Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Recommendation 798 (1977)[1]

Conservation of the living resources of the seas

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having taken note of the report of its Committee on Agriculture on the conservation of the living resources of the seas (Doc. 3904) ;

2. Recalling its Recommendation 570 (1969), on fishery policies in Europe, its Recommendation 724 (1974), on the problems of over-fishing and on means of preserving fish stocks in the North Atlantic and the North Sea, as well as its Resolution 504 (1971), on salmon fishing in the Atlantic, and its Resolution 515 (1972), on the common fisheries policy within an enlarged Community ;

3. Having regard to the motion for a resolution on science, technology and the conservation of resources (Doc. 3865), presently being studied by the Committee on Science and Technology ;

4. Having regard to the current over-fishing of several species of fish in the North-East Atlantic and the North Sea ;

5. Stressing the urgent need for rational scientific management and conservation of all fish resources ;

6. Recognising that such management includes in particular the establishment of protection areas in which fishing is limited or even banned completely ;

7. Having regard to the need for close monitoring of the state of the fish stocks ;

8. Convinced of the need to ensure that management and protective measures must be effectively enforced ;

9. Considering the entirely new situation that arises in the wake of the establishment in January 1977 of economic coastal zones of 200 miles off the shores of Western Europe, placing a considerable burden of responsibility on governments ;

10. Being of the opinion that the establishment of a 200-mile economic zone can be considered as only one measure amongst others in the field of fish conservation ;

11. Considering that it would be of great assistance to hold, in the second half of 1977, an exchange of views on fish conservation matters with all concerned- i.e. scientists, fishermen, merchants, consumer associations, politicians, governmental authorities- in the light of experience being gained from this new situation,

12. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers invite the governments of member states :

a. to ensure that the fishing for those species of fish currently over-fished is either completely banned or limited to comply with recognised scientific findings ;

1. Assembly debate on 24 and 25 January 1977 (20th and 21st Sittings) (see Doc. 3904, report of the Committee on Agriculture). Text adopted by the Assembly on 25 January 1977 (21st Sitting).

b. to promote :

scientific research in the field of conservation, of major communicable fish diseases as well as in the field of sea pollution ;

international scientific co-operation in the above-mentioned fields ;

c. to encourage fish farming ;

d. to reconsider their policies as regards the fishing of species suitable for human consumption in relation to that of species used solely for industrial purposes ;

e. to reach agreement on the effective means of jointly enforcing appropriate management and protective measures such as the regulation of mesh sizes, fish size limits, closed seasons and areas, fishing gear and total allowable catch ;

f. to promote, or continue to promote, research into the possibilities of using for human consumption species of fish which have not so far been so used ;

g. to set up a monitoring system enabling a current supervision of the availability of fish stocks ;