

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA

**JOINT PARLIAMENTARY  
COMMITTEE**

**28th Meeting**

**27 June 2007, Vaduz**

**RESOLUTIONS**

Adopted pursuant to Rules 11 and 13 of the Rules of Procedure,  
at the 28<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Joint Parliamentary Committee

in Vaduz, 27 June 2007

***The Annual Report on the Functioning of the EEA Agreement in 2006***

Co-rapporteurs: Mr Bjarni BENEDIKTSSON (Independence Party, Iceland), and  
Ms Diana WALLIS (ALDE, United Kingdom)

adopted unanimously

and

***The EU Future Maritime Policy: Implications for the EEA***

Co-rapporteurs: Mr Børge BRENDE (Conservative Party, Norway) and  
Mr Alyn SMITH (Greens/EFA, United Kingdom)

adopted unanimously

## Resolution

### ON THE ANNUAL REPORT ON THE FUNCTIONING OF THE EEA AGREEMENT IN 2006

The Joint Parliamentary Committee of the European Economic Area:

- A. in accordance with its task laid out by the EEA Agreement (Article 95, paragraph 4),
- B. emphasising that the EEA EFTA States are not third countries in matters concerning the Internal Market, but full participants,
- C. mindful of the importance of maintaining homogeneity within the EEA,
- D. noting that the information and consultation process provided for in the EEA Agreement is an essential tool for the EFTA States to participate in the shaping of common rules,
- E. acknowledging the importance of implementation of EEA legislation in order to establish a dynamic and homogenous European Economic Area,
- F. recalling its resolutions on the functioning of the EEA in 1994 (adopted 29 May 1995), in 1995 (adopted 3 June 1996), in 1996 (adopted 14 April 1997) in 1997 (adopted 25 May 1998), in 1999 (adopted 16 March 2000), in 2000 (adopted 24 May 2001), in 2001 (adopted 20 June 2002), in 2002 (adopted 20 May 2003), in 2003 (adopted 27 April 2004), in 2004 (adopted 25 April 2005), and in 2005 (adopted 22 May 2006),
- G. recalling its resolution on Implementation of EEA legislation (adopted on 10 October 2006) and its resolution on Enlarging the EEA: Experiences and Perspectives (adopted on 10 October 2006),
  1. emphasises that if the EEA is to have a meaningful future, it needs to be taken more seriously by all stakeholders in the EEA and needs to be the focus of increased resources and efforts on the part of the European Commission, so that outstanding differences are solved promptly and that the good functioning of the EEA is not put at risk;
  2. takes note of the Annual Report of the EEA Joint Committee for 2006 and agrees with the general assessment that the EEA functioned in a satisfactory manner in the reporting period, subject to some important reservations concerning the transposition of Directive 2004/38/EC and the enlargement of the EEA (see paragraphs 7 and 14 respectively);
  3. recommends that in addition to the Joint Committee Annual Report, the EEA Joint Committee drafts a more analytical report for the purposes of the EEA JPC, taking major EU developments and horizontal policy issues

into account when assessing the functioning of the Agreement, enabling the Report to be understood by a wider audience, which could better permit the EEA JPC to exercise the democratic scrutiny of the functioning of the Agreement;

4. welcomes the EEA JPC's institutional relationship with the EEA Joint Committee and the EEA Council and appreciates the oral responses provided by the President-in-Office of the EEA Joint Committee and by the representatives of the EEA Council, which have been comprehensive;
5. welcomes the meeting of the European Parliament with EEA EFTA Foreign Ministers as a model for future cooperation with the EEA Council and expresses its willingness to repeat such events in the future, so as to enhance joint working;
6. recommends the distribution of written Joint Committee statements on JPC resolutions before JPC meetings which would facilitate a fruitful dialogue with EEA Council and Joint Committee representatives;
7. regrets that the transposition deadline for Directive 2004/38/EC on the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States expired on the 30 April 2006, leading to the Commission bringing the matter to the EEA Joint Committee on 27 October 2006 and activating the procedures according to Article 102 of the EEA Agreement; and reminds that only once before in the successful history of the EEA have the same steps been taken;
8. stresses that if an act is not incorporated in the EEA within six months and no solutions has been found, the annex in which the act should be placed could be suspended provisionally six months later with unprecedented consequences;
9. expresses its concern about the situation as regards Directive 2004/38/EC and urges the relevant authorities to view this with utmost urgency and resolve the issue in a pragmatic way as soon as possible;
10. recognizes that good progress was made on formalising EEA participation in the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) in 2006 and reminds the relevant authorities that for five years in a row the EEA JPC has called for a speedy participation of the EEA EFTA States in EFSA;
11. regrets that the EEA EFTA States' participation in EFSA remains unresolved; expresses hope that the issue can be resolved as soon as possible; and requests both further elaborations on the delay in formalising the agreement and a realistic timeframe for its conclusion;
12. expresses its concerns as to the long delay in incorporating the important Directive on the Greenhouse Gas Emission Trading Scheme into the EEA Agreement; and requests further information on the causes of the delay;

