

Procedure file

Basic information		
COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	2001/2190(COS)	Procedure completed
Conservation of fishery resources : rebuilding stocks of cod and hake in Community and adjacent waters		
Subject 3.15.01 Fish stocks, conservation of fishery resources		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	PECH Fisheries	V/ALE HUDGHTON Ian	03/09/2001
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	Fisheries	2359	18/06/2001
European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner	
	Maritime Affairs and Fisheries		

Key events			
12/06/2001	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2001)0326	Summary
18/06/2001	Debate in Council	2359	
22/10/2001	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
18/12/2001	Vote in committee		Summary
18/12/2001	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0458/2001	
17/01/2002	Decision by Parliament	T5-0017/2002	Summary
17/01/2002	End of procedure in Parliament		
07/11/2002	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2001/2190(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/5/14861

Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document		COM(2001)0326	12/06/2001	EC	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A5-0458/2001	18/12/2001	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T5-0017/2002 OJ C 271 07.11.2002, p. 0068-0416 E	17/01/2002	EP	Summary

Conservation of fishery resources : rebuilding stocks of cod and hake in Community and adjacent waters

PURPOSE : to rebuild stocks of cod and hake in Community and adjacent waters. **CONTENT** : on 14-15 December 2000, the Commission was invited to submit proposals for multiannual recovery plans for relevant stocks of cod and hake. This Communication presents the objectives of and main instruments to be used in the recovery plans, summarises the conservation measures either already in place or soon to be adopted and outlines the approach which the Commission intends to follow in its preparation of formal proposals which will be presented before the end of 2001. For many years, proposals by the Commission for TACs intended to reduce fishing mortality rate on both cod and hake have not been acceptable to Council. In more recent years, especially for cod, Total Allowable Catches (TAC's) intended to reduce fishing mortality rate have been accepted by Council but for hake there has been opposition to accepting such TACs. In brief, the fishing pressure on these stocks and catches of small, juvenile individuals, many of which are discarded, are too high. Both of these factors have resulted in an erosion of the quantities of mature fish (spawning stock biomass) to the extent that there is a high probability that the stocks are no longer able to replenish themselves by reproduction. The recovery plans will take into account the need for an ecosystem-based approach. They will also respect the Community's international commitments and, in particular, they will be consistent with the FAO Code of Conduct for responsible Fishing and with the 1997 Statement of Conclusions of the Intermediate Ministerial Meeting relative to the North Sea Conference, including the application of the precautionary principle. The objective of the recovery plans is to restore spawning stock biomass to levels considered by science to provide a high probability that replenishment of the stocks is not threatened. The only means open to management to achieve this objective is to moderate the activities of fishermen in such a way that the fishing mortality rate on cod and/or hake is substantially reduced. For the duration of the recovery plans the fishing mortality of adult fish will have to be reduced to very much lower than the current high mortalities. Furthermore, reduction in fishing mortality rate for cod and hake cannot be achieved unless reduction in fishing mortality rate for species caught in association with cod/hake is also accepted. These species include haddock, whiting, plaice, sole, anglerfish and megrim. Lastly, the Commission intends to table legislative proposals for Council decision on a definite hake and cod recovery plan by November 2001. This timing will allow further scientific advice to be obtained from ICES and the STECF and the results of current trials of selectivity devices for certain fishing gears to be taken into account. ?

Conservation of fishery resources : rebuilding stocks of cod and hake in Community and adjacent waters

The committee adopted the report by Ian HUDGHTON (Greens/EFA, UK) on the Commission communication. While acknowledging the need to replenish stocks, the report stressed that the measures must be based on properly funded independent scientific advice. Research was needed into the various factors (including those external to fisheries) which may have contributed to the dramatic decline in cod and hake stocks. The committee said that technical measures should be targeted according to the species and the geographical area in question. Moreover, all interested parties should be involved in the planning and decision-making process when drawing up the long-term recovery plans. There was a need for flexibility and balance, given the extraordinary sacrifices which some of the proposals would entail for the fleets affected. Decommissioning should be considered only as a last resort and there should be increased aid for voluntary withdrawal from fishing activities. In addition, the committee called for the measures to be applied more slowly but over a longer period of time (7 instead of 5 years) and wanted to see more socio-economic measures to support the sector. The report also drew attention to the difficulties which fishermen experienced as a result of increased mesh sizes, although it acknowledged that scientific evidence showed that mesh sizes needed to be at least 100mm in order to prevent catches of juvenile hake and cod. It stressed that industrial fisheries, which included huge by-catches of juvenile fish, must be gradually phased out. Lastly, it called for multiannual TACs and quotas to be put forward as soon as practicable for long-term planning.?

Conservation of fishery resources : rebuilding stocks of cod and hake in Community and adjacent waters

The European Parliament adopted the resolution by Mr Ian Stewart HUDGHTON (Greens/EFA, UK). (Please refer to the decision of the committee responsible 18/12/01).?