

Procedure file

Basic information		
COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	1995/2123(COS)	Procedure completed
Biological impact of fisheries		
Subject 3.15.04 Management of fisheries, fisheries, fishing grounds		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	PECH Fisheries		18/07/1995
		PPE LANGENHAGEN Brigitte	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	ENVI Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection		26/07/1995
		V MCKENNA Patricia	
Council of the European Union			

Key events			
05/05/1995	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(1995)0040	Summary
10/07/1995	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
22/01/1996	Vote in committee		Summary
22/01/1996	Committee report tabled for plenary	A4-0006/1996	
16/02/1996	Decision by Parliament	T4-0083/1996	Summary
16/02/1996	End of procedure in Parliament		
04/03/1996	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1995/2123(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 142
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	PECH/4/06748

Documentation gateway					
Non-legislative basic document		COM(1995)0040	05/05/1995	EC	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A4-0006/1996 OJ C 047 19.02.1996, p. 0004	22/01/1996	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T4-0083/1996 OJ C 065 04.03.1996, p. 0194-0199	16/02/1996	EP	Summary

Biological impact of fisheries

Following the Commission and Council declaration at the Council of EU fisheries ministers in December 1993, the Commission set up a working group of marine ecology experts and instructed it to find ways of improving the data used to manage fisheries activities, especially data on by-catches and discards and the description of the effects of various types of fishing gear on individual juveniles, non-commercial species, biota on the sea bed, marine birds and small cetaceans. The working group was also instructed to draw up a list of priority subjects. This communication summarizes the working group's scientific report and indicates the potential for future development. In the light of this report, the Commission feels that work in the immediate future needs to be geared towards a quantitative investigation of the following questions in order to decide on suitable methods for controlling and monitoring the biological impact of fisheries: - the effects of fisheries on cetaceans, seals, reptiles and birds; - the direct and indirect effects of industrial fisheries on birds and the first predatory fish in the food chain; - the direct and indirect effects of fisheries on benthic communities. According to the 23 recommendations by the working group, work in these areas will focus on collecting and standardizing data on the fate of the various species, the size of their population and mortality rates, test methods and evaluation tools and the integration of these elements in existing or new models. These work programmes need to be coordinated at international level and suitably financed and the Commission will therefore ask the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) and the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) for aid. As this work progresses, the Commission will submit proposals with a view to incorporating operational measures and objectives into Community fisheries legislation. Finally, the Commission will call on the Member States and third countries to contribute to the budget needed to finance the research and will examine the possibility of EU aid.?

Biological impact of fisheries

The Committee unanimously adopted the report by Mrs Brigitte LANGENHAGEN (EPP, GER) on the Biological Impact of Fisheries, following a Commission discussion document on the subject. The Commission communication was the result of a meeting of a working group set up, at the request of the Council, to consider the effects on the ecosystem of fisheries and the problems which were perceived to exist. The group found that:- in many areas the current state of knowledge is inadequate; - to answer all probable questions would require a huge budget. The Commission concluded that the best approach would be to prioritise research resources in those areas which it considered to be of most concern to the public. Mrs LANGENHAGEN'S report agreed with the Commission that prioritisation was essential, but stressed the need for the widest possible consultation and coordination at all levels within the fisheries sector in order to restore the confidence of fishermen in the work of the scientific community. The Committee is now calling on the Commission to carry its initiative forward, by establishing a working party of scientists to formulate a research plan with an adequate budget, so that priorities may be established in cooperation with the industry. It further calls for the active participation of the Committee in this process and for the Commission to then submit proposals which would command broad support within the industry to Parliament and Council.

Biological impact of fisheries

In adopting the report by Mrs Brigitte LANGENHAGEN (PPE, D), Parliament stressed the need for the widest possible consultation and coordination of research on the interaction of fisheries and the marine ecosystem, especially with the individual regional producer organizations. It called for action to be taken to restore the confidence of fishermen in the work of the scientists. It regretted that the report did not give sufficient emphasis to the measurement of discarding, and called on the Commission to ensure ways of accurately estimating the level of discards by area and by species, its biological impact upon the total biomass, and the changes in level of discards caused by annual changes in TACIS and quotas. The Commission was requested to bring forward financial proposals in the 1997 preliminary draft budget that would adequately address the needs of the sector, to be furnished with ongoing data of sufficient quality. ?