

Collection, management and use of data in the fisheries sector and support for scientific advice regarding the Common Fisheries Policy

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The Committee on Fisheries adopted the report by Paulo CASACA (PES, PT) amending – at 1st reading of the consultation procedure – the proposal for a Council regulation on establishing a Community framework for the collection, management and use of data in the fisheries sector and supporting scientific opinions on the Common Fisheries Policy.

The main amendments are as follows:

- the Member States and the Commission should be obliged to ensure sufficient levels of confidentiality in accordance with the data concerned, the characteristics of the end-user and the national law in question;
- “end-users” means national or international bodies which, whether or not scientific in nature, are active partners and participants in fisheries research or management; the degree of connectedness of the end-user to fisheries management and research shall determine his level of access to the primary, detailed or aggregated data;
- a new Article has been introduced stating that the Commission shall clearly define different levels of penalisation according to the seriousness of the failure to comply, as also “official request for information” and “incomplete national programme”;
- where charges are applied, public authorities shall publish and make available to those requesting information the scale of charges, specifying in what circumstances charges may or may not apply;
- in the definition of expenditure to be included in the national programme, account should be taken of expenditure arising from the self-sampling programmes;
- where the end-user is not a public body, a recognised scientific research centre, an international fisheries management organisation, or a body associated with any of the above for purposes of fisheries research or management, and where the persons, bodies or associations concerned are private, the public authorities should be allowed to **charge for providing the information** referred to in this Regulation. The sum charged, however, should be reasonable;
- with a view to verifying the existence of the mandatory primary data to be collected under this Regulation, the Commission may carry out spot checks on the national databases;
- the Commission, in cooperation with the Member States, may develop an IT platform for the exchange of the information enabling such checks to be made;
- the Commission shall provide for access to these data, which may include individual data, e.g. of a vessel. However, the confidentiality of the information of the economic agent must be safeguarded. Thus, the Commission may have access to aggregated (not individual) data, in line with the definition of aggregation to be included in the implementing regulation;

- Member States shall make data available to end-users to support scientific analysis, ensuring the confidentiality of such data and taking account of the following: i) detailed data as a basis for advice to fisheries management; ii) aggregated data: - in the interest of public debate and

stakeholder participation in policy development; - for publication for scientific purposes;

- the Commission shall each year draw up: i) a report for the European Parliament and the Council evaluating the means employed by each Member State, the appropriateness of the methods used and the results achieved in the collection and management of the data covered by Regulation (EC) No 2371/2002; ii) a report on the Community use of the data collected under the present Regulation.