

Multiannual recovery plan for Bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean

2015/0096(COD) - 19/01/2016 - Text adopted by Parliament, partial vote at 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted **amendments** to the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on a multiannual recovery plan for Bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean repealing Regulation (EC) No 302/2009.

The matter was **sent back for revision to the committee responsible** and the vote on the resolution was postponed until a subsequent plenary sitting.

The main amendments adopted in plenary are as follows:

Subject matter and scope: Parliament sought to improve the scope of the Regulation by paying particular attention to non-industrial fishing activities and to the most artisanal and sustainable gear types, such as traditional traps ("almadrabas", "tonnare"), which contribute very positively to the rebuilding of tuna stocks, due to their high level of selectivity and low environmental impact in marine ecosystems, and which are valuable in scientific terms.

Fishing plans: in a new article, Parliament proposed that the annual fishing plan submitted by each Member State shall provide for an **even breakdown of quotas** among the gear groups in order to help ensure compliance with individual quotas and by-catch allowances. Member States shall use transparent and objective criteria for the national allocation of the quotas, giving special consideration to the preservation and prosperity of small-scale, artisanal and traditional fishermen using traps and other selective fishing methods, and to the encouragement of such methods.

Fishing capacity management plans: Members introduced a reference to the "tonnage corresponding gross tonnage" and stipulated that by way of derogation from the provisions in the Regulation, Member States shall **review the Bluefin tuna fishing quota system**, which penalises small-scale fishermen, for the purpose of removing the monopoly currently exercised by large vessel owners and encouraging more sustainable fishing systems such as those used for small-scale fishing.

Minimum conservation reference size, incidental catch, by catch: the Common Fisheries Policy [basic Regulation](#) introduces a landing obligation, in which the concept of minimum size, linked to the discard obligation applied up to the last reform, has no longer sense. Therefore, Members replaced the concept of 'minimum size' with that of '**minimum conservation reference size**'. To recall, the minimum conservation reference size for Bluefin tuna caught in the eastern Atlantic and in the Mediterranean shall be 30 kg or 115 cm fork length.

Recreational and sport fishery: Parliament stipulated that any Bluefin tuna landed shall be **whole, gilled and gutted**. Each Member State shall take the necessary measures to ensure, to the greatest extent possible, the release of Bluefin tuna caught alive, especially juveniles, in the framework of recreational and sport fishing.

Fishing authorisations for vessels: an amendment specified that the fishing authorisation for Bluefin tuna and **may** require the vessel to proceed immediately to a port designated by it when the individual quota is deemed to be exhausted.

Landings: the proposal provides that the estimated quantities of Bluefin tuna retained on board may be notified at the agreed time of notification prior to arrival. If the fishing grounds are less **than four hours from the port**, the estimated quantities of Bluefin tuna retained on board may be modified at any time prior to arrival.

ICCAT Regional Observer Programme: Member States shall also ensure that an ICCAT regional observer is present during all transfers from one farm to another. ICCAT regional observers shall also be tasked to observe and monitor fishing and farming operations in compliance with the relevant ICCAT conservation and management measures.

Delegated acts: references to the exercise of the delegation for future amendments of the recovery plan have been deleted throughout the text. Parliament stressed that the transposition of the Regional Fisheries Management Organisations' (RFMO) Recommendations has to remain a joint European Parliament and Council competence under the ordinary procedure (co-decision).

Entry into force: Parliament proposed to change the entry into force to the twentieth day following that of its publication in the Official Journal of the European Union (as opposed to the third as proposed by the Commission).