13. welcomes that overall, most EEA relevant acts seem to be processed in an efficient manner with the procedures for the integration of acts in EFTA capitals, the substructures and the Joint Committee functioning adequately; regrets that although the backlog is still relatively low, it increased slightly from the previous year to 129 in 2006; and reiterates its previous resolutions whereby it stresses the need to keep the backlog to a minimum;
14. regrets that by the end of 2006 a conclusion to the negotiations of the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the EEA had not been reached despite the stated goal of the respective Authorities and numerous recommendations of the EEA JPC calling for a simultaneous enlargement of the EU and EEA in order to ensure the homogeneity and good functioning of the EEA;
15. welcomes that the outstanding issues in the enlargement negotiations were finally resolved; and welcomes Bulgaria and Romania as new members of the EEA;
16. expresses its grave concern that a settlement in the enlargement negotiations was seriously delayed, essentially rendering the European Economic Area in a legal vacuum for nearly 4 months and thereby preventing the EEA Joint Committee to adopt decisions on legal acts for 5 months;
17. trusts that the delay in the EEA enlargement negotiations will not have any serious repercussions and stresses that disruptions as these can have grave consequences for the good functioning of the Agreement;
18. regrets that as a result of the delay in EEA enlargement negotiations, the EEA EFTA States' participation in EU programmes was left in a legal vacuum at a particularly sensitive time as regards a start up phase for a new generation of EU programmes which run from 2007-2013; expresses its hope that this situation will not have a lasting effect on the EEA EFTA States' important participation in EU programmes; and urges the relevant authorities to prevent such a situation from arising again;
19. requests that the EEA JPC is provided with further information on the EEA EFTA States' participation in EU programmes in the coming years and thus making it able to evaluate if the unfortunate situation of the first half of 2007 will have negative consequences for the good functioning of the EEA;
20. welcomes that during 2006 the EEA EFTA States continued to participate in a wide range of EU programmes which constitute a vital part of the EEA Agreement; and hopes that the EEA EFTA States will not encounter any new legal obstacles to participate in the new programmes;
21. encourages the EEA EFTA States to continue to participate in EU committees, comitology committees, programmes, expert and non-

comitology committees with the aim of influencing EU decision-shaping to the widest extent possible;

22. welcomes the substantial contributions from the EEA EFTA States towards the reduction of social and economic disparities in the enlarged Internal Market with the Financial Mechanisms 2004-2009; and underlines the need for more information on the administration of the Financial Mechanisms;
23. welcomes that the EU Member States' average transposition deficit for 2006 was 1.2%, marking the best result ever and finally meeting the 1.5% target set by the Heads of State and Government in 2001 and welcomes especially the fact that all EU Member States have improved their deficits;
24. welcomes that the EEA EFTA States did meet the 1.5% transposition deficit target in 2006 by bringing their deficits down to 1.4% but regrets that they remain 0.3% over the EU average;
25. asks the Commission and the EFTA Surveillance Authority to review how they might cooperate more closely in order to ensure even enforcement across the whole of the EEA;
26. welcomes the European Surveillance Authority's publication of its first State Aid Scoreboard in 2007;
27. instructs its President to forward this resolution to the EEA institutions, to the European Parliament and the EEA EFTA Parliaments and to the European Ombudsman.

