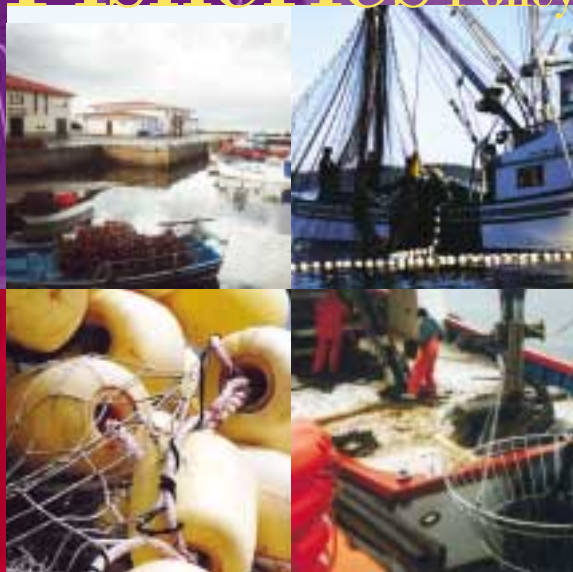


# The Reform of the Common Fisheries Policy



*PES Group Seminar*



PARLIAMENTARY GROUP OF THE PARTY OF EUROPEAN SOCIALISTS

*We would like to thank the co-operation of :*

*Eduardo CHAGAS, Secretary of Fisheries Section, ETF - European Transport Workers' Federation  
Clare COFFEY, Research Fellow, Institute of European Environmental Studies, United Kingdom  
Carmen GALLEGO, Founder of AGAMAR (Seafood Fisherwomen's Association), Spain  
Lothar FISCHER, secretary-general, German Fishermen Association, Germany*

**Enrique Barón Crespo**  
*President of the PES Group*

*Dear Comrades,*

*As you are all aware, we find ourselves in the midst of the review of the Common Fisheries Policy – a process that is both difficult and complex and yet not unexpected, since the date for it was set a long time ago.*

*We knew that taking on reform of a policy dating back to 20 years would present us with a huge challenge. Moreover, we knew how difficult it would be to change a status quo which some find acceptable and others find unacceptable and which, more to the point, has failed to help us preserve marine resources and jobs in an economic sector of such vital importance to those communities dependent on fisheries.*

*We can confidently say that since the Commission's Green Paper was first released, and moreover since the report by our colleague, Rosa Miguélez, gave its important input, the members of our Group have spoken with all those involved in the fisheries sector. Many of the people we approached are those most directly affected by the CFP and, by extension, by the Commission's current reform proposal.*

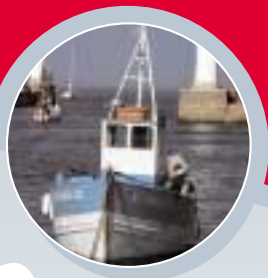
*The Socialist MEPs on the Committee on Fisheries are to be congratulated for having reached a greater degree of consensus on the CFP than their counterparts from other groups. However, we need to continue our work on CFP reform so as to ensure that our Group comes up with a clear position in support of the Community fisheries sector and sustainable fishing.*

*The Commission's delay in submitting the legislative proposals concerned mean that now we must not only to take the right decision, a difficult task in itself, but do so quickly as well!*

*In order to help us form a clearer view of the situation, we have decided to hold a seminar and use this pamphlet to set out the matters dealt with by the reform. Our aim is to ensure that, by engaging in a healthy and informed discussion and exchange of views on the issues at hand, we can formulate the position that our Group should take when the reports relating to the reform are voted on in Parliament in the near future.*



“Effective and uniform standards of



## The Reform of the Common Fisheries Policy PES Group Seminar

19 SEPTEMBER 2002, BRUSSELS

### ► A social perspective

*Part of the PES Group analysis of the current reform of the Common Fisheries Policy is centred on the social impact of the proposed measures and on the possible ways to minimise the consequences for fishermen in case the proposed measures are adopted.*

The PES Group agreed with the diagnosis of the situation in the EU fishing sector reflected in the Green Paper from the Commission and in particular with what relates to the existing overcapacity in the EU fleet. In fact it must be clear that no sustainable fisheries will be possible if the fleet capacity, but especially, the fishing effort, are kept at their current levels.

