Fishery resources: management and conservation of the marine environment

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The committee adopted the report by Georgios KATIFORIS (PES, GR) on fisheries management and nature conservation. The report called on the Commission, when adopting any environment-related measure, to take into account at all times the fact that the deterioration in marine species was caused by various factors, including pollution, climate change, industrial activity, the pressure of human activities on coastal areas, sea transport and uncontrolled fishing. All these problems were interdependent and should be dealt with together. Solutions must be balanced in respect of all sectors and activities dependent on the sea. The report also asked the Commission not to forget that the fishing industry was often a further victim of environmental deterioration. The committee pointed out that a policy of fisheries management based on conservation of the marine environment was not incompatible with the long-term interests of fishing communities but was, rather, essential if fishing was to survive in coastal communities. It also urged that monitoring and supervision of fisheries be strengthened by every means possible and that Member States should take more responsibility for ensuring compliance with environmental legislation affecting the management of fishery resources. Community inspectors should also be given increased powers and responsibilities. In conclusion, the report referred to the precautionary principle as set out in the Declaration of the 1992 UN Conference on the Environment and Development.