## **Resolution**

### **On the EU Future Maritime Policy: Implications for the EEA**

The EEA Joint Parliamentary Committee of the European Economic Area:

- A. Having regard to the European Commission's Green Paper on Towards a Future Maritime Policy for the Union: A European vision for the oceans and seas, presented by the Commission on 7 June 2006,
  - B. having regard to the Icelandic and Norwegian contributions to the Green Paper on a European Maritime Policy,
  - C. recognising the work undertaken by the European Parliament in relation with the Future Maritime Policy of the Union,
  - D. recognising that the numerous regions and industry sectors whose activities relate to the sea are one of the European Union's engines of growth, whereas between 3 and 5% of Europe's GDP is estimated to be generated by marine-based industries and services and the maritime regions account for over 40% of GDP,
  - E. recognising that the future maritime policy constitutes a myriad of economic and societal opportunities for the Member States of the EEA and that it will have a wide-reaching impact on EU Member States and its immediate neighbours,
  - F. recognising that the EEA EFTA States, especially Iceland and Norway, with their rich maritime heritage, well established best practices, knowledge and understanding of the responsible utilisation of sea resources are natural partners in the constitution of a future European Maritime policy,
  - G. having regard to the fact that some of the areas covered by the Green Paper on a future Maritime Policy for the Union are applicable to the EEA-EFTA States within the framework of the EEA agreement, and that given Iceland's and Norway's geographical location, the two EEA EFTA States consider all matters related to the ocean and the seas to be highly important,
1. welcomes the initiatives taken by the European Commission to formulate a holistic and ambitious future maritime policy which will rest firmly on the Lisbon Strategy by stimulating economic growth, competitiveness and jobs in a sustainable way, and reflecting the principles of an ecosystem-based management and the improvement of the status of the ocean; stresses that EU action will be required only where it actually adds value to national and local action; and recognises the important role of regional and local authorities in the development of a successful integrated maritime policy;

2. welcomes the way in which Iceland and Norway have contributed constructively to the establishment of the future maritime policy and urges the European Commission to draw from that experience in the process ahead;
3. praises the unique consultation process which the European Commission has embarked upon in drawing up a proposal for a future Maritime Policy for Europe, whereby stakeholders' extensive participation has been encouraged;
4. acknowledges that the Green Paper lays the foundation for a future dynamic and pro-active European Maritime Policy which is directly linked to the internal market; and underlines that the EEA EFTA flagged fleet has a 26% share of the world fleet;
5. recommends the development of an integrated Maritime Policy for the EU which constitutes: A strict and deep-rooted commitment to sustainable management of marine resources; a forward-looking, market-based competitive strategy within an acceptable international trade and environmental framework; and, a high-quality coastal living environment based on proud marine cultural traditions;
6. agrees with the Green Paper's concerns on greenhouse gas emissions and the importance of seeking all possible means of reducing emissions generated by maritime activity; stresses the vital importance of continuing to promote and foster research and development of technologies aimed at enhancing energy efficiency or utilising environment-friendlier energy carriers; and encourages the EU to continue its support and financial contribution to such projects;
7. encourages that emissions from international shipping are included in a binding reduction scheme after 2012, which would apply to all ships regardless of the flag of register;
8. recognises that nitrate and sulphur emissions still represent a serious pollution problem; expresses its concern that if no further measures are introduced, by 2020, emissions of nitrate and sulphur from international shipping around Europe may have surpassed the total emissions from all land based sources in the EU Member States combined; welcomes the ongoing revision of MARPOL<sup>1</sup> Annex VI in the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), introducing limits to NOx and SOx emissions; and calls upon the EU to support this revision and to seek stricter requirements, for example mandatory use of cleaner fuels and phase-out of heavy fuel oil;
9. draws attention to the fact that innovation and new technology are the keys to future cleaner ships; urges strong support and funding at both national and regional level; and welcomes initiatives in developing innovative concepts for cleaner ships and for combating CO<sub>2</sub> emissions such as the Norwegian Ship-owner Association's zero emission policy, solar energy ships, new fuel cell technologies, and the promotion of hydrogen being used as fuel;

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<sup>1</sup> International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL)