However, we refuse to only have economic or ecological approaches to that problem. Fisheries represent for the dependent communities much more than its own weight in the internal product of the countries concerned. Fisheries cannot be seen as another sector which we have to restructure. In a large majority it is composed of small scale fishermen whose activities are, in general, respectful of the environment. It represents the nodal point around which a number of communities interact, playing a significant role in terms of social cohesion, territorial management and this is particularly significant for the ultra peripheral areas. In fact, the Commission makes a wrong approach in dealing with the low profitability of the sector and concluding that the solution is in drastically reducing the

number of vessels and fishermen and in making the vessels more effective. It must be recalled that, according to figures from the Commission, in the period 1990 to 1998, 66.000 jobs have been eliminated, representing 22% of the work force. It has also known the difficulty of attracting new recruits to the sector. The evaluation made by the Commission in the Green Paper of the impact of the aids given to the sector in maintaining employment should be revisited as those funds have mainly reverted to the employers and had little or no improvement for the fishermen.

The PES Group is of the opinion that no further steps should be given before a serious evaluation is done of the social consequences of the measures contained in the different proposals adopted by the Commission. The necessary support measures should then be simultaneously adopted. The invitation made to the social partners, workers and employers to jointly discuss the impact and adequate social measures in the framework of the CFP reform, should be noted. However, this can not represent the dismissal by the Commission from its

# *control and enforcement are essential to the future CFP”* *Gordon Adam*



responsibilities to ensure the necessary support measures to minimise the socio-economic consequences of that reform. In the Sectoral Dialogue Committee ETF and Europêche have managed to agree upon a proposal for a **social clause** to be included in the fisheries agreements with third countries, which will also contribute to improve the working conditions of third countries nationals on board EU vessels, and by this means to revert the trend for a degradation of those of EU fishermen. Nevertheless, finding common positions has been always very difficult in the Sectoral Dialogue Committee on Fisheries and therefore the Commission must play a leading role in this process too.

**We question the irreversible character of some of the effort reduction measures proposed by the Commission.** Although the Commission says that it is not possible at this stage to quantify the social consequences of the proposed effort reduction, we consider that the figures used as a hypothetical basis are significantly lower than the reality if we consider that for each job onboard there are three or four ashore.

We also believe that only a very small part of the fishermen will be in a position to opt for a job re-conversion. We consider that this will only be possible when more resources are allocated for reducing the dependency of high fishing-dependent areas, thus favouring the creation of new and alternative jobs. However, a parallel effort has to be done towards those professionals who will remain in the profession, especially with regard to training and

retraining, adequate social protection and the improvement of the working and living conditions on board. The ratification by all Member States of the STCW-F Convention and the Torremolinos Protocol would contribute for a level playing field and the basis for common safety standards.

We ask for the implementation of unemployment schemes for fishermen in all member states and the financial support for voluntary withdrawals from the profession.

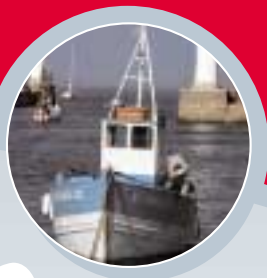
Other aspects of the reform relate the attempts by the Commission to introduce the market rules in the sector. This would have a profound impact on the fishing rights and opportunities, leading to the privatisation of the living marine resources which the PES Group strongly refuses.





*“The CFP reform must strengthen*

19 SEPTEMBER 2002, BRUSSELS



## ► The processing industry

*The EU Commission submitted proposals on the reform of the EU Common Fisheries Policy on 28 May this year. These proposals provide to some extent for fundamental changes of the current EU-fisheries policy .*

The Socialists welcome the approach of the Commission towards a sustainable and responsible management of the fish stocks.

Fishing activities can only survive if stocks remain and are only partly exploited. The resulting management plans must be based on a careful scientific analysis of the stocks. However, the Commission's proposals must be questioned.

The Commission proposes multi-annual management plans, although fisheries science has been, up to now, unable to predict developments for individual fish stocks for several years in advance, not to mention a multi-species-approach, which would be very important.

Therefore, fisheries research has to be developed more strongly, so that it can provide for an appropriate basis for this kind of management system.

Financial resources will be needed. In order to help research, Europêche started a poll for the North Sea, in which the fishermen were asked to write down their observations on the frequency of stocks, the distribution of size, discards etc. so that science could compare this data with its own research results.

It is in the interest of the fisheries sector to have as good data as possible. Without a sound

scientific basis, it is impossible to put into practice a well intentioned approach. of the multi annual and multi species management plans.

As for the management plans :

The Commission intends in its proposals to introduce, besides the existing system of TACS and quotas and technical measures, a fishing-effort-system.

