**REPORT**

on rebuilding fish stocks in the Mediterranean: assessment and next steps

(2019/2178(INI))

Committee on Fisheries

Rapporteur: Raffaele Stancanelli

**EXTRACT**

***Improving legislative aspects***

* Calls on the Commission, after consulting the Advisory Council for the Mediterranean (MEDAC), to identify the obstacles to the process of rebuilding fish stocks, including an analysis of the implementation of the 2017-2020 GFCM strategy, with a view to including its findings in the 2021-2030 strategy, ensuring that practical steps are taken to rebuild fish stocks, including considering, if needed and found appropriate, both legislative and non-legislative actions;
* **Calls on the Commission to assess whether new stock management plans are required to achieve the principles of social, economic and environmental sustainability set out in the CFP**;
* Calls on the Commission to draw on the successful example of bluefin tuna by **studying the introduction of total allowable catches (TACs) in the long term for some species** including hake and to come forward with a proposal during the evaluation of the multiannual plan in 2024;
* Calls on the Commission to ensure that **every legislative proposal aimed at increasing fish stocks which restricts fishing activities is preceded by a wide-ranging impact assessment to quantify its possible socioeconomic and environmental impact on coastal communities and on the productivity and competitiveness of EU fisheries** undertakings and the production chain, and is supported by the best available scientific data shared with stakeholders related to the fisheries sector;
* Underlines the lack of precise quantification of the **consequences for fish stocks** of all possible impacts above and beyond fishing activities**, such as pollution, global warming, alien species, exploitation of hydrocarbons, dredging and maritime transport**; stresses that this lack of information does not allow for sufficiently adequate and effective decision-making to ensure the conservation of fish stocks and marine ecosystems;
* Stresses that **any future legislative measures to promote the recovery of fish stocks in the Mediterranean Sea that have an impact on the fishing activity of the European fisheries sector should be implemented gradually and in proportion to the sector’s capacity for action**; stresses, in addition, the importance of ensuring that any future legislative proposal does not impose an excessive bureaucratic and financial burden on the European fisheries sector, particularly on small-scale fisheries;
* Stresses the **need to legislate on the basis of an eco-system approach** which can be used to identify and analyse all interactions that have an impact on fish stocks, taking into account not only fishing activities, but also other factors weighing in the balance and the presence of new invasive species;
* Calls on the Commissioner responsible for fisheries and maritime affairs **to establish a consultation body with the involvement of non-EU countries of the Mediterranean area with a view to reducing unfair competition and to securing a level playing field for European fishers and women working in the sector;**
* Calls on the Commission to **analyse the social, economic and environmental impact, as well as the effects on fish stocks in the recreational fishing sector**, with a view to incorporating this analysis into any measures that may be adopted.

***Giving operators a greater role in decision-making and data collection***

* Calls on the Commission to **carry out an economic analysis of the social and employment effects of the decline in fishery resources** in the Mediterranean, with a view to identifying **appropriate support measures to guarantee a fair and equitable transition to low impact fisheries;**
* Stresses that the **full achievement of any objective relative to stock recovery in the Mediterranean and a proper implementation of the rules adopted by the European legislators is dependent on the effective participation of the fishing sector**
* Calls on the Commission to **improve and strengthen cooperation and dialogue with the advisory councils, fishers and professionals in the coastal community sector**, taking due account of their views and acknowledging the importance of fishers, women working in the sector and relevant professional organisations and civil society organisations in the formulation of rules to be implemented and decision-making processes.

***Upholding the rule of law***

* Calls on the Commission **to engage in a dialogue with those North African countries that do not comply with the UNCLOS and GFCM policies and decisions, ensuring safety and a level playing field for all EU fishers**