

Policy Coherence for Development and Fisheries

Information note, December 2010

What is Policy Coherence for Development?

- The principle of coherence was introduced by the **1992 Maastricht Treaty**. It introduced an obligation on the EC to consider the impact of all its policies (including fisheries) on the stated objectives of its development policy.

Article 130u set out the following as objectives of Community (EC) development policy:

“the sustainable economic and social development of the developing countries, and more particularly the most disadvantaged among them; - the smooth and gradual integration of the developing countries into the world economy; and the campaign against poverty in the developing countries.

Article 130v provided that¹:

‘The Community shall take account of the objectives referred to in Article 130u in the policies that it implements which are likely to affect developing countries.’

- The **2004 Constitutional Treaty** maintained the principle of coherence in article III-316 and defined the main objective of Development cooperation as:

*‘Union development cooperation policy shall have as its primary objective the **reduction and, in the long term, the eradication of poverty**. The Union shall take account of the objectives of development cooperation in the policies that it implements which are likely to affect developing countries.’*

- The commitment towards Policy Coherence was embedded in the **European Consensus on Development** adopted in December 2005. The EU agreed to apply the Policy Coherence for Development approach in 12 policy areas that could accelerate progress towards the UN’s Millenium Development goals, including fisheries (and particularly Fisheries Partnership Agreements).

¹ Articles 130u and 130v were renumbered as articles 177 and 178 by the 1997 Amsterdam Treaty.

The legal framework in the Treaty of Lisbon

The EU commitment towards policy coherence has also a strong legal basis in the **Lisbon Treaty**², particularly in **article 208** on the functioning of the European Union (TFEU), which states that: *"The Union development cooperation policy shall have as its primary objective the reduction and, in the long term, the eradication of poverty. The Union shall take account of the objectives of development cooperation in the policies that it implements which are likely to affect developing countries."*

EC Coherence report: What it has to say on fisheries....

Every two years, the Commission reports on progress made on policy coherence for development by the EU in these 12 areas, including fisheries. The EC report 2009 on Coherence for Development (Fisheries Chapter)³ highlights various issues arising for ensuring coherence from the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy.

In this report, the European Commission indicates that *"concerns remain with regard to the sustainability and the social consequences of the agreements (FPAs). The forthcoming reform of the CFP provides an opportunity to re-evaluate the external dimension of this policy with a view to making it more development-friendly"*.

In the EC staff working document accompanying the report, a chapter analyzes further at how the EU fisheries policy impacts on developing countries and assesses its contribution to their development. It underlines that *"FPAs greatest virtue being that they regulate the access of the European fleet to the waters of developing countries.... While this framework is not perfect, it certainly presents significant advantages over private agreements."*

One of the objectives of FPAs, as indicated in the report, *is to promote European investment in the partner countries' sectors, in particular by creating joint-ventures. This seems to be difficult to achieve. In fact European investment in joint-ventures is stagnating both in countries with which an agreement has been signed and in other countries traditionally targeted by European fishing vessels such as Namibia or Argentina. Reasons for this include the investment climate and the poor infrastructure in some developing countries...*

The report concludes by saying that the Commission's Green Paper on reform of the Common Fisheries Policy published in April 2009 recognises that the external dimension needs to be reassessed and invites comments on a number of crucial questions associated with *sustainability, equity and governance*.

² See Fair Politics website <http://www.fairpolitics.nl/europa/coherence>

³ Report 2009 from the Commission on Policy Coherence for Development http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/SEC_PDF_2009_1137_F_ACTE_PCD_EN.pdf
Commission staff working document accompanying the report from the Commission to the Council, 2009 Report on Policy Coherence for Development {COM(2009) 461 final}
http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/repository/SWP_PDF_2009_1137_EN.pdf

European Parliament Report on PCD

In 2010⁴, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on Policy Coherence for Development⁵. The resolution stated that:

“Whereas the financial contributions paid by the EU within the framework of Fisheries Partnership Agreements (FPAs) have not helped to consolidate the fisheries policies of partner countries, largely owing to a lack of monitoring of the implementation of these agreements, the slow payment of assistance, and sometimes even the failure to use this assistance”

And called on the Commission and member States

“to give an overall assessment of the fisheries agreements with third countries, so as to ensure that the European Union's external policy in the field of fisheries is completely consistent with its development policy, while strengthening European Union partner countries' capacity to guarantee sustainable fishing in their waters, enhancing food security and local employment in the sector;

The resolution also recalled that

“EU access to fish stocks in third countries should not in any way be a condition for development assistance to those countries.”

The resolution further proposed *the appointment of a Parliament standing rapporteur for 'policy coherence for development', with the mandate of following up, and informing the DEVE Committee of incoherencies in EU policies.*

⁴ In the motion for a resolution explanatory statement, concerning fisheries, the EP rapporteur highlighted that ‘in the new Fisheries Partnership Agreements, overexploitation of fish stocks will still occur since reliable scientific data to determine a sustainable maximum catch is often lacking. Local fishermen do not have priority access to fishing grounds and will still be harmed by subsidized competition from European vessels. In this case, the local processing industry, which has the highest potential added value in the production chain, receives little support’

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&reference=A7-2010-0140&language=EN>

⁵ European Parliament resolution of 18 May 2010 on the EU Policy Coherence for Development and the "Official Development Assistance plus" concept (2009/2218(INI))

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P7-TA-2010-0174&language=EN&ring=A7-2010-0140>