Conservation and enforcement measures applicable in the Regulatory Area of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO)

2022/0035(COD) - 28/06/2022 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Fisheries adopted the report by Isabel CARVALHAIS (S&D, PT) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU) 2019/833 laying down conservation and enforcement measures applicable in the Regulatory Area of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation.

The committee responsible recommended that the European Parliament's position adopted at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure should endorse the Commission's proposal.

The objective of this proposal is to transpose into EU law the amendments to the conservation and enforcement measures adopted by the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO), to which the EU is a Contracting Party, at its annual meeting in 2021. The NAFO Convention stipulates that the conservation measures adopted by the NAFO Commission are binding and that the Contracting Parties are obliged to implement them.

In the explanatory memorandum accompanying the draft resolution, the rapporteur stressed that it is essential to ensure compliance with the best conservation measures for fisheries in these waters, given the particular sensitivity of certain target species, especially those with long life cycles.

The rapporteur also insisted on:

- the transposition into the EU legal framework of several decisions taken at the NAFO annual meeting in September 2021, in particular, concerning the calculation of ‘Others’ quota, introducing flanking measures for Cod in Division 3M in relation to inspection of landings, as well as Greenland halibut;

- the transposition of revised provisions concerning additional procedures, serious infringements in relation to use of mesh sizes, grid or grate, and reinforced measures relating follow-up for infringements, as well as transmission of documents to NAFO and European Fisheries Control Agency.

Recalling that the gear used by fisheries in the Convention area is trawl gear, which affects the integrity of the seabed, the rapporteur stressed the importance of ensuring that the exploitation of a resource has a limited impact on habitats, other resources and other species.