened in the EU's bilateral and multilateral trade agreements;

81. Considers that, at the same time, incentives should be drawn up for third countries that do not share EU standards to adopt good practices, and where applicable to establish trade measures such as banning imports of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fish products, and of aquaculture and fisheries products that do not comply with human rights and the United Nations conventions on employment (ILO) and navigation (IMO);

82. Urges the Commission to promote international collaboration against IUU fishing and to examine whether any possibility exists vis-à-vis the two other countries that together with the EU form the principal fisheries markets in the world, namely the USA and Japan, so that one way of completing this action would consist in the application of a Unique Identifying Number for all vessels to ensure the total traceability of the product in an entirely transparent way;

83. Underlines that serious and systematic infringement by a partner country of the objectives adopted by RFMOs or any international arrangements to which the EU is party concerning the conservation and management of fishery resources can lead to a temporary withdrawal of preferential tariffs; calls on the Commission to regularly report to Parliament on the implementation of the provisions related to fisheries conservation and management included in its proposal for the revised scheme of generalised tariff preferences (GSP);

84. Considers that the EU must ensure that products imported through international trade comply with rules and regulations that are identical to those for EU products;

85. Calls on the Commission to ensure that fish and fishery products from third countries meet the same sanitary and hygiene conditions and come from sustainable fisheries, and thus to create a level-playing field between EU and non-EU countries' fisheries;

86. Calls on the Commission to further streamline EU policy regarding development, trade and fisheries policy objectives;

87. Insists that bilateral and multilateral trade agreements negotiated by the EU should:

- be accompanied by economic, social and environmental impact assessments with respect to the threat of over-exploitation of resources, for both non-EU and EU countries, taking into account the networks already created by pre-existing agreements,
- respect rules of origin,
- require traceability of the product to ensure it comes from legal and sustainable fisheries,
- not undermine the IUU Regulation or other provisions of the CFP,
- include provisions to ensure that only fisheries products coming from well-managed fisheries are traded,
- not lead to increased trade, which would result in over-exploitation and depletion of resources,
- ensure that unsustainably caught products do not enter the EU market,
- include provisions for suspension and review of the payment of the financial contribution as well as provisions on the suspension of the implementation of the protocol in the event of a breach of essential and fundamental human rights provisions, as laid down for example in Article 9 of the Cotonou Agreement, or non-compliance with the ILO Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work;

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88. Recalls that due to the different legislations of many of the EU's trade partners, the issue of rules of origin and their cumulation is a controversial and sensitive subject in trade negotiations; calls on the Commission, therefore, to give specific consideration to the matter and to negotiate balanced solutions which do not penalise the EU fishery sectors;

89. Welcomes the Commission's proposals for trade-related measures such as import restrictions on fish and fishery products to be applied to countries allowing non-sustainable fishing while ensuring their compatibility with the rules of the WTO;

90. Urges the EU to develop and implement ocean- and sea-based regional strategies, particularly for those in which sustainable fisheries can only be guaranteed through international cooperation;

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91. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.

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Elections to the European Parliament in 2014

European Parliament resolution of 22 November 2012 on the elections to the European Parliament in 2014 (2012/2829(RSP))

(2015/C 419/27)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Articles 10 and 17 of the Treaty on European Union,
 - having regard to Articles 10 and 11 of the Act concerning the election of the members of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage annexed to the Council decision of 20 September 1976, as amended ⁽¹⁾,
 - having regard to the statement by the Commission of 22 November 2012 on the elections to the European Parliament in 2014,
 - having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas citizens are directly represented at Union level by Members of the European Parliament;
- B. whereas political parties at European level contribute to forming European political awareness and to expressing the will of the citizens of the Union;
- C. whereas the President of the European Commission is elected by Parliament on a proposal from the European Council, acting by a qualified majority, which must take into account the result of the elections to Parliament and which must have held the appropriate consultations before making its nomination;
- D. whereas the Commission, as a body, shall be responsible to the European Parliament;
- E. whereas the new Parliament needs sufficient time to organise itself in advance of the election of the Commission President;

⁽¹⁾ Council Decision 76/787/ECSC, EEC, EURATOM (OJ L 278, 8.10.1976, p. 1) as amended by Council Decision 93/81/Euratom, ECSC, EEC (OJ L 33, 9.2.1993, p. 15) and by Council Decision 2002/772/EC, EURATOM (OJ L 283, 21.10.2002, p. 1).