Fishery in international waters in the frame of the external action of the Common Fisheries Policy

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The committee adopted the own-initiative report by Rosa MIGUÉLEZ RAMOS (PES, E) on fisheries in international waters. It regretted the lack of any debate to date on the external dimension of the common fisheries policy and the lack of a proper strategy for defending the Community's interests in non-Community waters. The report therefore called for the development of a CFP linked to the Union's external policy. It stressed that, given the Community's exclusive competences regarding the external dimension of the CFP, the Commission must be responsible for proper representation, effective negotiation and relations with Regional Fisheries Organisations (RFOs), including fisheries monitoring. The Commission was therefore urged to reorganise its DG Fisheries, to allocate more resources to Community participation in RFOs and to play a more active role within these bodies, for example by submitting initiatives on standardising offences and penalties and on closer coordination in monitoring fishing activity. The Council and Commission were urged to seek participation in those RFOs in which the Community sector has a legitimate interest but from which the Community is nonetheless currently excluded. The committee also reiterated Parliament's demand that the Council and Commission should raise, in the appropriate forums, the question of readjusting the EU's voting weight in the RFOs in line with the number of participant countries. Other recommendations included: - pursuing an active policy to ensure greater compliance with UN fishing law; - further developing trade relations with third countries to ensure both access for their products to the EU market and the presence of the EU fleet in non-Community fishing grounds, on the basis of the principle of responsible fishing; - establishing relations with non-member Mediterranean countries to harmonise the management and exploitation of common resources in order to avoid further penalising Community fishing, depletion of stocks, job losses and an increase in imported fisheries products; - more stringent monitoring and punishment of illegal fishing; - guaranteeing the fundamental labour rights of all fishermen, through social dialogue and the drawing up of a Statute for Fishermen.