

## European Union

### Support women in fisheries

*In the European Parliament resolution on “Women’s networks: fishing, farming and diversification (2004/2263(INI)” adopted on 15 December 2005, Member States have been asked to launch the necessary actions to secure greater legal and social recognition of the work of women in the fisheries sector*

**Excerpts from the resolution are given below. The full text can be downloaded from <http://www.europarl.eu.int>**

#### *The European Parliament*

1. Recognizes the role that the (European) Commission has played in hosting the aforementioned conference on the role of women in the fisheries sector and in funding a number of innovative actions, and welcomes its intention to host another Conference in the near future; believes, nonetheless, that insufficient progress has been made;

2. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to launch the necessary actions to secure greater legal and social recognition of, and promote and raise the profile, of the work of women in the fisheries sector, to support their efforts to obtain better living conditions for their families and communities and to guarantee social and economic rights, including wage equality, unemployment benefit in case of interruption of work (temporary or definitive), the right to obtain a pension, the reconciliation of work and family life and access to parental leave, access to social security and a free health service, and the protection of safety and health at work;

3. Calls on the Commission to produce a report as soon as possible identifying the nature, extent, objectives and activities of women’s networks in fisheries throughout the European Union, paying particular attention to the situation in the newer Member States;

4. Underlines the fact that women’s active participation in fisheries-related activities helps to preserve cultural traditions and specific practices and aids the survival of their communities, thereby ensuring the protection of cultural diversity in these regions;

5. Recognizing that these networks have emerged above all from local or regional initiatives, calls on the

Commission to look into specific measures to provide active support for both the development of existing women’s networks, particularly where they are less consolidated, and their creation where no such networks exist;

6. Calls on the Commission also to consider what measures it might take to assist in the development of a women’s network at the pan-European Union level, paying particular attention to the need to eliminate linguistic barriers;

7. Calls on the Commission to establish appropriate channels to increase and disseminate information on the situation of women in the various areas which make up, and are linked to, the fisheries sector, and to promote sociological research on fishing communities; calls on the Commission to provide active support for existing women’s networks and the creation of new networks, at national, regional and local levels, and to foster the exchange of information and good practices; underlines, in this context, the need for close co-operation with the future European Institute for Gender Equality, with a view to improved effectiveness as regards identifying and combating discrimination against women in these communities;

8. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to give a commitment to take the necessary measures to eliminate the administrative and social barriers hampering women’s full participation and progress in all areas of the fisheries sector through specific actions for the sector, and to ensure the full application of the principle of equal treatment and opportunities for women and men in all fields, in particular training, and access to funding and loans, including micro-credit, etc. to encourage entrepreneurship;

9. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to promote more vocational training and education specially geared to the activities of women working in the fisheries sector and to set up mechanisms to improve the provision of information about training opportunities and the funding available to make use of them;

10. Welcomes the provisions in the proposed European Fisheries Fund that oblige Member States to ensure that operations to enhance the role of women in the fisheries sector are promoted, and calls on the Council to adopt Parliament’s Amendment 24 in its aforementioned position on the European Fisheries Fund which emphasised that efforts on a transnational



level should also be promoted; nevertheless urges the Commission to support specific projects which have as their objective the recognition, promotion and diversification of women's role in fisheries-related areas;

11. Urges the Commission, likewise, to draw up a specific pilot project to address the particular situation of shellfish gatherers;

12. Believes that the provisions of the European Fisheries Fund should afford an opportunity to support activities that have hitherto been undertaken on a voluntary basis, and calls on the Commission to consider what other sources of funding might be made available to women's networks in the fisheries sector, including sources of micro-credit;

13. Believes further that an important use of fisheries-related European funding would be the involvement of women's networks in projects researching the impact of restructuring on the fishing and farming industries;

14. Calls on the Commission to maintain the FEMMES programme, and include networks of women working in fisheries-related occupations;

15. Believes also that women's networks have an important role to play in the development of Coastal Action Groups, and that there should be sufficient flexibility in the use of the Structural Funds to allow the integration of the activities of women in fisheries-dependent communities and of women in farming communities in coastal areas;

16. Stresses the need to strengthen women's effective participation in representative, decision-making and advisory fisheries bodies at European, national and regional levels, and believes that a Commission recommendation to the competent bodies to take action in this regard would make a positive contribution;

17. Believes that women's networks can contribute to improving safety at sea and to improving the sustainability of fisheries, in particular by promoting consumption of fish from sustainable stocks, and discouraging consumption of fish from unsustainable stocks;

18. Calls on the Commission to report regularly to Parliament on the development of women's networks in the fisheries sector and on the basis on which their activities are being funded; calls on the Commission to keep Parliament periodically informed of developments in the situation of women in the fisheries sector;

19. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to review the situation of women in fishing and farming communities at European, national and regional levels, and to address any issues relating to the adequacy of their health and other social protection, and to remove any barriers to their participation in representative activities; proposes, as an initial measure, that the Commission make a recommendation to the competent bodies that they take action in this regard;

20. Shares the concern of women working in the sector at the scant presence of young people in fishing activities, and calls on the Commission to launch measures to encourage young people to work in the sector in order to ensure its continuity;

21. Calls on all those engaged in the formation of Regional Advisory Councils to ensure the participation of representative delegates from women's networks in their activities, particularly with regard to work on the socioeconomic impact of fisheries policy; considers that, in this connection, consideration should be given to the extent to which women's networks can be compensated for the costs they incur;

22. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and Commission, the governments of the Member States and the Regional Advisory Councils.