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

2020/0302(COD) - 27/10/2020 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to establish a catch documentation programme for bluefin tuna.

PROPOSED ACT: Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the European Parliament decides in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and on an equal footing with the Council.

BACKGROUND: the objective of the Common Fisheries Policy is to ensure an exploitation of living biological resources that is sustainable economically, environmentally and socially.

The Union has been a contracting party to the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) since 14 November 1997. ICCAT has the authority to adopt recommendations on the conservation and management of the fisheries under its competence, which are binding on the contracting parties.

As part of the measures to regulate bluefin tuna stocks and to improve the quality and reliability of statistical data, and in order to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal fishing, ICCAT adopted a recommendation introducing the implementation of the bluefin tuna catch documentation scheme (BCD) and a recommendation developing the implementation of the bluefin tuna catch documentation scheme by introducing a mandatory electronic document system (eBCD).

The purpose of this proposal is to transpose and implement existing ICCAT measures, which are binding upon the contracting parties.

CONTENT: this proposal establishes a Union bluefin tuna catch documentation programme to implement the conservation and management measures adopted by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas relating to bluefin tuna catch documentation programme and the mandatory use of the electronic bluefin tuna catch documentation system with a view to identifying the origin of all bluefin tuna.

Specifically, the proposal:

- lays down general provisions on the use of bluefin catch and re-export certificates and sets rules for the recording and validation of catch and subsequent trade events of bluefin tuna. Particular rules are set for tagged fish;

- introduces additional provisions on verification before validation, transmission of data from eBCD users, the use of paper eBCD in exceptional cases and annual reporting to ICCAT;

- sets out a detailed list of cases where delegated powers are requested to address frequent changes to the recommendations adopted by ICCAT.