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Future of the common fisheries policy**European Parliament resolution on the Commission Green Paper on the future of the common fisheries policy (COM(2001) 135 – C5-0261/2001 – 2001/2115(COS))***The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the Commission's Green Paper (COM(2001) 135 – C5-0261/2001,
 - having regard to its resolution of 17 January 2001 on the regional meetings held in 1998 and 1999 on the common fisheries policy after 2002 ⁽¹⁾,
 - having regard to the Council conclusions of 30 October 1997 on the policy concerning fisheries agreements with third countries ⁽²⁾,
 - having regard to the White Paper on European governance ⁽³⁾,
 - having regard to its resolution of 6 November 1997 on the common fisheries policy after the year 2002 ⁽⁴⁾,
 - having regard to the communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on fisheries and poverty reduction (COM(2000) 724),
 - having regard to special report No 3/2001 on the Commission's management of the international fisheries agreements ⁽⁵⁾ and the Ifremer study on the evaluation of the fisheries agreements concluded by the Community of August 1999,
 - having regard to its resolution of 17 January 2001 on the common fisheries policy and the challenge of economic globalisation ⁽⁶⁾,
 - having regard to Rule 47(1) of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Fisheries and the opinions of the Committee on Budgets, the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Policy and the Committee on Development and Cooperation (A5-0470/2001),
- A. whereas the European Union is a body governed by international law, within which there exists a desire for economic, social and political integration, in accordance with its constituent treaties and operating rules, which should therefore also cover the fishing industry,
- B. whereas the CFP entails a derogation from the principle of equal access (Articles 6 and 7 of Council Regulation (EEC) No 3760/92 of 20 December 1992 ⁽⁷⁾) and, in the absence of a Council decision, the derogation laid down in Article 6 will expire on 31 December 2002,
- C. whereas fisheries is one of the few sectors in which there is a firmly established Community sectoral policy, which should be maintained and improved to enable the European Union to bring its weight and influence to bear in an economic sector that operates at global level,
- D. whereas the fundamental aim of the common fisheries policy is to balance ensuring the viability of an economic sector of strategic importance to the European Union, which contributes to food supplies and is vital for employment and economic and social cohesion in the Union's outermost and coastal regions, with maintaining sustainable marine ecosystems, in particular the conservation of fish stocks for future generations,

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 262, 18.9.2001, p. 163.

⁽²⁾ Fisheries Council – Press release 11687/97.

⁽³⁾ OJ C 287, 12.10.2001, p. 1.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ C 358, 24.11.1997, p. 43.

⁽⁵⁾ OJ C 210, 27.7.2001, p. 1.

⁽⁶⁾ OJ C 262, 18.9.2001, p. 157.

⁽⁷⁾ OJ L 389, 31.12.1992, p. 1.

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- E. whereas there exists extreme concern about the deplorable state of fish stocks in the European Union, and the recent report of the STECF that only 2 of 240 stocks were in conformity with a precautionary approach,
- F. whereas the analysis made by the Green Paper regarding the current situation of the CFP is correct as regards the biological aspects, the lack of use of the instruments available under Regulation (EEC) 3760/92, the inadequacy of scientific information and the arbitrary setting of TACs, among other aspects, which demonstrates the serious nature of the current situation and the lack of compliance with the fundamental objectives of this policy,
- G. whereas the MAGPs have been repeatedly breached by most of the Member States and the results obtained in terms of reducing capacity have consequently been very limited at Community level, given the lack of any serious and harmonised system of sanctions,
- H. whereas serious socio-economic problems are faced by communities dependent on fisheries and it is therefore a task of the CFP to promote employment opportunities for those working in the fisheries sector, both male and female, including coastal fishing, which represents three-quarters of EU fishermen, and, when necessary, to facilitate diversification; whereas it is crucial to take measures which ensure working conditions comparable to those in other production sectors in the Union, and to preserve and manage fish stocks,
- I. whereas it has not yet been possible to achieve the objective of matching the fleet to resources,
- J. whereas the Green Paper continues to place the abolition of structural measures for fleet modernisation at the centre of its proposals on fleet policy,
- K. whereas the European Parliament's resolution of 5 April 2001 ⁽¹⁾ on safety and the causes of accidents in the fisheries sector calls for the promotion of a culture of safety through information campaigns, development and exchange of best practice and the development of health and safety training,
- L. whereas maintaining a modern, competitive and safe fleet is not incompatible with recognising the need to reduce fishing capacity,
- M. whereas the common fisheries policy must take into account other factors such as the environment, safety, health and consumer protection and development, in order to ensure that Community action is coherent, yet without endangering the objective of the CFP, which is to develop a sustainable economic activity – fisheries – and to safeguard employment and working conditions for those working in the sector,
- N. whereas the common fisheries policy must abide by the fundamental principles of the Treaty, including that of equal treatment, except in those areas where derogations are deemed necessary and appropriate,
- O. whereas in assessing alternative models for fisheries management, an institutional form must be sought which ensures delivery of the aims and objectives of sustainable development, capable of generating a simple, coherent and transparent management strategy which will restore legitimacy to fishermen's actions and regain their willing compliance with the objectives and mechanisms of resource conservation,
- P. whereas if the rules governing the CFP are to be effective, fishermen and other sectors concerned must play a large part in their adoption, so that their experience can be taken into account in order to develop a viable and realistic system of regulation which can be enforced, and whereas this participation must not amount to any renationalisation of what is a Community policy,
- Q. whereas the protection and conservation of marine resources and the rational and responsible exploitation of resources on a sustainable basis must be central to fisheries management and is vital to ensure the viability of the Community fisheries sector,

⁽¹⁾ 'Texts Adopted', item 24.

