Harmonised safety regime for fishing vessels of 24 metres in length and over

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The Committee welcomes the Commission proposal as it will help to improve fishing safety standards. However, it stresses the need for appropriate measures to provide an accurate picture of the number and impact of accidents on fishing vessels, including fatalities, industrial accidents and industrial diseases that affect fishermen. While supporting the aim of making the requirements mandatory for third country vessels which wish to fish in Member States' internal or territorial waters or land their catch at an EU port, the Committee feels that this will be difficult to check. The Commission should encourage Member States to increase the means of checking, both on land and at sea. The Committee considers it vitally important that, as the Commission proposes, common safety standards and requirements be laid down for fishing vessels measuring 24 metres or more, as an initial step. It also supports the Commission's intention to study measures for existing vessels and for vessels of less than 24 metres on top of the measures already laid down for other vessels. These studies should be issued by 1 January 1998 so that the new proposals which the Commission intends to present can also cover these groups of vessels.