Fisheries: reduction of discards of fish by the fishing fleets, action plan

2003/2036(INI) - 19/06/2003 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted its own-initiative report drafted by Niels BUSK (ELDR, DK) on the Commission Action Plan to reduce fish discards. (Please see the document dated 20/05/03.) Parliament pointed out that s the FAO has estimated the volume of fish discards within commercial fisheries at between 17.9 and 39.5 million tonnes worldwide, which far exceeds the EU's total fisheries production (catches and aquaculture) of 7.8 million tonnes. The optimal supply of fish depends on the fish being allowed to grow and spawn before they are caught, and some stocks have been reduced to a critical level partly as a result of catching and discarding juvenile fish at sea. Overall reductions in fishing effort on many fish stocks would help not only in stock recovery but also in the reduction of discards. Parliament asked the Commission to examine how the Regional Advisory Councils can be utilised to their greatest effect to reduce discards.