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- R. having regard to the major changes that have occurred in the International Law of the Sea in recent decades, with the exclusive fishing areas of coastal countries being extended to the point where 90 % of resources are located in the exclusive economic zones of a sovereign State, with the result that an active international relations policy is needed to safeguard supplies and whereas fisheries agreements and their commercial character form part of the *acquis communautaire*,
- S. whereas the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea must provide the permanent and stable basis regulating deep-sea fishing at international level, establishing a balance between the interests of coastal states and of those fishing on the high seas,
- T. having regard to the need for the Commission to coordinate its development cooperation and common fisheries policies, dedicating more material, human, technical and budgetary resources from its development cooperation policy to develop the fisheries sectors of third countries,
- U. having regard to the guidelines given by the Council of Fisheries Ministers of October 1997 with regard to fisheries agreements,
- V. having regard to the important and growing role played by regional fisheries organisations in the supply and sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources in adjacent zones and international waters,
- W. whereas fisheries policy in the Mediterranean does not form part of the CFP and current fisheries management is based on a series of derogations and exceptions,
- X. whereas one of the factors with the greatest impact on the situation in the Mediterranean is the fact that it is a sea shared with non-Community countries, almost all of them developing countries, with serious shortcomings in terms of a fishing culture based on sustainable development and little experience of the handling and introduction of fisheries management systems,
- Y. whereas, in view of the technical progress and the changes which have occurred in the European Community since the establishment of the CFP, a genuine reform of the policy is needed in order to address developments such as the creation of the single market, the various enlargements, the depletion of fish stocks and the growing aquaculture sector, whilst maintaining the basic objectives and principles underlying the policy,
- Z. whereas no specific mention is made in the reform of the CFP of market policy, either in its internal or external aspects,
- AA. whereas the principle of preference, designed to protect the production of the Community fisheries sector, must fit in with the need for imports from third countries in order to supply both the markets and the European processing industry in the event of temporary or seasonal shortages,
- AB. highlighting the need to include the economically and socially significant aspect of the forthcoming enlargement of the European Union in the reform of the common fisheries policy,
- AC. whereas the CFP must respect both the need for conservation outside as well as within Community waters and the right of developing countries to safeguard and to benefit from the fisheries potential of the waters adjacent to them; whereas also those that profit from fisheries agreements with third countries should contribute to their costs,

Introduction

1. Calls for a fisheries policy based on rational and responsible management of resources which has as its rationale the preservation of fish stocks and the maintenance of the way of life of those traditionally dependent on the sea and preserves the fundamental principle which derives from these objectives, namely relative stability; a policy which facilitates a fair and equitable regime for distributing fisheries resources tailored to the specific needs of fisheries dependent regions and which is impartial, stable, enforceable and under Community control;

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2. Stresses that fisheries cannot be analysed from a purely economic standpoint because of its multi-faceted nature and the way it helps to knit together the socio-economic fabric of coastal areas, where it represents a way of life, helping to ensure cohesion and guarantee food supplies;
3. States that the economic impact of the Common Fisheries Policy is very important for the fisheries sector, as public money injected into the EU fisheries sector amounts to € 1,1 billion compared to the value of the total Community production (€ 9 billion);
4. Underlines that the EU budget is the most important source of public money provided for the EU fisheries sector (€ 919 million in 2001);
5. Considers that reform of the common fisheries policy should take into account three aspects: first, deep sea fishing, which, in addition to the contribution it can make to the development of coastal areas, should be seen as a commercial activity designed to provide the Community market with the raw materials it requires, second, small-scale, artisanal coastal fishing, where the main focus should be on maintaining socio-economic activity in regions highly dependent on fisheries, and third, aquaculture, an important pillar of the CFP which is increasingly helping to meet the growing demand for fishery products on the Community market;
6. Regrets the lost opportunity, as part of the Green Paper, of carrying out a genuine analysis of the current state of dependency on fishing in the various European regions and their development in recent years, the poor methodology used, the failure to use homogeneous data and the absence of many parameters which are fundamental for defining regions' dependency on this economic sector; stresses that this analysis is vital before the CFP is revised;
7. Calls for a fresh analysis of the communities highly dependent on fisheries that takes into account developments in the Community in the last 25 years;
8. Contends that scientific knowledge of marine biotopes is a prerequisite for the establishment of a policy of conservation and sustainable management of resources;
9. Expresses its concern at the contradiction between the highly critical analysis made by the Commission, and shared by the European Parliament, and the subsequent reform proposals put forward in the Green Paper, which are scarcely innovatory in nature;

