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DOCUMENT 1-1519/83

REPORT

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture

on the right of access to fishing grounds and the
management of fishery resources in the Mediterranean

Rapporteur: Mr G. PAPAPIETRO

PE 88.585/fin.
Or It

On 16 November 1983, the European Parliament, pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure, referred the motion for a resolution tabled by Mr BATTERSBY on the right of access to fishing grounds and the management of fishery resources in the Mediterranean (Doc. 1-966/83) to the Committee on Agriculture.

At its meeting of 25 and 26 January 1984, the Committee on Agriculture decided to draw up a report and appointed Mr G. PAPAPIETRO rapporteur.

The committee considered the draft report at its meetings of 1-2 February 1984 and 28-29 February 1984.

At the latter meeting it adopted the motion for a resolution by 27 votes to none, with three abstentions.

The following took part in the vote : Mr CURRY, chairman; Mr COLLESELLI and Mr DELATTE, vice-chairmen; Mr PAPAPIETRO, rapporteur; Mr ABENS (deputizing for Mr LYNGE), Mr ADAMOU, Mr BATTERSBY, Mrs CASTLE, Mr CLINTON, Mr DALSSASS, Mr EYRAUD, Mr GATTO, Mr HELMS, Mr HORD, Mr KEATING (deputizing for Mr WETTIG), Mr LUCKER (deputizing for Mr FRUH), Mr MAHER, Mr MARCK, Mr MARKOPOULOS (deputizing for Mr GAUTIER), Mrs S. MARTIN, Mr MERTENS, Mr B. NIELSEN, Mr PRANCHERE, Mr PROVAN, Mr SIMMONDS, Mr STELLA (deputizing for Mr LIGIOS), Mr TOLMAN, Mr VERNIMMEN, Mr VGENOPOULOS and Mr VITALE.

The report was tabled on 1 March 1984.

The deadline for tabling amendments to this report will be indicated in the draft agenda for the part-session at which it will be debated.

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The Committee on Agriculture hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution together with explanatory statement :

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

on the right of access to fishing grounds
and the management of fishery resources in the Mediterranean

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the motion for a resolution by Mr BATTERSBY (Doc. 1-966/83),
 - having regard to the resolution of the European Parliament of 9 February 1983¹,
 - having regard to the answer to Written Question 185/83 which details the common fisheries policy measures applied to the Mediterranean²,
 - having regard to the report by the Committee on Agriculture (Doc. 1-1519/83),
- A. whereas the common fisheries policy is assuming increasing practical importance for thousands of fishermen in Europe,
 - B. whereas the Mediterranean is excluded from a large part of the common fisheries policy,
 - C. whereas the 200-mile exclusive economic zone is not applicable in the Mediterranean,
 - D. having regard to the importance of the Mediterranean as an economic area, both for fishing and for other activities such as tourism,
 - E. whereas fishing in the Mediterranean has its own special character and therefore requires its own special measures,
 - F. whereas the Commission's recent proposals on the integrated Mediterranean programmes provide for a Community contribution of 466 m ECU towards structural measures in the Mediterranean fisheries sector,
1. Considers that the Community, whose Member States occupy a considerable proportion of the Mediterranean seaboard, should work out special principles on which to base a common fisheries policy for the Mediterranean;
 2. Considers that the common fisheries policy should lead to the introduction of rules governing the right of access to fishing grounds, given that at present the exclusive zone does not apply to the Mediterranean;
 3. Considers that any measures to create an exclusive economic zone in the Mediterranean and to end free access to this sea would run counter to the interests of both Community and other fishermen;

¹ Report by Mr GAUTIER, Doc. 1-949/82
² OJ No. C 266 of 8.10.1983

4. Believes, nevertheless, that the more negative aspects associated with any extension of the economic zone could be overcome by introducing Community rules in agreement with the third countries concerned;
5. Considers that the aim of regulating right of access should be to preserve inshore fishing by protecting the rights of fishermen who traditionally fish these waters;
6. Believes that the rules on right of access should be closely linked to the conservation and management of resources;
7. Rules out the possibility of using a catch quota system in the Mediterranean but favours instead a system of resources management through rules covering licences, fishing periods and nets, and other possible methods;
8. Stresses the need for the management of fishery resources to be achieved through cooperation with the other, non-Member countries bordering on the Mediterranean and that these contacts should not be effected on a bilateral basis;
9. Calls on the Commission to fill this gap, which still exists despite numerous requests by Parliament that agreements be concluded with the third countries bordering on the Mediterranean;
10. Believes that the Community should use these agreements to bring the problem of resources management to the attention of the third countries;
11. Points out that the absence of a common fisheries and marine policy is liable to jeopardize the economic vitality of the Mediterranean;
12. Stresses that the management of resources must take account of the wide variety of activities other than fisheries pursued in the Mediterranean such as tourism, craft trades and industry, and calls on the Commission to draw up a programme for the exploitation of coastal areas;
13. Considers it vital for the future Parliament to give further and more detailed consideration to the subjects dealt with in this report and to sponsor initiatives to introduce rules on the right of access and the management of resources in collaboration with third countries;
14. Calls on the Commission to draw up an intervention programme for this sector;
15. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission and Council of the European Communities.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

In adopting its resolution of 9 February 1983, on the basis of a report drawn up by Mr GAUTIER? the European Parliament laid stress on the special nature of the problems of fisheries in the Mediterranean, as reflected in the large number of persons employed in the fisheries sector in the Mediterranean and the commercial value of the catch.

One of the observations made by the European Parliament's resolution is that the Community has failed to tackle the more specific problems of Mediterranean fisheries such as resources management, cooperation with the countries bordering on the Mediterranean and the prospects for Community fishermen in terms of new outlets like the development of aquaculture and mariculture.