The Socialists consider counter-productive an effort-system which keeps fishermen from their work. Since 1995, there has already been a fishing-effort-system in the western waters. Up to now this system did not work. The Commission submitted a proposal for an effort-regulation for the cod fishery in the North Sea. It aims at introducing so-called "KW-days", i.e. in one year only a certain amount of kilowatt-hours may be used.

This would mean that the fishery would have to concentrate on a few days in the year, when good catches are to be expected and the weather conditions are good. As a consequence, all fishermen concerned would leave the port at the same time and return accordingly at the same time with all their catches, after having fully exploited the few fishing days available.

In our view, this leads to an overloading of the market within a short time, with prices going

*the role of women in the fisheries sector.”*  
*Carlos Lage*



down, whereas high-quality fish could go into intervention, and on the remaining days hardly any high-quality-fish would be on the market.

**The PES Group regrets that the whole reform of the fisheries policy gives no consideration to the market at all.**

Following the EU-market organization for fisheries products, the producers' organisations are held to set up catch and marketing plans, which would then become void. The producer organisations are, by far, better able to plan the use of their ships than the Commission is by means of an effort system. We think that proceeding in such a way would be shortsighted and therefore we are against it.

One must note that the submitted proposals are not a reform of the EU fisheries policy, but only contain certain management methods for fishing and structural policy. The impact of these measures on the market and the fish-processing industry was not taken into account at all. The same could be said about the consequences for the infrastructure in the fishing ports and, last but not least, for the employment situation in the entire fishing industry; these impacts have not been assessed.

We consider other measures much more useful, for example the introduction of real-time-closures. This means that, if in a certain area a high concentration of young fish is detected, this area will be closed at short notice for all fisheries and, as soon as this concentration of young fish is distributed, it will be immediately reopened. This measure would decrease substantially the discard rates and would allow many fish stocks

to recover. This instrument is foreseen in the Commission's proposal, but it should be stressed much more.

We also welcome that the Commission in its proposal still reserves the access to the 12-mile zones for the vessels of the coastal state. This represents a certain protection for the local coastal fisheries and should therefore not be given up.

Fishing of non-quota-species should not be permitted in these areas, since inevitably there will be by-catches of quota-species, and the result would be an illegal fishery and / or a substantial increase of the discard rates.

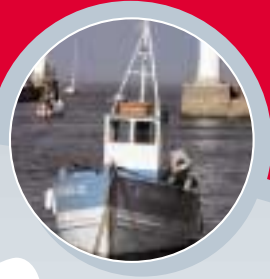
We consider quite reasonable the system of TAC and quotas determined on a scientific basis. This system implies however equivalent controls and implementation in all Member States. Therefore, we support the proposals of the Commission on control and implementation. The Community control should be developed further.

If the Commission comes to the conclusion that parts of the fishing fleet in certain areas are, in the long run, too big for the existing stocks, it should try to buy the capacity of these vessels by means of **high scrapping subsidies. These measures must however be accompanied by socio-economic measures for the crew and for the owners.** The socio-economic measures proposed by the Commission up to now are by far insufficient. We expect proposals on how alternative jobs can be created in the ports.



*“Boats that are safe, solid and  
Public aid to build them is an*

19 SEPTEMBER 2002, BRUSSELS



## ► The processing industry

It is not possible to reduce the fishery in a short time without important consequences for the subordinate sectors, like fish trade, the fish processing industry and the entire ship building and armament industry.

On the proposals of the Commission on the fleet structure, the following comments could be made:

**The immediate abolition of the financial support for the construction of new vessels and the strong reduction of the financing of the modernisation of fishing vessels has to be refused.** If these support mechanisms have to be finished, it should rather be done through a gradual reduction.

In this context, it can be pointed out that the FIGG programmes still run until 2006. Therefore, a support should in any case still be available until the end of the FIGG programme. It is not possible to create a "museum fleet" and to leave fishermen and other people employed on board facing the risks and dangers of the sea.



Another element to point out in this context, is that the European Parliament itself voted a

resolution (Miguélez report), in which it claimed that - for safety reasons - fishing vessels older than 20 years should not be used anymore.

### **The German case:**

The German fleet consists of approximately 2300 vessels, which are on average more than 30 years old. This fleet must urgently be renewed. 1800 amongst these vessels are however small vessels with less than 12 meters.

The renewal and modernisation of the fleet without public assistance is hardly possible, since the banks are not willing to give higher loans, because of the difficult situation in the fisheries industry and the very frequent changes in the management systems. Modernisation is only possible, if public aids are still granted. For the moment, we still have approximately 4000 employees in the German deep-sea fishing industry.