Conservation and management of resources

10. Reaffirms the European Parliament's determination to participate in the reform of the CFP, with the aim of ensuring balance in the marine eco-system, an indispensable condition if profitable economic activity in the fishing industry is to be maintained;
11. Points out that the reform of the CFP must also take full account of EU policy in the field of the environment and the requirements of Article 174 of the Treaty;
12. Takes the view that the reform of the CFP must place the precautionary principle as defined in the European Parliament's resolution⁽¹⁾ of 14 December 2000 on the Commission's Communication on the precautionary principle (COM(2000) 1 – C5-0143/2000 – 2000/2086(COS)) at the forefront and that the FAO Code of Conduct and the United Nations agreement on fish stocks provide good definitions of this principle;
13. Points out that the protection of marine biotopes and the conservation of fisheries resources in ways that will ensure the sustainable development and rational exploitation of fisheries in line with the principle of economic efficiency, as well as maintenance of coherence with the marine environment, are principles which must govern the common fisheries policy;
14. Calls on the Commission, with a view to the rational management of fisheries, to define and adopt methods of analysing marine ecosystems based on the precautionary principle; and calls for TACs to be set in line with rational, transparent methods, incorporating scientific opinions and information provided by people working in the industry, particularly in view of the fact that TACs will be set on a multiannual and multi-species basis;

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 232, 17.8.2001, p. 345.

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15. Asks the Commission for any interannual upward or downward variation in a TAC of more than 15-20% to be preceded by a socio-economic impact report (except in the case of a dramatic and proven change in the situation of the resource);
16. Calls for the mechanisms designed to prevent overexploitation of resources to be improved, seeking to reduce fishing effort by developing current systems based mainly on TCMs, TACs and quotas, which should be multi-species and multiannual and should be set on the basis of scientific opinions on developments in resources and guaranteeing the necessary flexibility with regard to annual revision and on the precautionary principle, so that undertakings in the sector can plan their activities on the basis of rational criteria;
17. Calls on the Commission to examine the possibility of introducing new fisheries management mechanisms, such as co-management, which would make it possible for fleets to adapt more flexibly to the actual state of resources, accompanied by the necessary structural measures to ensure that their introduction does not harm the industry;
18. Rejects any proposal to introduce a system of individual quotas or individual transferable quotas at EU level, which would amount to the privatisation of fishery resources and the concentration/verticalisation of catches, which would have negative consequences at the socio-economic and environmental level;
19. Agrees with the opinion expressed by the Commission in its Green Paper that these alternative mechanisms for fisheries management can play a significant complementary role in Community fisheries management;
20. Approves, therefore, the Commission's proposal to organise an exchange of views with the Member States on alternative systems of fisheries management with a view to preparing a report for the other institutions as soon as possible, and consequently calls for that report to be drawn up as a matter of urgency and submitted to Parliament at the latest six months after the adoption of this resolution;
21. Points out that a system must be introduced to eliminate or substantially reduce discarded catches, which at present represent an unsustainable waste of protein of high nutritional value; calls on the Commission to produce a study of possible options, including the requirement that all caught fish be landed and the feasibility of a system under which quotas can be transferred locally between vessels on an ad hoc basis;
22. Calls for:
- increased research to improve the selectivity of fishing gear and reduce its impact on the marine habitat, involving both scientists and the fishing industry;
 - stricter technical measures to reduce bycatch and discards, even if that may cause somewhat lower catches of target fish species;
 - discarded fish to be counted against quotas;
23. Stresses the need to take specific measures to protect small juveniles, in particular by improving the possibilities offered by selective techniques;
24. Calls on the Commission to adopt specific measures for the rational and sustainable management of fisheries, aimed at protecting young or juvenile fish of commercial and non-commercial species subject to or at risk of overexploitation, by establishing closed seasons, restricting activity in certain areas or even closing them for fisheries on a flexible basis (short-term closure of an area in which high concentrations of juveniles are to be found), and encouraging the use of selective fishing gear, with the aim of increasing stocks of fish of reproductive age that will guarantee the long-term rebuilding of stocks and the viability of fisheries;
25. Notes that improvements in fish quality, due to better handling, processing and storage techniques, can often compensate economically for reduced catch volumes;

