Fishery resources: technical and control measures in the Skagerrak

2012/0232(COD) - 27/02/2013 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Fisheries adopted the report by Werner KUHN (EPP, DE) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on certain technical and control measures in the Skagerrak and amending Regulation (EC) No 850/98 and Regulation (EC) No 1342/2008.

The parliamentary committee recommends that the European Parliament's position adopted at first reading according to the ordinary legislative procedure should be to amend the Commission's proposal as follows:

Entry into force: the Commission proposed that the landing obligation should take effect on the 1 January 2013. As it is so closely linked to the rules on quotas, it should reasonably take effect in the beginning of a quota year. As it would not be possible to have the rules in place before the end of this year, they should **take effect on the 1 January 2014**.

Geographical scope: the Regulation can only apply to the areas of the Skagerrak that falls within the jurisdiction of Denmark and Sweden. It would be applicable to all vessels fishing in those areas, including vessels from Norway. Reciprocally, EU vessels would be subject to Norwegian rules when fishing in the part of the Skagerrak that is under the jurisdiction of Norway.

Obligation to minimise catches of unwanted species and juveniles: Members introduced new provisions stipulating that anyone carrying out fishing activities in the Skagerrak shall avoid catches of unwanted species and catches below the minimum conservation reference size, inter alia, by selecting fishing gear and where and when the fishing effort takes place. The Member States concerned shall take all necessary measures to this end by making available **more selective gear**.

Members also introduced **an obligation to register and report all catches**.

The obligation to land all catches: the proposal sets out an obligation to land fish of in total 25 species named in Annex 1 to the Regulation. Members specify that notwithstanding the obligation to register all catches, the obligation to land all catches shall not apply to a species in a specific fishery where **it has been established that it has a high survival rate, provided that it can be separated from the main catch**. The Commission should also be empowered to adopt **delegated acts** to support the decision of the fishermen to release or not their catch.

Quota management: Member States shall ensure that fishing vessels flying their flag retaining on board fish for which the Member State has no quota **shall cease fishing immediately** and return to port.

Fishing gear specifications: Members wish to clarify that **trawls** having a mesh size equal to or less than 32 mm may only be used in fisheries for pelagic and industrial species. They propose raising to **80%** the threshold applicable to catches of pelagic and industrial species.

Remote electronic monitoring (REM): the amendments provide that a fishing vessel of 12 metres overall length or more fishing in the part of the Skagerrak that is in Union waters must have on board a fully functioning system comprising closed circuit television (CCTV), a global positioning system GPS, and sensors and transmitting devices before it is allowed to leave port.

This measure should apply according to the following timeline: (a) from **1 January 2015** for Union fishing vessels of 15 metres' length overall or more; (b) from **1 July 2016** for Union fishing vessels of 12 metres' length overall or more.

Data recorded by the CCTV cameras shall be **automated** using image recognition software and shall be treated in conformity with the applicable **data protection** rules and principles.