### **Germany's fish processing industry:**

The fish processing industry relies on raw material fish. It urgently and strongly needs a lasting management for the fish stocks. It also needs a continuous supply and cannot live with drastic fluctuations on stock prices. The German fish processing industry consists of approximately 100 enterprises with more than 11,000 employees. It has a turnover of approximately 2.015 Mio Euro and produces more than 420.000 tons of fish products. Therefore, it needs approximately 1.8 Mio tons of fish (measured in catch weight per year). Approximately 35% of those are white fish, such as Alaska Pollack, cod and pollack, around 20%



*comfortable ensure safety for fishermen.  
investment for life” Bernard Poignant*

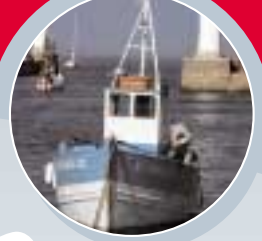


herring, 11% tuna etc.... The final products are approximately 28% deep frozen fish, 27% canned and marinated fish, 14% fresh fish and other products.





*“We must and will be able to find Fisheries despite the problems and*



19 SEPTEMBER 2002, BRUSSELS

## Environment and fisheries

*Some environmental issues are associated with the common fisheries policy reform.*

### **Resource management in the CFP reform proposals**

The health of fish stocks. Most people are increasingly aware in the media that the situation with global fish stocks is one reaching crisis. There has been a repeated and recurring issue since the early 1970's. Perhaps for this part of the world the situation with cod stocks has made it very clear that fish stocks are limited and that decline is something we have to already deal with now.

According to the FAO, we can in fact see that total global landings of fish started to decline already in the late 1980s and their estimates point to a situation where three quarters of global fish stocks are already out or beyond their limits in terms of exploitation.

This is a problem which isn't limited to a particular area in the world or in the EU. There is growing evidence that some fish stocks in the Mediterranean as well as in the North Sea and in the North East Atlantic, are more or less in trouble. We have to see this as a wide spread problem, not all stocks (some of the small pelagic fish stocks are in a better situation). In some cases, there is potentially an increase of exploitation levels.

The real problems, certainly in relation to the high value stocks, the ground fish stocks, and cod and hake have been the target of a lot of attention in the last few years for this reason. The point is that we are close to the limit, if we

haven't gone beyond it.

**The challenge for the reform is to accept those limits** and the discussion needs now to be on how we work within them. It's a discussion on how you balance social and economic interests. Resources are something we cannot create so, we have to respect those limits.

The important issue is that currently there aren't a great deal of winners in the fisheries sector and therefore there is a need for all parts of all interests to come together and try and improve the situation.

There is a certain trade off but we have to accept that socially, the situation is not particularly encouraging. **The Commission has put forward figures of 66 thousand jobs lost since 1990** and we know that those are crude figures, that losses are different depending on which part of the sector you look at. In some areas, there is more opportunity for growth and in others, we might have seen a larger number of job losses, particularly, perhaps in the small-scale sector.

The situation of the fleet is one of excess capacity and that has economic implications. The impacts vary, from sector to sector but certainly, there is a clear need for EU aid, which suggests that somehow the sector isn't operating at a level that allows its own renewal.

# *our way forward towards a sound future for European fundamental differences of opinion” Giorgios Katiforis*



Now, that can be for different and very justifiable reasons but still, economically it's not the healthiest of sectors. The third pillar in sustainable development talk is this environmental one. All of these issues were on the agenda at the Johannesburg summit.

There is simply a realisation that fishing has broader impacts veered on non-commercial fish themselves but also other species, habitats, the genetic pool etc. There has been research showing that, in the north east Atlantic, fisheries is one of the most critical issues in terms of altering the environmental state of that ocean.

Some would argue that none of the three pillars of development are in good condition. We have an unsustainable sector. If everyone can agree on that, we can also start working towards suitable solutions.

## ***The Scottish perspective:***

*In Scotland, there is a high dependency on fisheries in rural areas. Depending on the area, approximately 20% of jobs are considered to be fisheries dependent.*

Fisheries is therefore an important sector in Scotland. The inshore sector is particularly important. A large majority of boats rely on very limited resources within the inshore, resources that are not only important for the inshore sector but also as a nursery area for the off-shore sector.

Scotland like other areas has suffered in terms of employment loss in the fishing industry. 26%

of jobs, according to Scottish executive data have been lost since 1993. For the industry itself this is as much to do with technological improvements and reduction in jobs per fishing vessel as well as a decline in the resource base.

