

Reporting obligations under Regulation (EC) No 2371/2002 on the conservation and sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources under the CFP

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The Committee on Fisheries adopted the initiative report by Carl HAGLUND (ALDE, FI) on reporting obligations under Regulation (EC) No 2371/2002 on the conservation and sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources under the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP).

Members note that the Commission has now fulfilled its commitments under Council Regulation No 2371/2002, which obliges it to report on i) the operation of the CFP with respect to Chapters II (Conservation and Sustainability) and III (Adjustment of Fishing Capacity) of that regulation; and ii) on the arrangement on fishing restrictions in the 12 nautical mile zone.

Conservation and sustainability (Chapter II): the report stresses the need for a **balance between the ecological and the economic and social situation** in each fishery while acknowledging that without plentiful fish stocks there will be no profitable fishing industry.

Members believe that, as part of the objective of guaranteeing sustainability, the policies considered should focus on the future of the fishing sector and, consequently, on **facilitating the entry of new generations of fishermen**. They call on the Commission, the Member States and the Regional Advisory Councils (RACs), in the future, to use the **ecosystem approach** as a basis for all long-term management plans (LTMPs) which should be the basis of the future CFP.

The report highlights the need to develop an effective **no-discards policy** at EU level whereby the Community Fisheries Control Agency (CFCA) has greater powers to ensure a fair system of rules and sanctions. It also stresses that **selective fishing gear** and other devices which reduce or eliminate by-catches of non-targeted species, or of juveniles of targeted species, should be promoted, along with other sustainable fishing methods.

The Commission is invited to:

- provide for the establishment of **long-term management plans** for all commercial EU fisheries within a highly decentralised management regime which fully involves all relevant stakeholders;
- assess the possibility of establishing a **network of closed areas** in which all fishing activities are prohibited for a certain period of time in order to increase fish productivity and conserve living aquatic resources and the marine ecosystem;
- address immediately the lack of **sufficient reliable data** necessary for sound scientific advice by establishing a system whereby Member States which do not fulfil their respective obligations regarding data collection and transmission under the European fisheries data programme are sanctioned.

The report emphasises that **scientific fisheries research** is an essential tool for identifying factors that influence the development of fishery resources, with a view to carrying out a quantitative assessment but

also for improving fishing gear. In this context, it stresses the need to invest in the training of human resources, to provide adequate financial resources and to promote cooperation between various public bodies in the Member States.

Adjustment of fishine capacity (Chapter III): the report calls on the Commission to:

- establish a **definition of overcapacity** at EU level, accommodating regional definitions and taking into account local specificities;
- redefine **fishing capacity** in such a way that both the vessel's fishing capacity and its actual fishing effort are taken as a basis;
- measure, before the end of 2013, the **capacity of European fleets** in order to establish where there is overcapacity in relation to the resources available and what reductions/conversions are required;
- **monitor and adjust fleet capacity ceilings** for Member States so that they are in line with reliable data and technical advances are taken into account.

Members emphasise that the future [European Maritime and Fisheries Fund](#) (EMFF) must provide for adequate financial assistance to mitigate any **socio-economic impact of measures** aimed at reducing overcapacity, and to adjust the size and effort of fishing fleets in line with fishing opportunities and long-term sustainability.

The report stresses the need to set clear deadlines and make progress as soon as possible towards fleet adjustments where necessary. It urges the Commission to provide for **a scheme of measures to sanction Member States** which do not fulfil their respective obligations within the set timelines, while also providing adequate funding for this process, and to develop further the concept of **ecological and social conditionality** in the context of access to fishing resources and remuneration which rewards sustainable fishing.

Lastly, Members believe that, for the present, the **special access regime for small-scale fisheries in the 12 nautical mile zone should be retained**, as should specific restrictions for vessels registered in the ports of the Azores, Madeira and the Canary Islands in respect of the waters around these archipelagos, particularly the bio-geographically sensitive areas currently covered by Council Regulation (EC) No 1954/2003.