

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

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Brussels, 7 January 1983

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Recommendation for a  
COUNCIL DECISION

authorizing the Commission to negotiate fishing agreements with certain  
third countries in the Carribean region in the waters of which Community  
fishermen have traditionally fished

(submitted to the Council by the Commission)

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ORDER SECTION



1. The fisheries sector constitutes a fundamental part of the economic balance of the French departements of the Antilles and Guiana. About 15 % of the working population of these departements (nearly 25 % in certain communities of the Antilles) are employed in fisheries, which is one of the main resources of the region, along with agriculture.
2. Fishermen from these departements have been traditionnally fishing in waters that have come under jurisdiction of third countries as a consequence of the evolution of the law of the sea. Fishermen from Martinique catch about 33 % of the total catches of the departement in the waters of neighbouring third countries; fishermen from Guiana follow the stock of shrimps during its seasonal migration, in the waters of Surinam.
3. Until now, the interests of Community fishermen have been safeguarded by means of provisional autonomous regimes granted by the third countries concerned. In the present situation, in which these regimes may be reconsidered, the Commission considers its necessary to negotiate fishing agreements with these countries with a view to guaranteeing the fishing rights of Community fishermen, in particular those of the local populations concerned.
4. In addition, the Commission considers that such agreements will constitute the basis of a global fisheries policy for the West Central Atlantic region.

As far as relations between the Community and third countries are concerned, the Commission finds it necessary to act along the following lines :

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- To reduce the number of vessels flying the flag of third countries that do not belong to the region and to increase consequently the number of vessels flying the flag of Member states of the Community, with a view to ensuring the development of the local industry. A first step in this direction has been made by reducing the number of licences granted to third Countries vessels fishing in Guiana.
  
- to conclude fishing agreement with third countries in the region .
  
- to develop multilateral cooperation for the conservation and rational exploitation of sea resources in the region. This can be achieved in particular by developing the activities of the West Central Atlantic Fisheries Commission, which is the FAO body competent for that region, in whose works the Community will actively participate.

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THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community,

Having regard to the Recommendation from the Commission,

Whereas Community fishermen established in the French overseas departments of Guiana, Martinique and Guadeloupe have been traditionnally fishing in waters that are now under the jurisdiction of neighbouring third countries;

Whereas it is necessary that the Community ensure that these fishing rights are maintained, by negotiating appropriate agreements with these third countries, and as far as possible to offer them as reciprocity, fishing rights in the Community fishing zone situated off the coasts of these overseas departments,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS :

Article 1

The Commission is hereby authorized to negotiate fishing agreements with certain third countries in the Caribbean region in the waters of which Community fishermen have traditionally fished, in accordance with the annexed directives.

The Commission shall conduct the negotiations with the assistance of representatives from the Member States.

Done at

For the Council

Directives for the negotiation of fishing  
agreements with certain third countries in the Caribbean region  
in the waters of which Community fishermen have traditionally fished

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The Commission will initiate negotiations with certain third countries in the Caribbean region in the waters of which Community fishermen have traditionally fished, according to the following directives :

. these negotiations will be based on the Common declaration on fisheries annexed to the second Lomé Convention;

. they will aim at ensuring reciprocal access of the vessels of each party into the other party's waters;

. if no reciprocity can be ensured, the Community will grant compensation such as financial aid to projects for the development of fisheries and ancillary activities, or financial compensation, such as that granted by the Community to other ACP Countries within the framework of existing fishing agreements;

. these negotiations will be complementary to, and take place in the framework of, the Community's policy for regional cooperation in the fisheries sector in the Caribbean which is carried out in accordance with agreements reached under the procedures for implementing the Lomé Convention.