Just focusing on the resource base in Scotland, there are particular problems. Some of the key stocks like cod, whiting and haddock, all very important staples for the Scottish sector, are seeing very significant reductions, with significant impacts and a situation where there is far more demand for decommissioning fishing vessels than the British authorities are funding. So, in fact, operators - particularly from the demersal sector - are wanting to leave simply because there isn't a viable future in that part of the sector.

In inshore terms, very important for the Scottish sector, there is a recognition of the limits of the need to work very carefully within the inshore environment in order to secure a viable future. There are some interesting initiatives going on.

We need to work within the resources that are available to us. Of course, there will almost inevitably be some pain along the way and we need to make sure that the pain is managed and reduced as much as possible.

## ***The CFP reform package, does it meet the challenges then?***

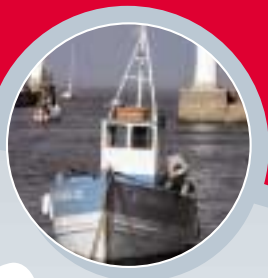
From our perspective and in support of what was said earlier, a central aspect of the reform proposals is the emphasis towards developing multi-annual management plans.

The idea is to produce a package of measures targeted at specific fisheries, or stocks, maybe



## “The European Commission proposals

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### Environment and fisheries

even areas in some cases. A lot of emphasis has to be put on the need for more stability for operators, to make sure that catch limits are not too crude, recognising that in some cases, over capacity is more of an issue than in others. This focus on management plans provides an opportunity to move away from the traditional December negotiating fest and to try to say, this is the resource base that we have, these are the fleets that currently operate there and try to develop a package so that in the long term, if we want to maximise jobs in the sector, for example, that is for the member state to decide that that is what they want to do.

This provides a way of actually looking forward and saying, what do we want in the long term rather than jumping from year to year and allowing the sector to develop in the way in which it is, in fact, reducing jobs and not necessarily providing employment for as many people as could be possible.

These multiannual management plans are really a major step forward if they can work. There are some difficulties, one of them is, who administers the plans? There are concerns within the Parliament about the level of involvement in management committees which are envisaged in the year to year administration of these plans.

It is important to reduce some of the discussions in the December Councils which have just not served the industry or the resources very well.

Two other points which are to be emphasised as positive are:

- 1. the regional approach – the idea that some advisory committees (like the advisory committee

for fisheries and aquaculture) can have sub-committees, so that these can actually focus on what is important for people in their day to day fishing operations. This does not change the competence neither does it devolve the CFP to a regional area or to the member state level. It simply provides a forum so that people can talk. Everyone who is involved in that fishery, be they from a northern member state or a southern, would have a seat at the table. This is not exclusive to coastal states at all. Importantly for us, it would also involve other environmental interests too, because we need to have a more balanced approach.

- 2. the proposals potentially provide some more support for inshore fisheries management, maybe not going far enough, because most people recognise the particular difference and importance of the inshore sector socially and for local economies etc. Certainly, the fact that member states could now look at the inshore in a more integrated way and try and manage the sector with perhaps less interference from the EU, maybe welcomed, maybe not. It is a difficult issue but nevertheless, it would be good to actually channel more aid to the inshores, so that better management of the inshore areas can be achieved.

One other point is cross-compliance, trying to deal with the incoherence of the CFP. Out of good intention there has been a desire to manage resources to maximise jobs and to have the best economic circumstances but without integrating those three pillars. There has to be much more connection through the management plans between aid, fleets and conservation measures.

# *hold out the prospect of a sustainable future for fisheries”* *Catherine Stihler*



Why not provide modernisation funds? Just as long as it does not result in increased effort and does not compromise the resource base.

### ***Some problem aspects of the reform package.***

Some of the problems with, and the discussions following the Commission proposals has been based on a fear that the world will change immediately. That is simply not the case. Let's say that the proposals were adopted in time which is increasingly unlikely, on the 1st of January there would be no change.

The reform proposals in fact, provide the basis and really build on the existing regulation with moderate change. It provides the bases for more integrated management in the future. The point of this is that, the decisions on management plans, the extent to which they will really result in job losses or decommissioning, will be taken down the line. They will go to the Council, come to the Parliament – to discuss and decide what the appropriate package will be for the specific stock concerned.

In fact, we will have, by 1 January 2003, no fleet policy apart from a maintenance of fishing effort, fishing fleet at levels that were set under the fourth multiannual guidance programs. In some cases, this is simply not appropriate, given the over capacity. But most people will accept that in some stocks we really need to deal with over capacity in the short term and not having to wait perhaps three years for long term management plans to be adopted.

