Resolution on the contribution of the common fisheries policy to the production of public goods

2011/2899(RSP) - 16/02/2012 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the contribution of the common fisheries policy to the production of public goods.

The resolution was tabled by the EPP, S&D, Greens/EFA, ECR and ALDE groups.

It recalls that, at an economic level, the fisheries sector (including aquaculture) is estimated to generate **EUR 34.2 billion in annual earnings** and that, at a social level, it creates **more than 350 000 jobs**, particularly in coastal areas, remote regions and islands. The fisheries sector involves activities which **contribute to the production of indispensable common goods through three main strands, fishing, processing and marketing.** Parliament emphasises that fisheries, if properly managed, could make a greater contribution to European society, in terms of food security, employment, and the maintenance of dynamic fishing communities, and in many other ways. The e**xistence of healthy fish stocks, healthy marine ecosystems and the preservation of marine biodiversity are in themselves common goods** which are only produced if fish stocks are managed in a sustainable way and any unnecessary negative impact on the environment is minimised. Parliament stresses that the **Common Fisheries Policy's top priority should be the establishment of a sustainable fisheries secto**r.

Furthermore, Members state that the fisheries sector has a **multifunctional dimension beyond its three traditional areas of activity** and its visible impact at an economic, environmental and social level. They call on the Commission to take due account of the fact that the sector plays an important role in the following areas:

- **culture** – by contributing to gastronomy, ethnography, history, literature, museology, etc;
- **recreation and tourism** – by offering many different activities, such as trips out to sea with local fishermen, whale and seabird watching, ecological diving, etc;
- **science** – by helping marine scientists, and others, in their research;
- **energy** – by promoting the development of new technologies which may subsequently benefit society as a whole
- **the environment** – by safeguarding bio-sensitive geographical areas, as well as coastal areas in which hatcheries and nurseries are located, and also in cleaning the seas;
- **education** – by developing people's enjoyment of the outdoors and teaching respect for the sea;

Parliament considers that the multifunctionality of the fisheries sector **should be fully taken into account in the financing of the CFP**.

It asks the Commission to:

- acknowledge the **multifunctionality of the fisheries sector** and the value of its production of a wide range of common goods;

- integrate the concept of '**conditionality**', which is already employed in the common agricultural policy, into the reformed CFP in order **to ensure positive discrimination for environmentally-friendly fishing practices**, for example through better access to funds;

- in order to promote the development of **parallel activities**, to find a legal solution which enables fishermen to develop other sources of income within the wide range of 'fishery-linked activities' without being financially penalised;

- to assist **small fishing ports** which have been badly affected by a decline in landings as a result of overfishing;

- to ensure in its future policy proposals and decisions that the CFP contributes to overarching policy aims, such as the EU 2020 strategy;

- take the specific characteristics of fisheries and **coastal regions** into account when developing and implementing these policies;

Lastly, Parliament stresses that the fisheries sector depends on the health of stocks and on the balance of the ecosystem, so that the **CFP reform must shift the focus back to the sector's role as the guardian and manager of marine resources** with a view to creating a more efficient, greener and more competitive economy, in line with the EU 2020 Strategy for promoting sustainable growth.