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26. Stresses the need to take specific measures concerning the incidental catch of marine species listed in Annex IV(a) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992⁽¹⁾ (Habitats and Species Directive);
27. Demands that areas where fisheries are restricted, either by closed seasons, boxes or restricted access to local waters, should be based on scientific criteria designed to protect resources;
28. Expresses its surprise at the lack of references in the Green Paper to the role of industrial fishing which, in the current situation where resources are scarce, accounts for two-thirds of Community catches, which are used for the production of fish meal and fish oils; the unrestrained development of this kind of fishing is affecting the balance of stocks and having an impact on the food chain, while at the same time leading to large catches of juveniles of species of high commercial value owing to the small mesh size of the nets used by this sector, as demonstrated by the crisis facing once abundant species such as cod and hake;
29. Considers that research is needed into the interaction and impact on marine ecosystems of predatory species and their prey with a view to adopting control measures for such species, if necessary;
30. Calls on the Commission to improve its method of collecting statistics on catches and landings, so as to obtain reliable knowledge on the state of resources; calls for scientific studies to be carried out into the effects of phenomena unrelated to fisheries, such as pollution or climate change; calls for the expansion of the corresponding services in the Community institutions;
31. Calls for greater investment in scientific research and development;
32. Calls on the Commission to encourage improvements to the selectivity of fishing gear and to take account of progress made in this area;
33. Continues, in view of the broad Community balance and the special features of the fisheries industry, to support the principle of relative stability;
34. Requests the Commission to study the feasibility of giving consideration to the environmental impact of particular fleets, so that those fishing fleets using gears and methods which have reduced environmental impact be given preferential access to fish stocks;
35. Considers that mechanisms should be devised in order to provide a framework for the incentives available under the Structural Funds in respect of environmentally sustainable fishing practices;
36. Considers that under the current system for allocating quotas to Member States, it should be recognised that rapidly depleting resources mean that quotas which have been allocated cannot always be utilised and therefore urgent conservation, and structural measures where appropriate, should be implemented;
37. Acknowledges the need to maintain the existing system of exclusive access to the 6-12 mile coastal zone;
38. Calls for full account to be taken of the particular environmental sensitivity of coastal areas (the main breeding and spawning grounds for stocks);
39. Demands that in these coastal zones, which often contain spawning grounds and nurseries, Community provisions on the conservation of resources be strictly observed, with the Member States complying rigorously with inspection and control requirements; notes that the preservation of marine ecosystems requires sustainable management of resources which will guarantee the long-term viability of the fishing industry; to that end, demands that measures be adopted to prevent the pollution and deterioration of the marine environment in all their forms; calls for uniform technical conservation measures, in particular as regards mesh size, in the different areas in which the same species, such as cod and hake, are caught;

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p. 7.

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40. Calls for European efforts towards integrated coastal zone management (ICZM) to be intensified so that human activities such as tourism, industry and fishing in areas near the coast can be directed in a coherent manner and coastal pollution avoided;
41. Urges the Commission to implement fully the UN FAO's 1999 International Plan of Action for Sharks; requests, in particular, that the Commission and EU Member States prohibit the practice of shark 'finning' and the carriage of shark fins in EU waters and by all EU registered vessels worldwide, ensure that sharks are landed whole and encourage the full utilisation of their bodies, minimise shark bycatch, identify and protect vulnerable shark stocks, ensure that all shark fisheries are sustainably managed and collect and provide relevant catch, landings, trade and biological data, by species where possible;
42. Urges the Commission, on the basis of existing scientific evidence, to take urgent action to reduce the levels of cetacean bycatch in EU waters;
43. Urges the Commission to define clearly the minimum acceptable elements of the ecosystem-based approach, including supporting application of the precautionary approach; agreed limits on by-catch and incidental mortality of non-target species; agreed levels of habitat disturbance; indicators to monitor the integration of environmental objectives; incentives for environmentally-friendly gear, practice and vessels; full monitoring and enforcement of ecosystem measures;
44. Stresses the need to carry out information and public-awareness actions aimed at strengthening support for conservation measures among all those involved in the fishing industry (fishermen, professional organisations, local and regional authorities, etc.);

Fleet policy

45. Points out that the multiannual guidance programmes designed to achieve a balance between available resources and the fishing effort of the Community fleet have failed to produce the desired results, largely because of the reluctance of some Member States to apply them properly;
46. Notes that fleet reductions require a socio-economic sacrifice which, if it is to be understood and accepted by the fisheries sector, must be achieved in a balanced manner in all Member States and which cannot be accomplished without the corresponding financial support from the Community; calls on the Commission to ensure that programmes geared to adjusting the size of the fleet chiefly have an impact on those segments which cause most damage to resources and the sustainability of the marine environment;
47. Calls for use to be made as often as possible of adaptable, reversible instruments to reduce capacity, such as reductions in fishing time;
48. Reaffirms, in agreement with the sector, the need to maintain a modern, competitive and safe fleet that provides a quality product as an essential basis for the maintenance and future of the fishing industry from the point of view of a globalised economy; endorses the request by the fisheries sector that the Community continue contributing to fleet modernisation, through structural measures improving safety and conditions, yet without this entailing an increase in fishing effort;
49. Rejects the Commission's intention substantially to reduce structural aid in the fishing industry, bearing in mind the socio-economic difficulties facing the industry, and considers that, in the light of past results, structural aid should be redistributed on a more equitable basis;
50. Calls on the Commission to set up a specific Community programme to support small-scale coastal fishing and artisanal fishing;