**The new aid package proposed by the Commission is insufficient and more funding will be needed to support the whole shift in capacity.**

The Commission has proposed 32 million euros in extra funds. More money would be useful to not just take out capacity but also to support the conversion where that it required by lack of resources.

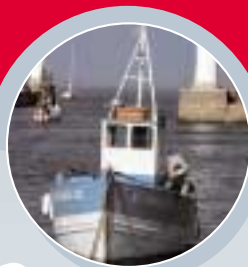
Of course there is alternative funding available under the European Social Fund and perhaps more effort needs to be placed on making coastal communities more aware of opportunities for funding and retraining, but that is a separate issue.

For the moment we are dealing with a reform package without having seen very important aspects of it. However, the legislative proposals are already on the table and we need to remember that the other documents that are coming through are going to be statements of policy from the Commission, they are not going to change the fundamental legislative framework.

Nevertheless, they should provide some important signals. One of the documents will try and include the sector much more, use the sector's expertise, skills, knowledge to help in the development of scientific advise.



## *“The reform of the Common Fisheries in the future and for the survival of*



19 SEPTEMBER 2002, BRUSSELS

### ▶ A "Galician" viewpoint

*It is absolutely necessary for all European Socialists to work together in order to achieve the most unified position possible on the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy.*

#### **The case of Galicia:**

Galicia is an "Objective 1" region with all types of fishing activity and different fleets. High sea fishing, traditional fishing, and small ships overall. As is known, for each job in fisheries at sea, a corresponding four or five jobs on land exist. In Galicia, this means more than 30 thousand workers and the whole industrial activity, processing or frozen fish companies which supply the fishing fleet etc.

There are more than 120.000 workers in jobs generated by fishing, as well as other indirect ones.

Everybody hears about the Galician industrial fleet, but in Galicia there are 8.615 ships and more than 7.000 are traditional fishing boats. These are distributed around 123 ports which have commercial activities as well as fishing, and other very small ports right along the whole of the coast of Galicia, which has three provinces : Lugal, Pontevedra and La Coruna.

The activity in these small ports is very important for the economy of the families there and its population is more than 40% economically based on traditional fishing. Moreover, fishing in Galicia isn't just an economic activity, it generates employment as well as forming part of the culture and tradition of its people.

The small fleets have many activities, many in developed sectors, for example, mussels. Other activities take place on the beaches and are carried out by many women, 6.400 women in Galicia: collecting live molusks from the beaches and then selling them. This is completely traditional and has no harmful consequences.

The methods for collecting these molusks doesn't affect the environment, even though in the next few years, some technology will be introduced in order to increase production and the income of fishermen. This is an activity which is still very frail in its organisational structure and it's productiveness is also quite low. The autonomous government in Galicia has developed this area very little, so the average income of these women in Galicia doesn't reach half of the average professional wage of the rest of the country.

The 7.000 vessels mentioned before face similar problems to these women. Due to the lack of organisation in structure which exists in many cases, they do not develop fully. The main fleets that are important economically have been classically organised around economical and social organisations. The traditional fleet, perhaps because of the low economic income this generates and the weakness of the sector from the 123 ports in Galicia, has created some organisations which were around already in Franco's era.

## *Policy is a prerequisite for a more sustainable fisheries European fishermen in the long run.” Heinz Kindermann*



Now, these organisations are managed and controlled by public authorities.

In Galicia, the Socialists are trying to propose an organisation that is restructured and try and see some kind of future for the traditional fleet. These jobs need to be valued, traditional fishermen do respect the environment.

The Socialists want to teach fishermen to sell their products well and give more value to the profession. Nowadays, people don't want to become fishermen.

This must change, young people should be encouraged to come into this profession and to be better trained, in order to better sell the fishery products. It is important commercially and for the fishermen to control their product until it reaches the consumer.

It is also necessary to modernise and renovate the ships in the traditional fleet and it has to be said that, in many places the majority of the traditional fleet has not had access to these funds.

For example, in Galicia, it was not because somebody stopped them, but simply that given the weakness of the organisational structure in the sector and its fragile economy, many times aid for modernisation hasn't gone to the fleet.

The biggest vessels have access to it because they can pay for people to prepare the documentation in order to get these funds but the traditional fisherman cannot pay for someone to read all the documents in order to claim all the subsidies. Clearly, they don't receive these funds.

Moreover, in order to modernise an 8 meter ship, exactly the same documentation is needed as to modernise a big freezer ship.. A specific Community program is necessary to support traditional fishing.



