Multiannual management plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean

2019/0272(COD) - 08/09/2020 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Fisheries adopted the report by Giuseppe FERRANDINO (S&D, IT) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a multiannual management plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean, amending Regulations (EC) No 1936 /2001, (EU) 2017/2107, and (EU) 2019/833 and repealing Regulation (EU) 2016/1627.

The aim of the proposal is to transpose into EU law Recommendation 18-02 of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) establishing a multiannual management plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean Sea. This recommendation was adopted at ICCAT's 21st special meeting, which was held in Dubrovnik from 12 to 19 November 2018.

The transposition covers all control measures that concern the catch and farming of bluefin tuna in EU waters and/or by EU vessels in the Convention Area.

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

Strict transposition of ICCAT Recommendation 18-02

Members proposed specific amendments to bring the proposal more in line with the ICCAT recommendation with regard to the following provisions:

- sport fishery, which shall be included in the proposal, and its definition;

- the definition of 'caging'; it is also suggested to change the terminology of the caging declaration and caging report;

- the possibility to provide for derogations as regards fishing seasons for the eastern Mediterranean and the Adriatic;

- as regards the transmission of VMS data, the possibility of providing for an exception for operations where there is a system of hailing in and out of port;

- the fixing of a limit of the percentage of the quota that may be allocated for farming purposes in the Adriatic Sea (Annex I);

- the possibility of providing for a timeframe for the provision of reports between the Member States authorities (Annex XI).

Alignment with ICCAT Recommendation 19-04

At its 26th ordinary meeting, held in Palma de Mallorca in November 2019, ICCAT adopted recommendation 19-04, which makes minor modifications to recommendation 18-02. Members proposed amendments to further align the text with ICCAT recommendation 19-04. These amendments concern, *inter alia*:

- the definition of a stereoscopic camera, which should also help to refine the number and weight of bluefin tuna;

- the possibility for Member States to request the transfer of up to 5% of their unused bluefin tuna quota from 2019 to 2020;

- the annual farming management plans of fishing capacity;

- reporting on quantities;

- the ICCAT regional observer programme;

- measures and programmes to estimate the number and weight of bluefin tuna to be caged;

- caging declaration and report;

- marketing measures;

- minimum standards for video recording procedures

Prolongation of the fishing season

The amended text provides that if a Member State demonstrates that, due to extraordinary weather conditions or a public health crisis, some of its purse seiners fishing for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean Sea were unable to use the fishing days allocated to them for the fishing season, that Member State may prolong the fishing season by an equivalent number of fishing days lost for the vessels concerned, up to a maximum of 10 days lost.

Small-scale fisheries

When allocating the fishing opportunities available to them, Member States shall distribute national quotas among the different fleet segments in a transparent and fair manner, aiming to redistribute part of the quota to traditional and small-scale fisheries. Member States shall also ensure that enough of their quota provides for bluefin tuna by-catches, particularly by traditional and artisanal fisheries.