Conservation of the Southern Bluefin Tuna: conservation and management measures

2021/0242(COD) - 02/02/2023 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 589 votes to 5, with 5 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down conservation and management measures for the conservation of Southern bluefin tuna.

The European Parliament adopted its position at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure.

The Regulation implements in Union law the **management, conservation and control measures** established under the Convention for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna which are binding on the Union. It implements the relevant resolutions of the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT) adopted until 2020, with the exception of those measures which are already part of Union law.

The proposed Regulation covers only the CCSBT provisions applicable to the EU, notably taking into consideration the specificity of the Union fleet (no targeted fishery, exclusively accidental by-catch in the past and none since 2012, no transhipments or landing) and the trade of Southern bluefin tuna.

In practice, most obligations will be only triggered if the Union fleet accidentally by-catches Southern bluefin tuna, which has not occurred since 2012, and retains those fish on-board, something that has not been reported to date.

Specifically, the Regulation includes:

- the ban on targeting of the Southern bluefin tuna, with only by-catches being allowed;

- the implementation of the CCSBT catch documentation scheme (CDS). By-catches of Southern bluefin tuna shall be tagged with catch tagging forms, while import, export and re-export documents are mandatory for the trading of Southern bluefin tuna;

- validation and verification of catch monitoring documents and tagging forms by flag Member States;

- the implementation of the CCSBT provisions on reviews and investigations related to the CDS and the maintenance of CDS records;

- the fixing of a SBF tag containing information on each whole SBF at the time of harvesting where SBF by-caught by Union fishing vessels is intended for export or re-export;

- the obligation to tranship SBF in port. Flag Member States will have to designate ports for transhipment of SBF for vessels flying their flag and communicate with the designated port States in order to share the information necessary for effective monitoring;

- implements the duty to cooperate in providing fishing vessels' data for: the investigation of incidents; cooperation related to the inclusion of a Union fishing vessel on the CCSBT Illegal Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) vessels list; reported cases of non-compliance; port inspection infringements;

- implements duties relating to monthly catch reports, and to annual and compliance reporting.

Personal data processed in the framework of this Regulation should be treated in accordance with the applicable provisions of Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Regulation (EU) 2018/1725.

Personal data processed under this Regulation should not be stored for a period longer than 10 years, except if those personal data are necessary to enable the follow-up of an infringement, an inspection or judicial or administrative procedures. In such cases, the personal data may be stored for up to 20 years. If personal data are retained for a longer period, the data shall be anonymised.

The Regulation provides for delegated powers to the Commission to provide for amendments to the CCSBT measures and to ensure that EU fishing vessels are treated on an equal footing with those of other contracting parties.