Aid for the modernisation of the traditional fleet is crucial, including the fleet under 24 metres which fish along the coast. For this fleet, a specific programme is needed because this is the fleet which is the oldest. It is where there are the most accidents and fatalities. This is

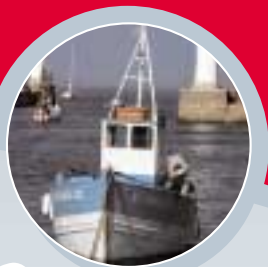
a sector which needs to modernise and renovate the most.

An example : in Galicia, a very risky activity is collecting barnacles in areas where the waves break very strongly. These fishermen use ships, not as a center for work, but in order to move about as the fishing actually takes place on the



*“The CFP must find the balance between companies and the keeping of the socio-*

19 SEPTEMBER 2002, BRUSSELS



## ▶ A "Galician" viewpoint

rocks. In order to move about and get out of the danger they put themselves in, they are connected by ropes by people who are up above them. To get out in time, they need to have ships which are maybe not big but which are very powerful, to get out quickly and not be smashed against the rocks. This is a security, safety measure.

In these cases, a powerfull engine, for safety reasons, is not increasing capacity but is helping to save lives. However, these fishermen find themselves up against the barrier of the autonomous region administration in the European Union which stops them from increasing the engine potential which they really do need.

The Socialists defend the need to increase the number of jobs, to give more value to this sector and to modernise the ships.

In addition, there are many difficulties in terms of social protection. The majority of these people are autonomous. They have a type of social security which is specific as they are their own company. One gap is that in many cases these people cannot retire before the age of 65. They can't increase contributions for pensions either in order to have a better pension.

For the women who collect sea-food, with very low income, it is impossible to pay a social security contribution given that their work does not bring in enough money. The Socialists have been fighting so that the social security system does adapt to their reality enabling them to get access to their contributory pension and retire under the same conditions as everybody else.

The PESCA initiative in Galicia (1994-1999) and the structural funds that were destined for a segment of the sector, was very good because it cut out the bureacracy that this sector had to deal with in a lot of cases. It also allowed the development of a lot of projects such as training programmes, as well as producing quality products.

Through this initiative, in Galicia a foundation was created (AGAMAR) which will receive the mark of origin. It was something which was very helpful for professionals in the sector as it avoids intervention from the administration which on many occassions, in that region, put the breaks on this sector and stopped it from developing at full capacity.



*the sustainable exploitation of resources, the viability of economic fabric of fishing communities” Rosa Miguélez*



*A final remark on the disaster caused by the sinking of the oil tanker Prestige in front of the Galician coast.*

*As we close the edition of this brochure, we still do not know the full size of this socio-economic and environmental disaster, although we do know that it will be terrible for the fishing communities of the region. This further proves the need for a stricter European maritime safety policy, without any other particular interests getting in the way.*

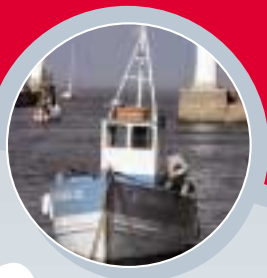
*The Socialists ask for European aid and call for the mobilisation of the Solidarity Fund which was recently set up to compensate natural disasters. And that as soon as possible.*





“We shall see once again

19 SEPTEMBER 2002, BRUSSELS



## Conclusions

*There have been many complaints with regards to the Commission's proposal of the reform, of the Common Fisheries Policy.*

The PES Group would like to take a decision on the first package but stresses that we do need to know some of the proposals in the second package.

**We are defending a Socialist position but above all, a European position.**

There are of course, some positive aspects, namely the issue of control and surveillance. But there are also many negative elements. For example:

- the need for more financial measures, the way forward for this reform and this whole process;
- the need to have more consensus implemented more gradually
- the need for an evaluation of the socio-economic consequences of some of the measures that the Commission has put forward;
- the lack of support for programmes specifically for the small coastal fishermen;
- the delay from the Commission of proposing these measures to the Parliament.

There has been an insufficiency of scientific findings until now which has led to many of the decisions being politically based.

There has been a lack of dialogue that, in this sector, which is like an illness or a cancer, which is eating away year after year and is leading to European weakness in international organisations.

The goods and evils are shared and we have to be aware, as Socialists, of this common position, which will allow us to be together and express our position in plenary where decisions are taken. The most important thing for us is that we don't lose this European side of the policy that fisheries continue to be a Common policy.

When the Commission talks about the fishermen and preservation of the environment, we the Socialists feel that its proposals contain a very basic error of focus by not acknowledging that fishermen themselves need to be the main players in environmental quality.

