

Conservation of fishery resources: cod, stock recovery

2003/0090(CNS) - 02/10/2003

The committee adopted the report by Catherine STIHLER (PES, UK) broadly approving the proposal under the consultation procedure, subject to a number of amendments stressing the need for greater flexibility and local participation. The committee wanted to allow Member States or Regional Advisory Councils (RACs) to propose alterations both to the geographical scope of the plan and to the exact arrangements designed to lessen fishing pressure. It argued that the participation of fishermen must be encouraged if the plan was to be effectively implemented. The RACs, created as part of CFP reform, were designed to do precisely that and should therefore have a formal role. The committee also called for stricter enforcement to help ensure the viability of the plan. It wanted all participating vessels to install on board by 1 January 2005 the necessary devices enabling them to be monitored by satellite. It also asked the Commission to draw up a report on the effects of industrial fishing on cod stocks, which remains a controversial issue. MEPs urged vigilance over the socio-economic effects of the plan and therefore called for Member States to report on these a year after it comes into effect. The Commission should report to Parliament and the Council on the socio-economic impact of the regulation within three years of its entry into force and should put forward proposals where necessary, including proposals for compensation to mitigate the industry's losses.