

Common organisation of the markets in fishery and aquaculture products

2011/0194(COD) - 27/06/2012 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Fisheries adopted the report by Struan Stevenson (ECR, UK) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the common organisation of the markets in fishery and aquaculture products.

The committee recommends that the European Parliaments position in first reading following the ordinary legislative procedure should amend the Commission proposal as follows:

Strengthen producer organisations: the committee considers that it is necessary to strengthen these organisations, which counterbalance the power of retailers, and to provide the necessary financial support to allow them to play a more meaningful role in the day-to-day management of fisheries, acting within a framework defined by the CFP objectives. Setting up transnational producer organisations or associations of these organisations at trans-regional level should be encouraged, to produce binding common binding rules that ensure a level playing field for all stakeholders engaged in fisheries activities,

The European Maritime and Fisheries Fund may financially contribute towards the establishment and/or development of associations of producer organisations. The Commission shall be empowered to adopt delegated acts laying down detailed rules concerning such financial support.

Financial support should also be provided to producer organisations to create electronic nationwide databases/markets to better coordinate information between market operators and processors.

POs should encourage contributing to food supply and maintaining and creating jobs in coastal and rural areas, including vocational training and cooperation programmes to encourage young people to enter the sector and ensuring a fair standard of living for those engaged in fisheries.

Fighting discards and illegal fishing: the committee clarifies the role of producer organisations in any future strategy to reduce discards. It should be a priority to reduce unwanted catches of commercial stocks e.g. by promoting selective fishing in order to reduce unwanted catches. Fishermens organisations should also step up checks on their members' activities in order to avoid unwanted catches and fight illegal fishing.

Landed by-catches: this could be used for bait, as well as for fishmeal, fish oil and pet food. Members state that those landing such products shall be eligible for the reimbursement of a proportion of the value of these fishery products. Any profit should go to a national or trans-national fund used for data collection, control, surveillance and scientific research purposes. The value of reimbursements shall be kept at a level so that it will not, in any way, create a new market for juveniles and other by-catch.

Large, commercial edible fish that have to be landed under the discard ban because they are out of quota, will be sold on the market in the normal way with the profits again split between compensation to the vessels and to a conservation fund. This differs from the commission proposal which would have seen unwanted catches being given away free of charge.

Labelling: previously frozen products placed on sale, as fresh goods will have to have words "defrosted products" on their labelling. For products that are to be sold fresh, the committee wants to see the date of landing (rather than date of catch) of fishery products labelling. Marketing and labelling information will also include specific fish stock and the area where the product was caught or farmed.

Market intervention reduced to single storage aid: the committee considers that today's market intervention mechanism should be reduced, in line with the Commission proposal, to a single storage aid. The committee rejected amendments seeking the continuation of additional support measures such as fish withdrawals.

Regional Advisory Council for the Outermost Regions: a Regional Advisory Council for the Outermost Regions shall be established with the aim of ensuring an ecosystem-based approach, taking account of the sensitive nature of their specific characteristics.

Eco-labelling: the Commission shall, by 1st January 2015, submit a report for the establishment of a Union wide eco-label scheme for fisheries products, and examine potential minimum requirements for obtaining approval for the use of such eco-label.