

Applied research relating to the common fisheries policy

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The Committee on Fisheries adopted an own initiative report by Rosa **MIGUÉLEZ RAMOS** (PES, ES) on applied research relating to the common fisheries policy.

MEPs are convinced that it is necessary, in the policies pursued with regard to research, to pay greater attention to the specific problems of fisheries and aquaculture in view of this sector's economic, social and political importance in the EU.

The report deplors that the 7th framework programme does not consider either fisheries or aquaculture as specific strands and calls on the Commission to review the 7th framework programme when the mid-term evaluation is carried out, scheduled for 2010, paying greater attention to the specific problems of fisheries and aquaculture. In particular, MEPs call on the Commission to ensure that the funding of applied research in the field of the CFP under the 7th framework programme is used as a lever to promote synergies between research efforts in the various Member States and attain the critical mass necessary to meet the great challenges of cross-thematic marine research.

The Committee on Fisheries also recommends that, in the field of scientific marine research, priority be given not only to research to gain knowledge of the state of fish stocks but also to the commercial, economic and social aspects that determine fisheries management, since all these aspects are of crucial importance. MEPs stress that, in the fields of fisheries and aquaculture, priority should be given to applied research.

The report notes a clear conflict of interest between fishermen and scientists in the short term (whereas their long-term objectives appear to be more compatible), and calls on the Commission to promote closer collaboration between scientists and fishermen and to gather specific information on the way in which the dialogue between scientists and fishermen currently operates in the various Member States and to list best practices.

Lastly, MEPs stress the worrying problem of the deficit of young scientists in applied research in the fisheries sector, because careers are not very attractive compared to basic research and other scientific disciplines. They stress the need to re-establish interesting and status-enhancing university degree courses leading on to remunerative careers for this scientific path.