

Agenda 2000: Financial instrument for fisheries guidance, application FIG, structural assistance

1998/0347(CNS) - 21/11/2000 - Follow-up document

In the conclusion of its annual report on the results of the multiannual guidelines for fishing fleets at the end of 1999, the Commission notes that during the first three years of the MAGP IV, the Community fleet was reduced by 82 439 GT and 447 148 kW, which represent reductions in fleet capacity of approximately 4% and 5.6% respectively. At 1 January 2000 the Community fleet was already approximately 17% below the final MAGP IV objectives in terms of tonnage and 6% below the final MAGP IV objectives in terms of power. These figures would seem to confirm the success of the MAGP in reducing fleet capacity. However, closer examination shows that these reductions were achieved because some Member States far exceeded the reductions called for by the MACP while others failed to achieve the target reductions by a substantial margin. The Member States that exceeded the required reductions must have been motivated by factors other than the MAGP objectives, whereas those that failed to achieve the required reductions largely ignored the MAGP objectives. It is also interesting to note that with the exceptions of Italy and Greece the countries opting to achieve their objectives purely in terms of capacity have reached their objectives in all segments, whereas all of the countries that opted to reduce activity as well as their capacity have all failed to reach their capacity objectives in one or more segments. In addition, there remain some doubts concerning the adequacy of the effort regimes to ensure a real and permanent reduction of activity in several of the countries concerned. Whilst the MAGPs do not seem to have been directly responsible for the major part of the reductions in fleet capacity in recent years, the eligibility for public aid for the renewal and modernisation of the fishing fleet under the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance does not provide an incentive to meet the objectives, at least for some Member States. This makes the measurement and control of fleet capacity of great importance. From the results presented in this report it would appear that the coherence between the data in the fishing vessel register of the Community and those in the national registers is now improving, but by no means perfect. Further improvements are to be expected as the Member States take greater responsibility for this coherence by having direct access to the Community register through the FRONT application. Lastly, a greater problem concerns the measurement of capacity itself. The problems of comparing fleet tonnage with the objectives of the MAGP as the fleet is progressively re-measured is evident in this report. There is also less obvious but perhaps more difficult problems associated with the measurement and control of vessel power.