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51. Notes that at present, in view of complex and highly diversified segmentation, the European Union, despite the efforts it has made, does not have a harmonised register of vessels, in terms of either capacity or power, which reduces confidence in the system and makes it very difficult to adopt harmonised measures to bring the existing fleet to an appropriate size;
52. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to adopt stable criteria for measuring the capacity and power of vessels and fleet segments, so that their development can be easily, transparently and accurately analysed and reliable knowledge of the Community register of fishing vessels obtained;
53. Calls for the Community definition of small-scale fishing to take account of the special features of extremely remote regions, in which this industry represents a particularly profitable area of production in terms of job creation;
54. Requests the Commission to sponsor a study into the extent to which technological innovations, known as 'technological creep', affect the measurement of fishing capacity;
55. Urges the Commission to submit proposals for simplifying the provisions on monitoring the fleet;
56. Points out that any new fleet management policy must take into account, as well as current over-capacity, the extent to which each individual Member State has complied with the objectives laid down in previous MAGPs, including whether other management measures have been implemented, such as days at sea; it must also take into account the state of the available resources concerned, since otherwise those Member States which had met the objectives laid down would be seriously penalised;
57. Urges the Council and the Commission to review the system of penalties in force for failure to comply with MAGPs and for repeated delays or failure to submit data on fleets, including effective sanctions;
58. In this context, applauds the recent decision of the Commission to begin procedures against certain Member States for nonconformity with their national MAGPs;

Inspection and control

59. Recognises that, although progress has been made in recent years, the operation of supervisory and control mechanisms is unsatisfactory, because of the different levels of human resources and equipment allocated for this purpose, with controls confined in most cases to summary checks on landings, and because of the lack of uniform practices by the competent services of the Member States;
60. Points out that all efforts to ensure conservation of resources and rational management of fisheries are doomed to failure, unless a harmonised European inspection and control system is introduced that applies to all those working in the sector, without discrimination, with uniform provisions and penalty procedures and with a high degree of compliance by the sector;
61. Calls on the Commission and Council to adopt the measures necessary to introduce a system of rules and a single control procedure applicable to catches, as well as the transport and marketing of fishery products, that will produce comparable results regardless of the nationality of the offender or the national inspection service concerned;
62. Calls on the Commission to fully implement its stated objective on control and enforcement which states to ensure effective enforcement of CFP rules through transparent arrangements which can guarantee a level playing field across the Union;
63. Calls on the Commission to propose enhanced control measures for species which are finally marketed. This will provide a less expensive method of verification which will cover both lawful and unlawful fishing;

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64. Urges the Council and Commission to study possible ways of tightening up the relevant provisions on control, expand the control powers of Community inspectors and introduce a uniform system of penalties to strengthen fishermen's confidence in the fundamental principle of equal treatment;
65. Calls urgently on the Commission and the Member States to implement effective monitoring and surveillance measures with regard to fishing activities; supports the Commission's intention to create a joint inspection structure to coordinate national inspection policies and activities;
66. Strongly believes that a system of 'observer corps', which could be rapidly deployed to observe fishing in sensitive spawning or fishing grounds, would do a great deal to alleviate many problems that persist in current European fisheries;
67. Demands the strict enforcement of the Community control system with regard to third country vessels operating within EU waters;

International relations

68. Stresses that the Community should firmly tackle the external dimension of the CFP, including international agreements and RFO, linking it to the European Union's foreign policy so as to protect the interests of the Community fleet more effectively and also to protect the interests of the population and the regions involved;
69. Considers it necessary, for reasons of budgetary transparency, not only to separate and differentiate the strictly fisheries-related component from the part relating to development cooperation policy, as indicated in the Green Paper, but also to fund these actions from the development policy budget;
70. Calls on the Commission and Council to address, through reform of the CFP's external relations policy, several major weaknesses in the Community's bilateral Agreements including failure to invoke the precautionary approach, insufficient attention paid to local third country aspirations to develop their own fisheries sector and poor monitoring and enforcement of EU vessels;
71. Stresses the international dimension of reform of the CFP and calls for the external branch of that reform to pay particular attention to environmental problems in third countries, with especially close attention being paid to the preservation of biodiversity in developing countries;
72. Recommends that fisheries agreements with third countries should be subject both to rigorous stock assessment – determining if there is indeed a 'surplus' to be fished – and environmental impact assessment;
73. Endorses the Council conclusions of October 1997 on fisheries agreements with third countries, recognising the socio-economic benefits the Community derives from these agreements as regards supplies of raw materials and employment and points out that they are and will continue to be a vital element of the common fisheries policy, which requires a substantial budget;
74. Protests at the fact that development cooperation in the field of fisheries is currently being undertaken almost exclusively through international fisheries agreements which, as commercial agreements, were not designed for this purpose;
75. Calls, therefore, for improved coordination of the external dimension of the CFP and development cooperation policy and draws attention to the need for development cooperation policy to be more closely involved in the development aspects of the fisheries sectors of third countries, providing more economic, technical and human resources;
76. Believes that the European Union must ensure that its Common Fisheries Policy is coherent with, and supports its policy on development and cooperation in its principal strategic objective, which is the eradication of poverty in the developing world. Solutions to the serious problems which beset the fishing

