Press release | 25.02.2010

CFP reform

EU Parliament demands sustainable Common Fisheries Policy

With the EU's Common Fisheries Policy due for its first fundamental reform in almost a decade, the European Parliament plenary today adopted a report that effectively sets out the institution's position on the failings of the current CFP and how it must be improved if it to lead to sustainable fisheries.

Isabella Lövin, Swedish Green MEP and coordinator in the Fisheries Committee, cautiously welcomed the report:

"I am pleased that Parliament agrees that priority access should be given to those who fish in the most environmentally sustainable way, leading to fewer discards, more jobs and less energy use. Parliament has sent a clear signal that the right to fish must be based on environmental and social criteria, rather than on who caught the most fish 30 years ago. It is years of overfishing that has led to the current crisis, so it is absurd to let the same fleets continue the damage.

The Parliament has accepted other positive points, including making ecological sustainability the basic premise of the CFP and the recognition that EU fleets must no longer overfish in the waters of developing countries.

Unfortunately, less constructive ideas are also in the report, such as a refusal to accept the destructive influence of subsidies. The report also declares the CFP to be the dominant policy in the EU, with environment and development policies being subservient to it. It is this "preserve the fishing industry at all costs" attitude that has led to the destruction of the marine ecosystem and the fishing communities that depend upon it. Clearly, the old guard that wants to exploit this resource has not yet understood the gravity of the fisheries crisis."

Notes to editors:

(1) Neves report: 456 votes for, 50 against, 67 abstentions

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