

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Working Documents

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DOCUMENT 1-233/80

Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture

on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (Doc. 1-130/80) for a Regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No 1852/78 on an interim common measure for restructuring the inshore fishing industry

Rapporteur: Mr Kent KIRK

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By letter of 21 April 1980, the President of the Council of the European Communities requested the European Parliament, pursuant to Article 43 of the EEC Treaty, to deliver an opinion on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No. 1852/78 on an interim common measure for restructuring the inshore fishing industry.

On 24 April 1980, the President of the European Parliament referred this proposal to the Committee on Agriculture as the committee responsible and to the Committee on Budgets for its opinion.

The Committee on Agriculture appointed Mr Kirk rapporteur on 19 May 1980.

It considered this proposal at its meeting of 3-5 June 1980.

At the same meeting the committee adopted the motion for a resolution by 14 votes to 1 with 1 abstention.

Present: Sir Henry Plumb, chairman; Mr Ligios, vice-chairman; Mr Kirk, rapporteur; Miss Barbarella, Mrs Castle, Mr Clinton, Mr Curry, Mr Diana, Mr Helms, Mr Jürgens, Mr Lyngge, Mr Martin (deputizing for Mr Maffre-Baugé), Mr Nielsen, Mr d'Ormesson, Ms Quin and Mr Wettig.

The explanatory statement will be presented orally by the rapporteur.

The opinion of the Committee on Budgets is attached.

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

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

embodying the opinion of the European Parliament on a proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No. 1852/78 on an interim common measure for restructuring the inshore fishing industry

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council¹,
- having been consulted by the Council pursuant to Article 43 of the EEC Treaty (Doc.1-130/80),
- having regard to the report of the Committee on Agriculture and the opinion of the Committee on Budgets (Doc.1-233/80),
- whereas the fishing industry is of particular importance to the more peripheral regions of the Community, characterized by high unemployment and a lack of alternative employment prospects,
- whereas the necessity to impose measures to conserve fish stocks requires major changes in the Community's fishing fleet and processing industries,
- whereas the situation of the Community's fishing industry has changed radically since the interim structural measures were originally drawn up, in that there now exists sufficient knowledge of the production potential in the different Community regions and the requirements for the modernization of the Community's fishing fleet,
- whereas such modernization is essential to the future economic viability of the Community's fishing fleet,

1. Does not believe it logical, at a time when strict limitations are placed on catches, that the Community's structural policy contains only provisions for development of fishing and none for planned disinvestment, redeployment, social measures and to promote consumption;

Calls on the Commission and Council to extend the scope and objectives of structural measures in the fisheries sector;

2. Considers, in view of the fact that requests for aid in past years have considerably exceeded appropriations available, that the allocation of 20 mEUA for 1980 should be increased;

3. Emphasizes that, in the absence of adequate Community structural measures, national measures will be introduced, so leading to distortions in competition and an unbalanced development of the Community's fishing fleet;

4. Requests that modernization projects for inshore fishing vessels submitted after 1 January 1977 under Regulation 17, of 15 February 1964, should be considered under the present proposal if they conform to the criteria described below;
5. Stresses the importance of structural measures to allow fishermen to adapt vessels to changes in regulations on quotas and technical conservation measures; and the need for industrial fishermen to conform to by-catch regulations;
6. Believes that the regulation should be modified to take into account the fact that a number of inshore fishing vessels may exceed 24 metres in length, and that for the modernization of vessels the maximum length should be increased, for example to 37 metres, and further criteria should be introduced, for example horse power;
7. Urges that restructuring measures should be implemented more flexibly so as to cover projects essential to the everyday activities of fishermen, and in particular those which will make it possible to improve the quality of fish, such as provision for ice machines and fish storage tanks on board vessels;
8. Points out that there is considerable confusion concerning the term 'North Britain' in the context of the development of the Community's fisheries policy; and considers that such a term should refer to the natural economic regions as defined by the Fish Producers' Organizations;
9. Points out that the processing industry, which provides more employment than the fishing fleet itself, has had to face heavy costs as a result of the necessity to adapt to stock management measures;
10. Considers, therefore, that further measures should be introduced to encourage the readaptation of the processing industry;
11. Requests the Commission to clarify the criteria used to judge the acceptability of projects submitted;
12. Points out that delays in informing applicants of the decisions taken on projects causes considerable economic hardship, particularly in view of the high interest rates to be paid; and urges the Commission, therefore, to ensure that no such delays occur.
13. Emphasizes that the tremendous increases in fuel cost to fishermen since 1977 threaten the economic future of the industry;

Calls upon the Commission to encourage steps to aid the introduction of fuel saving measures on vessels, for example by the coordination of research programmes.
14. Approves the Commission's proposal on condition that the proposal is modified according to the observations made above.

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON BUDGETS

Letter from the acting chairman of the committee to
Sir Henry PLUMB chairman of the Committee on Agriculture

Luxembourg, 12 June 1980

Subject : Proposal for a regulation on an interim common measure
for restructuring the inshore fishing industry (Doc. 130/80)

Dear Sir Henry,

The Committee on Budgets considered the above proposal at its meeting of 3/4 June 1980.

The Commission proposal to amend Regulation (EEC) No. 1852/78 provides for the third extension of a 1978 regulation which was designed as an interim measure. This regulation forms only a small part of an overall plan for restructuring the inshore fishing industry, which sadly has still not been adopted by the Council.

It is impossible to say how long the interim measure is to continue as the appropriations proposed for 1980 are clearly insufficient. Under these circumstances the committee particularly regrets the lack of an overall plan which would ensure the effective and economic use of these resources.

The financial statement shows that the Commission intends to finance the intervention expenditure of 20 million EUA by transfers of appropriations from Chapter 100 (15 million EUA) and transfers between chapters within Title 8 (5 million EUA).

The committee must point out in this context that in its opinion such transfers cannot be made until the 1980 budget has been finally adopted.

When this regulation was last extended the Committee on Budgets criticized the procedure provided for in Article 12 and demanded the abolition of the arrangement under which the decision rests with the Council in the event of disagreement between the Commission and the Standing Committee for the Fishing Industry, as this conferred executive powers on the Council.

.../...

Despite these criticisms, and in the hope that an overall solution will soon be forthcoming as part of a common fisheries policy, the committee nonetheless delivered a favourable opinion unanimously with three abstentions.

Yours sincerely,

Harry NOTENBOOM
acting chairman

Present: Mr Notenboom, first vice-chairman and acting chairman,
Mr Baillot, Mr Barbi, Mr Bonde, Mrs Boserup, Mr Delmotte
(deputizing for Mr Arndt), Mr Forth, Mr Gouthier, Mr Langes,
Mr Nord, Mr Nordlohne (deputizing for Mr Aigner), Lord O'Hagan,
Mrs Pruvot (deputizing for Mrs Scrivener) and Mr K. Schön