



Resolution 972 (1991)¹

Future of ocean fisheries

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Assembly is concerned that living marine resources, in particular fish stocks, are over-exploited and affected by pollution - particularly in coastal waters - and that this situation has led to serious hardship for European fishermen, the fishing industry and coastal communities dependent on fishing for their survival and well-being.
2. Consequently, the Assembly invites the governments of member states, the European Community, OECD and other intergovernmental organisations concerned :
 - 2.1. to work as a matter of grave urgency for the introduction of sustainable multiple species management policies for the exploitation and use of marine ecosystems and their living resources in general, with priority to oceans of major importance to European fishermen, that is, the North Atlantic, the Baltic and Mediterranean seas, but this priority should not be interpreted as a suggestion that the problems in more distant seas are not of a most serious character ;
 - 2.2. to include in this work the re-establishment of a balance between fishing efforts and fishing yields, the securing of proper enforcement of agreed conservation measures, the stoppage if necessary of non-selective harvesting methods (gill nets) on a case-by-case basis and the introduction and development of more selective harvesting equipment and practices (seasonal restrictions, specially protected areas for young fish, etc.). In this connection, the use of individual transferable quotas (ITQs) or taxation on landings should be explored ;
 - 2.3. to make a much greater effort to achieve the reduction and monitoring of ocean pollution ;
 - 2.4. to make sure that ocean management policies are drawn up and monitored in close co-operation among the nations concerned ;
 - 2.5. to improve the instruments for the resolution of conflicts and, in particular, consider the drawing up of a European convention to this end for the different sea areas of vital importance to European fisheries ;
 - 2.6. to fully involve fishermen and other groups directly affected in this process and in the control mechanisms of the management regime ;
 - 2.7. to avoid any unnecessary hardship for the fishing profession during any structural adjustment to comply with a new policy and to promote the economic and social development of the coastal areas concerned ;
 - 2.8. to relate these policies to coastal development policies aimed at preserving the life and well-being of European coastal societies - in particular by promoting aquaculture and the seafood/sea products processing industry in these regions ;
 - 2.9. to make sure that the consumers' right to receive healthy seafood is guaranteed ;

1. Assembly debate on 24 September 1991 (17th Sitting) (see [Doc. 6475](#), report of the Committee on Agriculture, Rapporteur : Mrs Gjørv). Text adopted by the Assembly on 24 September 1991 (17th Sitting).



2.10. to strengthen their scientific and technological work and co-operation for a better understanding and use of the marine ecosystems, in particular by studying the size, repopulation and health of different fish stocks, marine mammal populations and other living marine organisms and their interactions, by studying factors influencing the balance of ecosystems and their bio-diversity, and by developing more selective harvesting technologies and methods ;

2.11. to set up a EUREKA programme in the field of marine science, technology and law by identifying the major participants and allocating the necessary resources ;

2.12. to increase their support for the activities of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea, OECD, the FAO and other international organisations aimed at improving knowledge about marine ecosystems and achieving a sustainable use of their resources through international agreements ;

2.13. to take account of the existing treaties and agreements in furthering a sustainable ocean management policy; to ensure their signature, ratification and implementation in every respect by all member states (for example the MARPOL Treaty with all its annexes); and to prosecute vigorously any violation of any of them.