


Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	1995/2088(INI)	Procedure completed
Fishery sector problems in the NAFO zone		
Subject 3.15.01 Fish stocks, conservation of fishery resources		
Geographical area Atlantic Ocean area		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	PECH Fisheries		31/05/1995
		PPE ARIAS CAÑETE Miguel	

Key events			
22/02/1995	Non-legislative basic document published	B4-0157/1995	
13/06/1995	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
23/04/1996	Vote in committee		Summary
23/04/1996	Committee report tabled for plenary	A4-0133/1996	
18/06/1996	Debate in Parliament		
20/06/1996	Decision by Parliament	T4-0348/1996	Summary
20/06/1996	End of procedure in Parliament		
08/07/1996	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1995/2088(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 54
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	PECH/4/06671

Documentation gateway					
Non-legislative basic document		B4-0157/1995	22/02/1995	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A4-0133/1996 OJ C 166 10.06.1996, p. 0003	23/04/1996	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T4-0348/1996 OJ C 198 08.07.1996, p. 0159-0175	20/06/1996	EP	Summary

Fishery sector problems in the NAFO zone

The Committee adopted the report by Mr ARIAS CAÑETE. Discussion centred on the Union's relations with Canada, which often difficult, have been particularly strained since the "Halibut War" in 1995, during which the Canadian authorities illegally seized the Spanish freezer vessel "ESTAI" in international waters. At this time, some tensions arose within the Union when, despite almost universal condemnation of the Canadian action, fishermen in certain Member States displayed their sympathy for the overall Canadian position and their frustrations with EU fisheries policy in general, by flying the Canadian flag on their vessels. To a degree, the amendments presented reflected these tensions. However, the majority of members accepted the view of the rapporteur, that it was necessary to continue to take a firm line with Canada. The report points out in particular, that many aspects of Canadian law continue to be discriminatory and that Canada's behaviour within NAFO appears to be motivated, not by a genuine concern for conservation, but rather, by a desire to reduce fishing opportunities for the European fleets in order to reserve the stocks for itself. Mr ARIAS repeats the call already made in several EP resolutions for Canada to ratify the bilateral agreement negotiated in 1992 and to allow access for Community vessels to Canadian ports. He calls on the Commission to protect European fishing rights in the area (which in the case of Spain, go back to the 16th century) and to propose a modification of the voting system within NAFO, which disadvantages the Union by providing for only one vote per contracting party. He further argues that the Commission should seek the support of other countries, such as Norway, in order to draw up a joint strategy within NAFO, so as to ensure consistent management of overlapping fish stocks and stocks of major migratory species. Moreover, improved scientific research and use of satellite technology would strengthen the Community position. Finally, the report also indicates the Committee's concern that problems in other domains, such as those related to marine mammals, should not adversely affect relations in the fisheries sector and should be addressed in the appropriate fora and not in NAFO.

Fishery sector problems in the NAFO zone

Adopting the report by Mr Miguel ARIAS CANETE (PPE, E) on the problems of the fisheries sector in the NAFO zone, the European Parliament took the view that the European Union should reconsider its representation in the various bodies of the NAFO and should appoint representatives at a level which compared with that of other delegates. Calling on the Commission to abide by all the recommendations of the Scientific Committee of the NAFO, it urged it to lobby the Member States which have not yet joined this organization to do so as quickly as possible. As far as Community relations with Canada were concerned, Parliament welcomed the bilateral agreement concluded with Canada on 16 April 1995 with a view to achieving better stock management. However, it deplored the fact that the Canadian authorities had not seen fit to suspend the ban preventing Community vessels from entering Canadian ports. Expressing its concern with the problem of marine mammals, Parliament felt that consideration should be given to this area within other bodies in order to prevent differences of opinion on this matter from affecting the operation of the NAFO. Calling on the Commission to reconsider the voting system in international organizations in the fisheries sector, the European Parliament proposed that the European Union have as many votes as there were Member States with an interest in the fisheries in question. It also called for the Commission to improve its defence of fishing opportunities for the Community fleet, especially with regard to quotas of cod and black halibut, by demanding that the zero TAC for cod in zone 3NO be suspended, given the lack of any scientific justification for this measure. At the same time, it called on the Commission to work for the abolition of the facility to oppose conservation or management measures decided in the NAFO council, so that all majority decisions taken in these areas are recognized as binding by all the members of NAFO. Finally, the European Parliament called on the Commission and the Member States to regulate their legal differences with regard to the signature of the UNO agreement on the management of overlapping stocks and stocks of major migratory species so that the European Union can ratify this agreement.?