

Control measures in the north-east Atlantic fisheries (NEAFC), multilateral cooperation

2000/0280(CNS) - 30/10/2000 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to amend Regulation 2791/1999/EC laying down certain control measures applicable in the area covered by the Convention on future multilateral cooperation in the north-east Atlantic fisheries.

CONTENT : a Scheme of Control and Enforcement was adopted by the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) in 1998 and entered into force on 1 July 1999. It provides in particular for control measures that will apply to vessels flying the flag of Contracting Parties which operate in NEAFC areas, arrangements for inspections at sea which provide for reciprocal rights of inspection of vessels and the follow-up of infringements, and the inspection of non-Contracting Party vessels in port. This Scheme was transposed into Community law by Council Regulation 2791/1999/EC. The Council of Fisheries Ministers of 22 November 1999 decided, moreover, to introduce an 'ad hoc arrangement' for Community inspection and monitoring for the year 2000, with the responsibility for inspections divided between the Commission and the Member States. This 'ad hoc arrangement' was intended to allow sufficient time to evaluate the obligations of the Commission and the Member States, with the Commission required to submit appropriate proposals providing for a definitive regime before 30 September 2000. Although this evaluation is underway, it now appears that this one-year period is too short to fully appreciate the implementation constraints of the NEAFC Scheme. Furthermore, the Commission has just launched an overall review of monitoring in international waters and, more particularly, of the application by the Community of the inspection schemes of the regional fisheries organisations in their regulatory areas. The ad hoc arrangement should therefore be extended until 31 December 2003, with the Commission required to submit proposals by 30 September 2003 at the latest, and Regulation 2791/1999/EC should be amended accordingly.