

North-East Atlantic deep-sea fishing

Opinion of European Economic and Social Committee
Rapporteur Mário D. Soares

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- **A little presentation of EESC**
- A consultative institution
- Represents Europe's socio-occupational interests groups and others
- Assists the larger Institutions: EP, EC and The Council

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- **Why repealig Regulation (EC) No 2347/2002?**
- the vulnerability of many deep-sea stocks
- the negative impact of fishing with bottom trawls on vulnerable deep-sea marine ecosystems
- the high levels of undesired catch
- difficulties in determining the sustainable level of fishing pressure due to insufficient scientific data

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- **The EESC agrees with the Commission's proposal on the following points:**
- Deep-sea ecosystems and species are particularly vulnerable to human activity
- Fishing operators already cooperate in scientific research activities on deep-sea ecosystems and species. In fact, it is already common for scientists to be regularly included in fishing fleets
- The proposal's main objective must be to ensure the sustainable exploitation of deep-sea stocks while reducing the environmental impact of these fisheries, which means improving the information base for scientific assessment and the legislative provisions to be adopted on the use of these waters
- A licensing regime for deep-sea fishing is the appropriate instrument for controlling access to these fisheries

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- **Some important remarks:**
- The bottom trawls cannot be demonised
- It needs to strike the right balance between the protection of vulnerable habitats and species and the economically, socially and environmentally sustainable exploitation of resources
- need to provide financial support for vessels that have to change fishing gears and for training crews

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- establishing scientific criteria for deciding the restrictions on its use
- We need to provide financial support for vessels that have to change fishing gears and for training crews
- the Commission must conclude regional agreements on resource conservation that are binding upon all parties
- must seek simplification, regulatory stability and legal certainty for the Member States and the economic and social actors involved

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- **In Conclusion**
- It is appropriate and urgent to ensure the sustainability of deep-sea species and the protection of the sea bottom
- any changes concerning these fisheries must give consideration to socio-economic as well as environmental sustainability
- All interested parties should be involved in consultations and negotiations

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- the need for all measures adopted in this area to be based on the findings of scientific research
- simplification, regulatory stability and legal certainty for the Member States and the economic and social actors involved