10. emphasises that environmental and economical incentives play an important role in improving the environmental performance of shipping and encouraging more environmentally friendly behaviour; and encourages the EU to take steps to involve more European shipping companies, authorities and other stakeholders in setting key environmental performance indicators for shipping;
11. welcomes the EU commitment to install carbon capture and storage systems at several fossil power plants by 2015; and draws attention to the establishment of a North Sea Basin Task Force made up of both public and private bodies with the aim of providing a consistent basis for managing such activity;
12. underlines the importance of coastal zone management systems and stresses that the key to the success of such systems is a strong involvement and empowerment of local authorities combined with the active participation of all stakeholders in the planning process;
13. stresses that the aim of sustainable fisheries can only be achieved by an effective fisheries management system based on comprehensive scientific knowledge and best scientific advice, coupled with effective enforcement and control;
14. welcomes the EU's decision to review its discard policy, and draws attention to the effectiveness which economical methods have brought about in the campaign against discarding;
15. emphasises the importance of concerted international efforts in developing effective tools and enforcement procedures in order to combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing and stresses that vessels taking part in IUU activities should not receive any services from EEA coastal States unless emergencies arise;
16. draws attention to the importance of taking a common approach across different sectors when establishing risk assessment for maritime transport as an efficient tool to enhance safety at sea;
17. stresses the importance of developing a comprehensive network of existing and future vessel tracking systems for the coastal waters of the EU, with the aim of simplification and to prevent duplication of efforts; and underlines the importance of seeking collaboration with nations outside the EEA;
18. emphasises that instead of establishing an EU coast guard service, an enhanced co-operation and improved flow of information among existing coast guard services would be most beneficial; and stresses the importance of nations with adjacent territorial waters establishing a common advisory forum;
19. recognises that maritime transport is a global industry which calls for meaningful international cooperation for global solutions; and emphasises that efforts should continue to be focused on ensuring harmonised safety rules on international level through IMO and the International Labour Organisation (ILO), ensuring a level playing field;



20. stresses that the global nature of the maritime sector calls for stability and harmonisation of legislation; emphasises that the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) remains a legislative cornerstone in all matters related to the sea; and highlights the importance of both strengthening international rules set by IMO and ILO and ensuring that the European regulatory framework is as consistent with international rules as possible;
21. calls for rapid ratification of international conventions related to Maritime affairs; and recommends introducing a scoreboard of the Member States ratification of the most important international maritime conventions to be published by both the EU and the EEA Council;
22. draws attention to the fact that knowledge is a prerequisite for new and better jobs and that in order for Europe to remain at the cutting edge of knowledge and technology as regards the Maritime sector, it is essential to provide for more public long-term funding and economic support throughout the entire innovative/innovation process; supports a European marine-related research strategy to be developed; and recommends that the European Commission takes the initiative and develops a strategy through an extensive consultation process;
23. highlights the need to implement an integrated system of monitoring and research of marine areas, to ensure that monitoring is maintained in order to create a sufficiently sound scientific foundation for the decisions that must be made concerning the appropriate responses to various challenges;
24. emphasises that the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme is a crucial instrument for a successful implementation of the maritime policy; encourages well-functioning operational mechanisms to coordinate marine-related research across the nine different themes in the FP7; and underlines that when designing research and innovation support programmes, special attention is given to the industrial structures in the maritime industries;
25. supports the development of a European Marine Research Network and stresses that the co-ordination and integration of information can best be achieved by strengthening already existing systems, such as ICES<sup>2</sup>, IMO, WEFTA<sup>3</sup> and the Fisheries Forum.
26. Stresses the importance of a highly-qualified workforce in ensuring that the European integrated maritime economy remains competitive and therefore urges the Commission to promote the attractiveness of professions in the maritime sector and take measures to ensure better working and living conditions for seafarers;

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<sup>2</sup> International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)

<sup>3</sup> West European Fish Technologists Association (WEFTA)

27. supports the adoption of the Consolidated Maritime Labour Convention by ILO; urges rapid ratification by Member States; and calls upon relevant authorities to ratify STCW-F<sup>4</sup> concerning seafarers on fishing vessels.
28. encourages increased collaboration between the EU and the Arctic Council in issues concerning maritime affairs;
29. encourages both extensive research programmes on the North Sea ecosystem in a joint effort by the North Sea Countries in cooperation with the European Commission, and extensive research into changes in the climate and the sea in the far northern regions;
30. reminds all relevant authorities that as a result of intensifying exploitation of Arctic resources, marine traffic in the Arctic is already increasing at an accelerating pace; stresses that International co-operation is needed for the establishment of mandatory rules for Arctic shipping; and urges relevant authorities to monitor closely environmental developments connected to the opening of a Trans-Arctic sea route, which would call for an increased European cooperation and a common strategy;
31. welcomes the cultural and historical aspects of the Maritime Policy and underlines that there is a very close relationship between maintaining the cultural heritage of coastal regions and developing tourism in such areas;
32. supports a European action plan for encouraging best practises; reminds that strengthening of contacts between coastal communities can be a fruitful way to stimulate coastal tourism which relies on historical traditions; and encourages the development of a tourism strategy which emphasises sustainability and environmentally friendly operations.

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<sup>4</sup> International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel (STCW-F)