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industry here in the EU (excess fleet capacity, over-exploited resources, declining employment, degraded marine environment) must not be found in simple transfer of these problems to other areas, such as developing countries;

77. Considers that all European Union efforts to ensue sustainable development in our European coastal areas and in third countries, by practising responsible and careful fishing activity, must be based on a dual strategy; on the one hand, through the policy set out above with regard to developing countries with which we are linked, and on the other hand through firm action by the European Union in international fisheries organisations, aimed at seeking to prevent, by all possible means, any destructive fishing by the fleets of other powers;

78. Recognises the value to the Community of establishing an active policy to strengthen compliance with the International Law of the Sea, as called for by the United Nations in order to develop sustainable fisheries, the main instruments for this purpose being the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 and the 'New York Agreement' adopted on 4 August 1995, relating to straddling fish stocks and highly migratory fish stocks, and endorses the need to ratify this agreement, whilst calling, in conjunction with ratification, for interpretative notes to guarantee its proper application and the FAO Code of Conduct for responsible fisheries; urges the Community to implement the recently-adopted FAO Plans of Action on sharks, on seabirds, on the management of fishing capacity and on the elimination of IUU fishing;

79. Endorses the conclusions of the Council meeting of 7 June 1997 on coherence of development policy with the fisheries policy, including the importance it accords to the interests of the local fishing industry in the third country and the principle of sustainability of the resources;

80. Urges those Member States which have not yet ratified the UN Fish Stocks Agreement to do so as rapidly as possible;

81. Calls on the Commission and Council to adopt the measures necessary to end the illegal fishing carried out by vessels flying a flag of convenience or no flag at all, by taking urgent measures to prevent their catches reaching markets supporting the initiatives taken by some international organisations to combat unregulated fishing and stepping up controls and penalties considerably and the initiatives recently taken by the EP regarding the role of flags of convenience in the fisheries sector;

82. Calls on the Commission and Council to adopt a uniform strategy with regard to the conclusion of international agreements, regardless of the country or region involved, so that the beneficiaries in the fisheries sector are subject to the same conditions as regards fishing opportunities, fees, licences, use of surplus quotas and other conditions of the kind generally laid down in agreements of this type; calls on the Commission to devise a system under which those profiting directly from third country agreements make a significant contribution toward their costs;

83. Recognises the effective contribution to development and the fight against poverty made by international fisheries agreements and points out that, when determining their content, account should be taken of the sovereign decisions of the authorities of the countries with which they are concluded;

84. Calls on the Commission to lay down unequivocally which measures are to be carried out within the framework of development cooperation and which are to be carried out within the framework of the common fisheries policy, and to take particular account of the development of local fisheries in third countries in relation to the fight against poverty;

85. Calls for the EU to encourage privileged access for fleets from extremely remote regions to the waters of third countries in their geographical vicinity with which it negotiates fisheries agreements;

86. Calls on the European Union to encourage the establishment of joint ventures with third countries, which have proved a useful tool in developing the local fisheries sector, while at the same time helping to supply the Community market and maintain the Community fleet, but not used to circumvent fleet reduction targets;

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87. Recognises the growing importance of regional fisheries organisations as mechanisms for managing the marine environment and fisheries resources both in exclusive economic zones and the high seas;
88. Considers that the Union should take part in all existing and future regional fisheries organisations in which it has a legitimate interest;
89. Insists on reminding the Commission and Council that Parliament has already asked them to study and put forward in the corresponding fora a new allocation of votes to the EU within RFOs which should be more consistent with the large number of States which the EU embraces and the Commission represents, and not just as one more State;
90. Calls on the Commission to reduce the deadlines for transposing into Community law agreements binding on the Community adopted within regional fisheries organisations, while improving its own administrative procedures and adequately preparing the Community's position within these organisations, including prior consultation of the sector;
91. Calls for strengthening of Community control on fishing activities in the context of the international fisheries agreements;

Trade relations and market policy

92. Points out that, for the purposes of trade in fisheries products and when defining the European Union's trade policy, account must be taken of the following factors:
- the need to respect the principle of Community preference;
 - with regard to tariffs, these might be reduced provided that such a step is combined with the establishment of a list of sensitive products in order to guarantee that international fishing complies with the principles of responsible fishing methods;
 - awareness of the need for imports to meet growing demand for fisheries products for human consumption, together with the existence of an extractive and processing sector, whose protection requires a number of specific restrictions to be maintained on the open Community trading regime applicable to sensitive products;
 - the need for a global approach to trade negotiations, taking into account not only tariff reductions, but also important questions for the European Union such as access to resources, the right of establishment and investment in third countries, free access to ports, and measures to combat flags of convenience;
 - compliance with quality and traceability standards for imports;
 - with regard to investment, the restrictions specific to this sector by comparison with other investment should be abolished;
 - there should be strict controls on the entry of imports and on their compliance with Community health and veterinary rules, given that the liberalisation of trade in the fisheries sector must not entail concessions regarding the environmental standards and health and food-safety rules which apply in the European Union;
 - compliance with the rules contained in international legislation on nature conservation and labour protection, in particular the rules approved within the FAO and the International Labour Organisation;
 - the need for a common international definition of fisheries subsidies and for the development of a common methodology for the assessment of the extent to which such subsidies impact upon fishing capacity and effort;

