

Common Fisheries Policy CFP: establishment of Regional Advisory Councils

2003/0238(CNS) - 19/07/2004 - Final act

PURPOSE : to establish Regional Advisory Councils under the Common Fisheries Policy.

LEGISLATIVE ACT : Council Decision 2004/585/EC establishing Regional Advisory Councils under the Common Fisheries Policy.

CONTENT : the Council adopted this Decision establishing seven Regional Advisory Councils under the CFP. The reform of the CFP adopted in December 2002 provided for RACs in order to improve governance within the CFP and specified that the Council would decide on the establishment of a RAC. RACs offer the opportunity for stakeholders to be more closely involved in the development of the CFP.

The new RACs are as follows :

- Baltic Sea;
- Mediterranean Sea Maritime Waters of the Mediterranean of the East of line;
- North Sea;
- North Western waters;
- South Western waters;
- Pelagic stocks (blue whiting, mackerel, horse mackerel, herring);
- High seas/long distance fleet All non EC-waters.

Regarding the structure, each RAC shall consist of a general assembly and an executive committee. The general assembly shall meet at least once a year to approve the annual report and the annual strategic plan drawn up by the executive committee. The general assembly shall appoint an executive committee of up to 24 members. The executive committee shall manage the work of the Regional Advisory Council and adopt its recommendations.

On the functioning of the RACs, they shall adopt the measures necessary for their organisation including, as appropriate, a secretariat and working groups. They shall also ensure transparency in all stages of their decision-making process. Recommendations adopted by the executive committee shall be made available immediately to the general assembly, the Commission, Member States concerned and, upon request, to any member of the public. The members of the executive committee shall, where possible, adopt recommendations by consensus. If no consensus can be reached, dissenting opinions expressed by members shall be recorded in the recommendations adopted by the majority of the members present and voting. Upon receipt in writing of the recommendations, the Commission and, where relevant, the Member States concerned shall reply precisely to them within a reasonable time period and, at the latest, within three months. Each Regional Advisory Council shall designate a chairperson by consensus. The chairperson shall act impartially. The Member States concerned shall provide the appropriate support, including logistical help, to facilitate the functioning of a Regional Advisory Council.

On the reporting and auditing of the RACs, each Regional Advisory Council shall transmit an annual report of its activities to the Commission, the Member States concerned and the Advisory Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture before 31 March of the year following the year covered by the report.

Lastly, the financial reference amount for the implementation of this action for the period 2004 to 2011 shall be EUR 7 596 000. For the period following 31 December 2006, the amount shall be deemed to be confirmed if it is consistent for this phase with the financial perspectives in force for the period commencing in 2007. The annual appropriations shall be authorised by the budgetary authority within the limits of the financial perspective.

ENTRY INTO FORCE : 10/08/2004.