Another aspect typical of the special problems of Mediterranean fisheries is the fact that there is no exclusive economic zone applicable to this sea. Indeed, the Mediterranean is explicitly excluded from the application of a 200-mile zone. Furthermore, it is by no means out of the question that the principle of a median line could be applied in the Mediterranean - albeit unilaterally - which in practice would mean the sea being divided up between the countries bordering on it.

The practical effects of the situation from this point of view are that the Mediterranean is an area in which everyone can operate freely. This gives greater importance to the role which the Community could play by implementing a common fisheries policy in the Mediterranean. It would be wrong to think that the common fisheries policy is of significance only for areas where a 200-mile economic zone exists. In the Mediterranean there is a danger that the absence of a common policy may lead the Member States to adopt national measures - in the field of resources management for example - that are mutually antagonistic and could generate conflicts.

Furthermore, a common fisheries policy is even more necessary given that relations with third countries in the Mediterranean fall within the terms of reference of the Community, and it would therefore be absurd for each Member State to manage separately various aspects of the fisheries policy within such a confined economic area.

The only way of ensuring that the Mediterranean survives in the long term as an economic area is to achieve joint management of all the common aspects of fishing, initially at Community level and subsequently in cooperation with the other states which border on the Mediterranean.

As part of this gradual process, the first two aspects which must be dealt with in a Community context are the rules on right of access for Community and other fishermen in the Mediterranean and the management of resources.

An initial point to be considered in this connection is whether or not Regulation 170/83 establishing a Community system for the conservation and management of fishery resources is applicable and, in particular, whether it is permissible for the Member States to extend their coastal fishing grounds in the Mediterranean from 6 to 12 miles. The matter is probably not of vital importance, but it is worth considering as a starting point. For, given that the basis of Regulation 170/83 is the creation by the Member States of a 200-mile exclusive economic zone, and since this zone is not applicable to the Mediterranean, it could be argued that the entire regulation does not apply to the Mediterranean. In that case it should be possible to exclude the possibility of the Member States concerned extending their territorial limits from 6 to 12 miles.

In addition, the fact that the 200-mile limit has not been applied to the Mediterranean also means that the situation in this sea is totally different to that in the Atlantic or the North Sea. Inshore fishing is of great importance and must therefore be properly protected.

Community rules - but not national ones - on right of access to the Mediterranean should guarantee and protect both local fishermen and those who have 'historic rights' or have traditionally fished certain waters. The European Parliament should not confine itself to advancing political proposals but should also examine in detail the practical implications of introducing these rules.

In view of the limited time available and the approaching end of Parliament's term of office, your rapporteur takes the view that this subject should be taken up again and considered in depth by the new European Parliament to be elected in June 1984.

The second aspect to be considered is the management of the resources of the Mediterranean. This is a serious and urgent problem which has already been dealt with in the GAUTIER report. Although it must be acknowledged that some progress has been made, there are still shortcomings as far as research is concerned.

There is absolutely no possibility of applying a quota system in the Mediterranean and it is therefore necessary to examine other ways of regulating fishing, e.g. through licences, fishing periods, nets, and other means.

Your rapporteur again takes the view that a good deal more research into this aspect of resources management is vital and hopes that this subject will be taken up by the new Parliament.

Another aspect which will need to be looked at in detail is the question of relations with third countries. It is clear that in an area as restricted as the Mediterranean the matter of resources management cannot be tackled without taking account of the presence of a number of third countries. The final aim of Parliament's study should be to achieve some sort of common management of the Mediterranean sea area by the Member States of the Community and the third countries concerned that will allow profitable activity by all parties.

In conclusion, your rapporteur wishes through this report to take up and develop an idea put forward in the motion for a resolution by Mr BATTERSBY, though in the awareness that this subject is of such importance that it needs to be discussed at length not only in the Working Party on Fisheries but also with the scientific and economic circles concerned. In the time remaining before the end of parliament's first term of office it is impossible to provide precise guidelines on questions of this nature. However, the report is intended as a starting-point for a more detailed examination by the future Parliament.

The European Parliament hopes that the Commission will give its full support to the development of this important aspect of European marine policy.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION DOCUMENT 1-966/83

tabled by Mr BATTERSBY

pursuant to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure

**on the right of access to fishing grounds and the
management of fishery resources in the Mediterranean**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the decision of the Council of Ministers of 25 January 1983 and to the relevant implementing regulations,
 - having regard to the resolution of the European Parliament of 9 February 1983 (1),
- A. whereas the problems affecting fishing in the Mediterranean are of a specific kind,
- B. whereas there is at the moment no comprehensive policy for the management of resources in the Mediterranean,
- C. whereas the Community 200-mile exclusive economic zone does not apply to the Mediterranean,
- D. whereas certain Mediterranean states are considering extending the limit of their territorial waters in the Mediterranean to 12 miles,
1. Reaffirms the points made in a previous resolution on the specific nature of the problems affecting the Mediterranean (1);
 2. Considers that in its present form Regulation 170/83 is not fully applicable to the Mediterranean since there is no 200 nautical mile exclusive economic zone applicable to this sea;
 3. Considers that there is an urgent need to settle the problems of right of access and resources management in the Mediterranean;
 4. Calls on the Commission, therefore, to draw up as soon as possible a resources management programme which includes appropriate right of access criteria and which takes account of the specific problems of the Mediterranean;
 5. Considers that in the Mediterranean the management of resources should go through the application of technical conservation measures;
 6. Calls on the Commission to organize, in cooperation with the FAO General Fisheries Council for the Mediterranean, an international conference of all Mediterranean coastal countries with the aim of establishing a common resources management policy;
 7. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission and the Council and to the competent ministers of all the countries bordering on the Mediterranean.

(1) Report by Mr Gautier, Doc. 1-949/82