Social aspects

93. Reaffirms the social and cultural role of the fishing industry, and calls on the Commission to ensure that the economic and social measures necessary to guarantee economic and social cohesion in areas dependant on fisheries are fully integrated in the reform of the common fisheries policy; calls on the Community to promote greater social dialogue in the fisheries sector, which is characterised by the har-

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shness of working conditions and the lack of collective agreements, in order to secure better quality jobs, proper rest periods and decent wages for those working on vessels and on shore and stresses the importance of harmonising conditions of employment with respect to the status of fishermen and the qualifications required for the exercise of this activity, not forgetting the very special position of assisting spouses;

94. Calls, in order to safeguard jobs, for all restructuring measures within the sector to be supported by suitable accompanying welfare measures involving adequate additional special financing which does not affect the funding which has already been allocated to the sector in order to enable it to make structural adjustments (FIFG);

95. Calls on the Commission to consider quality employment and health and safety conditions at work as one of the objectives of the common fisheries policy, giving priority to the following points:

- improving the Community legal framework designed to ensure protection, safety and better working conditions for fishing industry workers, including those who operate vessels not included in Directives 93/103/EEC, 93/104/EEC, 97/70/EC and 2000/34/EC;
- amendment of existing measurement criteria to ensure that increases in volume designed to improve safety and working conditions on board are not counted as increases in vessel capacity;
- special attention to measures for the training of crews in safety and rescue procedures;
- compulsory annual inspections for all fishing vessels to ensure that the mandatory safety equipment is on board and is in full working order;

96. Calls on the Commission, the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, the European Food Agency and the European Maritime Safety Agency, once it is operational, to promote a culture of health and safety in the fishing industry, through information campaigns, development and exchange of best practice and development of health and safety training;

97. Points out that, in the context of the current food crisis, it is important to maintain consumer confidence at a high level; calls on the Commission, consequently, to ensure that the reform of the CFP (including aquaculture) takes full account of this requirement;

98. Calls on the Commission and Council to draw up a plan as a matter of urgency to give Community fishermen operating on vessels under the flags of third countries having fisheries agreements with the European Union, under joint fishing venture schemes or any other legal regime, the same rights and guarantees enjoyed by those operating vessels flying the Community flag; with this in view, social clauses should be included in international fisheries agreements and when setting up joint ventures;

Processing industry

99. Calls for the processing industry's access to the supply of raw materials to be eased through a reduction in or suspension of tariffs;

100. Calls on the Commission, on the basis of a scientific survey of the impact of structural appropriations (FIFG) on the sector, to draw up proposals geared to the more effective implementation of FIFG funds in the processing industry;

101. Urges the Commission to strengthen the rules and improve control mechanisms for fisheries products marketed on Union territory, verifying in a reliable manner that legislation on rules of origin of fresh and processed products, their quality and technical and health conditions are complied with in order to prevent fraud against consumers and unfair competition vis-à-vis the Community industry;

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102. Calls on the Commission to mount specific campaigns to promote both traditional and new Community products, giving wider publicity to the quality of these products by means of designations of origin or Community labels and an eco-label for sustainable fisheries valid throughout the Community, awarded by independent bodies under public funding and control;

103. Urges the Commission to encourage and provide financial support for innovatory measures and research into new production systems, new products, the processing of species which currently have no commercial value and new preparations and presentations;

Aquaculture

104. Considers aquaculture to be an integral part of the common fisheries policy as a complement to extractive fishing and requiring special attention because of the growing contribution it makes to employment and supplying the Community market; calls on the Commission to look into the complementarity between wild fisheries and farmed fisheries, since its development can help guarantee supplies whilst avoiding the overexploitation of wild stocks;

105. Accepts that aquaculture has a role to play in supplying the EU market but is concerned about the negative environmental consequences resulting from:

- the use of chemicals and antibiotics,
- its heavy dependence upon fish meal and oil as food,
- genetically modified marine and freshwater species,
- eutrophication,
- the disruption to marine ecosystems caused by industrial fishing for meal and oil as fish food,
- the spread of disease, and
- the interactions between wild fish and farmed fish which escape or are released;

106. Calls for the Community legal framework on aquaculture to be extended so as to encourage it to develop in a manner sustainable for the environment, employment and the economic viability of the sector;

107. Calls on the Commission, Council and Member States to ensure that support measures for the Community aquaculture sector take into account the following principles:

- global regional planning as part of integrated management of coastal areas, examining whether aquaculture is compatible with other activities such as tourism, shellfishing, sports fishing, industry and other uses of economic and social interest;
- need for global environmental impact studies for aquaculture projects, in order to prevent damage that might be caused by the unrestrained development of this activity;
- encouraging research into the health and hygiene implications of aquaculture plants, including those arising from the use of antibiotics and vaccines against contagious diseases;
- research into the use of techniques for genetic modification in all areas of fisheries, including imports, in strict compliance with the precautionary principle;
- coordinating production with market requirements, encouraging projects geared to species in demand by consumers and avoiding unnecessary products which could lead to a collapse in prices that would be harmful to producers;

