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## ADOPTION OF FISHING POLICY MARKS MILESTONE FOR EC

The adoption of a comprehensive Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) by the 10 member states of the European Community marks a new milestone in the development of the EC. The new policy was adopted on January 25, 1983 after over a year of difficult negotiations, which were imperiled when Denmark last year refused to accept a compromise agreed to by its other nine EC partners. However, Denmark finally accepted the plan after it received assurances on some points during meetings held early this year between officials of the Copenhagen government, the EC Commission and the government of the Federal Republic of Germany (which currently occupies the presidency of the EC Council of Ministers).

The policy is designed to keep European waters productive by restricting the annual catch of each major commercial fish species. Said EC Commission President Gaston Thorn: "The Community has made the logical choice to conserve and manage its fish resources through a Common Fisheries Policy. We now have the political apparatus which will make it possible for us to make an orderly harvest of fish resources and avoid their destruction. It is clear this is in the long-term interest of our fishermen and the shore-based industries that process fish." Thorn said he hoped the political courage shown by EC Fisheries Ministers in persuading their fishermen to accept difficult measures would be an encouragement to Community activities in other sectors.

The policy calls for a limit on the total fish catch (by species) in EC waters and provides for a quota system to allocate shares of that total catch among EC member states. The policy ensures the fishing fleets of EC member states fair access to Community waters but permits member states to restrict fishing activities within 12 miles of their own shores. However, the policy enables other member states to exercise their traditional fishing rights in zones within these 12-mile limits. Compliance with the fishing rules will be monitored by a new fishing inspectorate.

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"Fish do not respect frontiers and the orderly exploitation of marine resources has frequently posed the greatest difficulties. At the political level these difficulties give rise to 'fish wars'. At the biological level they often lead to the mere destruction of resources. The plight of the whale is a good example - or, nearer home - the severe depletion of our herring stocks", President Thorn observed.

The adoption of the CFP puts to rest a fish war that broke out earlier this year between the UK and Denmark over access for Danish fishermen to UK waters. The new policy replaces national-level fishing measures which went into effect to regulate fishing in EC waters after Fisheries Ministers failed to reach a unanimous decision on a common policy before the December 31, 1982 deadline.

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