Common fisheries policy (CFP): landing obligation

2013/0436(COD) - 11/12/2014 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Fisheries adopted the report by Alain CADEC (EPP, FR) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Regulations (EC) No 850/98, (EC) No 2187/2005, (EC) No 1967/2006, (EC) No 1098/2007, No 254/2002, (EC) No 2347/2002 and (EC) No 1224/2009 and repealing (EC) No 1434/98 as regards the landing obligation (draft omnibus regulation).

It should be recalled that the reform of the common fisheries policy adopted in 2013 saw fundamental changes being made to the rules applicable to fisheries. More specifically, the basic common fisheries policy regulation (Regulation (EC) No 1380/2013) imposes a landing obligation for all catches. That obligation will enter into effect in a stepwise manner over the period 2015 to 2019.

Since this landing obligation conflicts with several EU regulations currently in force, the Commission has brought forward an ‘Omnibus’ regulation which seeks to amend seven regulations in parallel so as to bring them into line with the basic common fisheries policy regulation.

The committee recommended that the European Parliament’s position adopted at first reading following the ordinary legislative procedure should amend the Commission proposal as follows:

Landing obligation: Members considered that the changes made by the omnibus regulation should be **strictly limited to implementation of the landing obligation, and only to the fisheries concerned as from 1 January 2015**, which is to say:

- small pelagic fisheries (i.e. fisheries for mackerel, herring, horse mackerel, blue whiting, boarfish, anchovy, argentine, sardine and sprat);
- large pelagic fisheries (i.e. fisheries for bluefin tuna, swordfish, albacore tuna, bigeye tuna, blue and white marlin);
- fisheries for industrial purposes (i.e. fisheries for capelin, sandeel and Norway pout);
- fisheries for Baltic Sea salmon;
- the species which define fisheries activities in the Baltic Sea other than those already listed above.

Given that the landing obligation constitutes a radical change for fisheries, the report noted that 2015 will be a test year in terms of implementing that change. Lessons should be drawn from this when implementing the obligation in the fisheries concerned after 2015. It also stated that a **two-year adaptation period** should be granted, during which infringements of the landing obligation are not considered to be serious infringements.

Technical measures: Members also proposed to amend the basic regulation on CFP in order to clarify the current wording concerning the possibility of incorporating technical measures strictly linked to the landing obligation into the discard plans to allow for increased selectivity and for unintended catches of marine organisms to be reduced as far as possible.

Parallel market: lastly, considering that the Commission proposal does not allow certain undesirable effects of the landing obligation to be prevented, Members introduced amendments aiming to prevent the possible emergence of a parallel market in juvenile organisms.