As the Socialist have said so often: fishermen should be **the guardians of the Seas**.

The call for re-evaluating the profession and all the labour and social conditions for fishermen is also absolutely essential.

We need to keep the fishermen in the European Union, it would not be good for the EU as a whole and for its culture or individual personal values if fishermen disappeared.

Fishermen feel that they have not been listened to at all. **Linking fishermen to scientific opinion is crucial** in this process. We should prevent fishermen from being set aside, merely witnessing how scientists dictate the state of resources and how politicians take decisions

## *the oceans with fish. And fishermen”* *Claudio Fava*



based on these scientific findings without even consulting them.

Scientific data is naturally open to dispute when examples such as the following happen:

- this year, in the Bay of Biscay, there was no tuna and fishing expeditions had been a complete failure. And then all the tuna came



at once and fishermen had so many tuna catches that they amounted to the same catch of the whole of the previous year.

- The Bay of Biscay is a coastal region where fishing takes place only a few days a year. The fish stocks move, the shoals are not there, they have moved somewhere else.

There is often the tendency to think that the fishermen are the only cause of the problems that are being experienced by the sea environment. Some have damaged a few stocks but not all the fishing stocks.

The marine environment, overall, suffers the effects of pesticides, fertilisers and ship wrecks, hydrocarbons, industrial activities, and other human activities, as tourism.

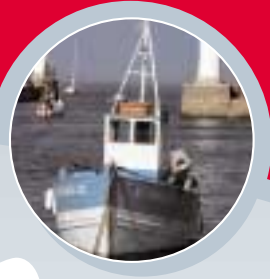
All of these have caused great damage to the marine environment. It is true that regionalisation has very positive aspects and the PES Group agrees that it is necessary to have a consultation at a regional level but we also stress that we can not lose sight of the European dimension.

We have been studying and evaluating the possibility of having an integrated management of the coastal zones in Europe so perhaps it would be better to think about how these important measures, which are inter-dependant and so important with regards to the coast, could be managed at a European level as well as at the level of the Member States.

The PES Group defends the need to have more harmonisation at European level. When talking about control measures, for example, the EU



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## Conclusions

and not just the Member States, needs to be able to exert control.

The EU needs to be able to control the markets, which are not being controlled as they should be and this is having very negative consequences for our fleets.

An example:

- the stocks of sword fish are a problem at present. The EU has an important fleet that fish swordfish in very distant waters. This fleet is fishing in compliance with all of the regulations, not only of the EU but also national regulations and those of the regional fisheries organisations.
- There are many third countries' boats that are also fishing but without any kind of control. Moreover, they can come with their products to our markets and sell them at a much lower price than our fishermen can. There has to be some sort of re-conversion here. All of the investment made in this fleet which is an important fleet for the EU may be lost – this situation was allowed to happen, due to lack of investment and rigorous control.

which moves better through international forums and that has perhaps more power in decision making, not only here but also in Member States and in regional advisory committees. And the other, which is very poorly represented.

Fishermen know about fish and we have obliged them to have a political discussion, which is not evident, because fishermen don't have to know about political discourse. However, it has been the politicians who have made their speeches for them and who have to be able to shift this political discussion and debate which involves a huge number of fishermen in Europe.



We must realise that there are two fishing models, industrial and traditional fishing. One



The PES Group believes that fishermen need to be paid more attention. As socialists, we are capable of providing a different future from the one offered by the right.

We have to be able to offer European fisheries this future that they are asking for in order to have a better life, better working conditions, with more support.

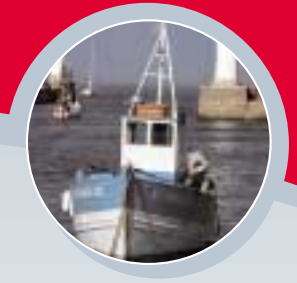
**We need to find consensus through the Socialist principles we all defend, based on further solidarity, the search for a fair society with a complete respect for the environment but never forgetting that priority is to be given to the people.**

Let us offer them a future where we can continue to fish and enjoy the pleasure which eating fish gives us.





# NOTES



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GRUPE PARLEMENTAIRE  
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PARTEI EUROPAS

GRUPO PARLAMENTARIO  
DEL PARTIDO  
SOCIALISTA EUROPEO



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**EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

RUE WIERTZ - B-1047 BRUXELLES  
TEL.:+32 2 284 21 11  
TEL. STRASBOURG: +33 3 88 17 40 01  
INTERNET: <http://www.socialistgroup.org>