Multiannual guidance programmes MAGP IV for the fishing fleets end 2001 and June 2002. Reports

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The committee adopted the own-initiative report drawn up by Patricia McKENNA (Greens/EFA, IRL) in response to the Commission's report on the results of the MAGP IV programmes. The report delivered a damning verdict on those programmes, which had resoundingly failed in their aim of achieving a sustainable balance between fish resources and the fishing rate. MEPs stressed that several segments of the Community fleet remained "excessively large" in comparison with the available resources and that only four individual Member States (Denmark, Spain, Finland and Portugal) had met all their individual targets by June 2002. The report added that the current crisis facing so many stocks of fish in Community waters was at least partly due to the long-standing and repeated failure to adopt meaningful programmes for the management of fishing capacity. The MAGP programmes, which had now been scrapped, had been replaced by a simple cap on total fleet capacity, which MEPs felt was equally inadequate. The committee therefore urged the Commission to develop a programme that would bring Community capacity into line with resources, while not exporting vessels to other parts of the world where there is already an excess. The programme should, moreover, be used to develop fleets that provide a maximum of employment while not further depleting fish stocks or damaging the marine environment.