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Research

108. Considers that the availability of reliable data on the state of resources is vital for rational fisheries management, and consequently research activities in the field of fisheries and Community support for such activities must be expanded, as must industry professionals' involvement in obtaining data for fisheries assessment and management;

109. Underlines that the current Precautionary Reference Points were set for EU fish stocks over the period 1996-1998 during the evolution of the precautionary approach; consequently calls for a re-evaluation of these points to ensure that they are still appropriate;

110. Stresses that management decisions have far-reaching effects ranging from the allocation of TACs to the social integrity of small fishing communities; believes therefore that future management must be based on both biological and socio-economic evaluations;

111. Stresses the need to improve scientific knowledge in order better to understand the workings of marine eco-systems;

112. Calls on the Commission and Council to provide increased support for scientific and technical research by the Member States and to encourage the exchange of information and data;

113. Stresses the vast potential of the marine environment with regard to sectors such as pharmacology, which should be given firm support in the Sixth Framework Research Programme, whilst regretting that fisheries and marine sciences are not given specific treatment in that framework programme but are scattered among various programmes and objectives, and calls, therefore, for fisheries and marine sciences to be dealt with en bloc and in a homogeneous way in future Community R & D programmes;

114. With a view to improving knowledge on the state of resources, stresses the need to take into account aspects such as increasing the number of scientific expeditions at sea, the possibility of chartering a Community oceanographic ship, granting more financial resources to scientific research in order to reduce margins of error, and encouraging a more intensive dialogue between researchers and fishermen; stresses the importance of expanding research into the selectivity and environmental impact of fishing gear, with the aim of reducing bycatches and the degradation of the sea floor and calls for fishermen to be more closely involved in research and for cooperation between science and fisheries to be improved with the aim of increasing acceptance for scientifically justified measures;

115. Calls on the Commission and the Council to stimulate scientific research on other factors than fisheries that influence fish stocks;

116. Calls on the Commission and the Council also to stimulate scientific research on changes in the balance between fish stocks in the most important fishing grounds of the European Union;

Mediterranean

117. Considers that new guidelines are needed for the management of Mediterranean resources based on the following:

(a) with regard to the Community aspects

- integration of the Mediterranean into the new CFP through the harmonisation of technical measures for all operators and improved scientific knowledge of existing species, their distribution and biological behaviour;
- introducing a management system by means of controlling fishing effort, which is more suitable for areas which, like the Mediterranean, are mainly based on multi-species fisheries;
- a review of existing legislation, in particular Council Regulation (EC) No 1626/94 of 27 June 1994⁽¹⁾, adapting the rules to the needs of the region as regards minimum size, technical measures, fishing gear and geographical zones;

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 171, 6.7.1994, p. 1.

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(b) with regard to international aspects

- strengthening international cooperation so as to achieve integrated management of the whole Mediterranean area, eliminating illegal fishing and activities not consistent with the rational and sustainable management of existing resources;
- strengthening the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean, which, should have effective powers to regulate fisheries with the European Union represented on its subsidiary bodies in a way consistent with its importance in the region, also promoting direct, balanced representation in the decision-making process of all those working in the industry;
- relaunching the multilateral approach through the establishment of a periodic conference of fisheries ministers and the national professional organisations of the coastal Member States which would act as a permanent forum able to ensure that the common objectives of all interested groups are achieved;
- harmonisation of the rules in the Mediterranean between the fishing activities of Community fleets and those of third-country fleets not subject to the restrictions in force, in order to guarantee conditions of fair and transparent competition;

Governance

118. Supports genuine decentralisation of fisheries policy in all the Member States, and stresses that the new CFP must be devised in close cooperation with those working in the sector, who must be heard and taken into account if they are to be expected to cooperate in the proper application of the rules;

119. Believes that if the CFP is to regain the confidence of the fishing industry throughout the EC, it needs to become more regionally sensitive, both ecologically and politically, whilst avoiding the path towards renationalisation;

120. Calls for decentralised fisheries management to be strengthened to take account of the specific characteristics of resources, the unity of the geographical areas where they are located and the interests of the fleets concerned, ensuring that all those with fisheries related interests in the zone are properly represented and that decisions are taken at the lowest possible level consonant with the maintaining of a fisheries policy common to all Member States throughout the EU;

Legislative consolidation

121. Calls for Community legislation to be made simpler and more legible and to be consolidated, so as to achieve a more transparent CFP which can be easily consulted by professionals and is accessible to the public; the Commission is to assess the application of CFP reform in 2007 at the latest;

122. Urges the Commission to continue its efforts as regards structural support for the fisheries sector, maintaining the specific financial instrument for fisheries and also maintaining existing aid which does not entail an increase in overall fishing effort and, in particular, aid which has an impact in terms of improving the state of resources and protecting the marine environment;

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