

Conservation of fishery resources: catch documentation programme for bluefin tuna, *Thunnus thynnus*

2009/0116(COD) - 07/07/2010 - Final act

PURPOSE: to establish a catch documentation programme for bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*).

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Regulation (EU) No 640/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a catch documentation programme for bluefin tuna *Thunnus thynnus* and amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1984/2003.

CONTENT: the Council adopted a regulation establishing a catch documentation programme for bluefin tuna, following a first-reading agreement with the European Parliament under the ordinary legislative procedure.

As part of the measures to regulate stocks of bluefin tuna, to improve the quality and reliability of statistical data and in order to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal fishing, ICCAT adopted amendments to the bluefin tuna catch documentation programme at its annual meeting in Recife (Brazil) on 15 November 2009. These amendments entered into force on 1 June 2010 and need to be implemented by the EU.

The regulation implements conservation and management measures adopted by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), by incorporating the provisions of the ICCAT bluefin tuna catch documentation programme with a view to identifying the origin of all bluefin tuna.

The adopted measures include, inter alia, the following elements:

Bluefun tuna catch document: Member States shall require a completed bluefin tuna catch document for each bluefin tuna landed or transhipped at their ports, caged as specified in Annex IV, and harvested from their farms. A **new Annex IV** sets out instructions for the issuing, numbering, completion and validation of the catch document.

Under the Regulation, any such landing, **transhipment**, caging, harvest, domestic trade, import, export or re-export of bluefin tuna without a completed and validated catch document and, where applicable, a re-export certificate shall be prohibited.

Farm Member States shall ensure that bluefin tuna caught in the context of a joint fishing operation are placed in separate **cages** or series of cages and partitioned on the basis of joint fishing operations. They shall ensure that bluefin tuna are **harvested from farms in the same year in which they were caught**, or before the beginning of the purse seiners fishing period, if harvested in the following year. Where harvesting operations are not completed within that period, farm Member States shall complete and transmit an annual carry-over declaration to the Commission within ten days of the end of that period.

A validated catch document shall include, as appropriate, the information set out in Annex II. A catch document model is set out in Annex III.

Tagging: Member States may require their catching vessels or traps to affix a tag to each bluefin tuna, preferably at the time of kill, but not later than at the time of landing. Tags shall have unique Member State specific numbers and be tamper-proof. The tag numbers shall be linked to the catch document.

Re-export validation: Member States shall ensure that each lot of bluefin tuna which is re-exported from their territory is accompanied by a validated re-export certificate. The re-export certificate shall be validated by the competent authority of the re-exporting Member State.

Communication and conservation of validated documents: Member States shall communicate, by electronic means, a copy of all validated catch documents or re-export certificates, except in certain cases, as soon as possible and in any event within five working days of the date of validation, or without delay where the expected duration of the transportation should not take more than five working days, to the following: (a) the Commission; (b) the competent authorities of the Member State or CPC where the bluefin tuna will be domestically traded, or farmed or imported, and (c) the ICCAT Secretariat.

Delegated acts: the Commission is empowered to adopt delegated acts in accordance with Article 290 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union in respect of the transposition of new conservation measures adopted by ICCAT, thus updating and supplementing the Annexes to this Regulation.

Review: the Commission shall review this Regulation following the recommendations adopted by ICCAT, taking into account the updated scientific opinions on stocks size which will be submitted at its meetings, and shall submit proposals for any amendments that may be necessary.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 13/08/2010.