2006-2008 action plan for simplifying and improving the Common Fisheries Policy

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The committee adopted the own-initiative report drawn up by its chair, Philippe MORILLON (ALDE, FR), in response to the 2006-2008 Action Plan for simplifying and improving the Common Fisheries Policy. MEPs welcomed the communication and expressed support for the objectives and methods proposed by the Commission. However, they called for more extensive pre-legislative consultation, at as early a stage as possible, of all the parties affected by the planned measures. The report stressed that closer consultation, in particular with the Regional Advisory Councils and the Advisory Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture, would "undoubtedly result in those involved in the fisheries sector identifying more closely with fisheries legislation".

The committee rejected the Commission's proposal of submitting a "short" regulation on technical measures to the Council, to be followed by detailed Commission regulations. It insisted that Parliament should not be bypassed in this way and warned that any simplification process should not be carried out "at the expense of robbing Parliament of its responsibilities as regards intervening in legislative procedures".

MEPs also urged the Commission to exercise caution when it comes to extending Member States' powers to adopt certain locally-applicable measures for the conservation and management of fisheries resources. They warned that this could lead to the emergence of discriminatory conditions in the Member States concerned. Lastly, the committee called on the Commission to finalise a 'standard agreement' for fisheries partnership agreements, enshrining the rights and obligations of the two parties (Community and third country).