



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 10 September 2012

13552/12

**PE 386
PECHE 329**

NOTE

from: General Secretariat of the Council
to: Delegations

Subject: Partial summary record of the meeting of the **Committee on Fisheries (PECH)** of the European Parliament, held in Brussels on 6 September 2012

– Items 7 and 8 on the agenda

The meeting was chaired by Mr MATO ADROVER (EPP, ES).

Item 7 on the agenda

Common Fisheries Policy

PECH/7/06595

***I 2011/0195(COD)COM(2011)0425 – C7-0198/2011

Rapporteur: Ulrike Rodust (S&D)
Responsible: PECH –
Opinions: DEVE – Isabella Lövin (Verts/ALE)
BUDG – François Alfonsi (Verts/ALE)
ENVI – Chris Davies (ALDE)
REGI – Younous Omarjee (GUE/NGL)
JURI (AL) – Eva Lichtenberger (Verts/ALE)

- Consideration of amendments

The rapporteur, Ms RODUST (S&D, DE), informed the Committee that more than 2300 amendments to the Commission proposal had been tabled by the deadline of 20 July. She outlined the timetable of the work which was as follows:

- Four meetings with shadow rapporteurs were scheduled to take place during the months of September and October and the first proposals for amendments would be tabled on 12 September;
- Vote in Committee: 8/9 October 2012;
- Vote in Plenary: November II session.

Since no concrete proposals for amendments could be presented at the meeting owing to the very short period of time between the deadline for amendments and the meeting, the comments of the members of the Committee remained short and preliminary.

Ms FRAGA ESTÉVEZ (EPP, ES) called on the rapporteur to present the whole package of compromise proposals as soon as possible as these formed the basis for further discussions in the Committee; the political groups should also discuss them. Furthermore, she stressed the need for flexibility concerning the proposed timetable, which should be extended, if necessary, in order to reach the best possible result for the CFP reform.

Mr HUDGHTON (Greens/EFA, UK) regarded the issue of decentralisation as one of the most important aspects and was of the view that decentralisation should be encouraged since it would greatly contribute to conserving fish stocks and to maintaining thriving fishing communities.

Mr FERREIRA (GUE/NGL, PT) noted that the initial Commission proposal had enormous influence over the final result of the reform and he regretted that Parliament had very limited power and capacity to make profound changes to it. He said, however, that small changes could be achieved in important areas such as "Transferable Fishing Concessions". He agreed with Mr HUDGHTON on the importance of decentralisation, which allowed for a top-to-bottom approach and gave more freedom to fishermen.

Mr DAVIES (ALDE, UK) stressed that in order for the CFP to become a success for the fishing industry, it was vital not to seek the simplest compromise during the negotiations but to try to find a majority for a compromise that also supported the main objectives of the reform.

In connection with meeting the "Maximum Sustainable Yield" (MSY) targets, he believed it was a political decision and asked for the introduction of the legally binding deadline of 2015 and for a change in the wording relating to this date from "where possible" to "except where impossible". He also said that it was important to clarify what should be achieved with this measure: whether fish stocks be kept stable or whether they should be allowed to grow and to recover thereby increasing the difficulty of reaching the short term objective.

Ms LÖVIN (Greens/EFA, SE) supported Mr DAVIES and referred to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), according to which reaching the MSY targets represented a legal obligation. She added that the UN's Rio +20 Conference on Sustainable Development called on countries to commit to "urgently" achieving the maximum sustainable yield by 2015.

Mr STEVENSON (ECR, UK) explained that a distinction should be made between Fmsy¹ and Bmsy²: while Fmsy could be achieved by 2015, Bmsy could only be achieved by 2020. He also pointed to the possible unintended negative consequences of such measures e.g. in a mixed fishery with cod.

Mr STEVENSON urged the Committee to reach a second reading agreement on the CFP reform in the course of next year. He recalled that if no agreement on the CFP reform was reached by the end of 2013, the proposals would be blocked, as in 2014 the reform package would no longer have a legal basis. In this case, the Commission would have to come forward with new proposals and negotiations would have to start anew.

In his reply, the Commission representative spoke on the following aspects of the CFP reform:

- a) MSY: he pointed out that reaching healthy MSY levels was beneficial to the economy in terms of income. With the CFP reform, the Commission aimed at maintaining these economic benefits while ensuring the appropriate MSY levels.
- b) Discards: this was a priority for the Commission, they should be eliminated in the long run. The Commission wished to establish a fixed and legally binding timetable, but was flexible as to how to achieve this objective.
- c) Multi-annual management plans: the Commission acknowledged them as the basic tool in long-term planning in the fishing industry; an interinstitutional agreement on how to split responsibility over the long term had still to be found.
- d) Regionalisation: the Commission was open and positive about ways of achieving this goal as long as the outcome respected the provisions foreseen in the Lisbon Treaty.
- e) Aquaculture: this was a shared competency with Member States. The Commission therefore called for the establishment of strategic national plans to more efficiently resolve existing problems at Member State level.

¹ Fmsy: the maximum rate of fishing mortality (the proportion of a fish stock caught and removed by fishing).

² Bmsy: the biomass that enables a fish stock to deliver the maximum sustainable yield.

Item 8 on the agenda

Amendment of Council Regulation (EC) No 2371/2002 on the conservation and sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources under the common fisheries policy

PECH/7/09776

***I 2012/0143(COD)COM(2012)0277 – C7-0137/2012

Rapporteur: Ian Hudghton (Verts/ALE) PR – PE494.477v01-00

Responsible: PECH –

Opinions: ENVI – Decision: no opinion

- Consideration of draft report
- Decision on deadline for tabling amendments

In his introduction, the rapporteur, Mr HUDGHTON, explained that the aim of the proposal was to extend the current regulation with regard to the 12 nautical miles access regime by further a two years, due to the slippage in the CFP reform timetable.

The rapporteur gave the Commission proposal a favourable opinion and advocated the extension of the 12 mile zone both in time and distance, while recognising that this issue should be dealt with in the wider debates on the CFP reform.

Ms FRAGA ESTÉVEZ (EPP, ES) supported the report in general but was opposed to the extension of the 12 miles limit explaining that it could jeopardise the principle of equal access to Community waters.

While Mr FERREIRA (GUE/NGL, PT) acknowledged the principle of equal access he found that exclusive fishing zones were also justified. He was in favour of extending these in distance, where appropriate.

Mr DAVIES (ALDE, UK) supported the rapporteur's opinion but considered that the current legislation should be extended by only three or six months instead of by two years. Although this would undoubtedly create more uncertainty for the people it concerned, it would put more pressure on the Council to deal with this important issue more urgently, he explained.

Deadline for tabling amendments: 12 September 2012

Date of the next meeting:

- 19 September 2012, 09:00 – 18:30 (Brussels)