Conservation of wild birds

1994/0061(COD) - 19/12/1995

The committee has adopted the report on the proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive 79/409 /EEC on the conservation of wild birds). Rapporteur Mrs Maartje VAN PUTTEN (NL, PES) saw her most important amendment adopted: to put an end to the hunting season by 31 January in all Member States. The authorities in the Member States, including France and Greece, shall see in particular that the bird species to which hunting laws apply are not hunted during their period of reproduction and are adequately protected during their return to their rearing grounds. A large majority in the Committee did not share the Commission's view that, in accordance with the subsidiarity principle, the Member States are best placed to define the rules for the application of common principles on hunting. In their opinion, the application of these common principles can only be achieved through EU rules. The Committee completely also deleted the Commission's Annex VI, Criteria for determining the maximum duration of the hunting season. The rapporteur said this morning that the Commission's proposal would be completely uncontrollable in practice. Most Member States generally already specify 31 January as the latest date for closing the season. The French in particular have problems: in this Member State, there exists a powerful lobby against more precisely defined rules.