

Conservation and management of fish stocks: statistical monitoring of bluefin tuna, swordfish and bigeye tuna

2002/0200(CNS) - 05/08/2002 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to introduce a system for the statistical monitoring of trade in bluefin tuna, swordfish and bigeye tuna within the Community. **CONTENT** : the European Community participates in regional fisheries organisations (RFOs) which provide a framework for regional cooperation in the conservation and management of fish stocks. In the last ten years a number of RFOs have adopted and implemented various programmes which seek, through the introduction of catch declarations, certificates of origin, monitoring and control arrangements and statistical document programmes, to control unlawful, unregulated and unreported fishing. The ICCAT has had in place a statistical document programme for bluefin tuna since 1993. At its seventeenth ordinary meeting in 2001, the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) adopted two recommendations, one on the introduction of a statistical document programme for swordfish and the other for bigeye tuna. At the same time, the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), at its sixth annual meeting in 2001, adopted a resolution on the introduction of a statistical document programme for bigeye tuna. The aim of these programmes is to improve the reliability of statistical data on catches of the species concerned and to provide information about trade flows. To that end the programmes seek to control imports, exports and re-exports of the products in question, using a statistical document validated by the competent authorities of the State concerned. The programmes, furthermore, impose an obligation on the contracting parties to ensure the collection and cross-checking of trade data. The purpose of this proposal is to incorporate in Community law the obligations laid down by the programmes and to establish the Member States' responsibility for seeing to it that they are fulfilled. In the case of bluefin tuna, the recommendations and resolutions adopted previously by the ICCAT concerning the statistical document programme have been incorporated in Community law by Council Regulation 858/94/EC of 12 April 1994 introducing a system for the statistical monitoring of trade in bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) within the Community, as last amended by Regulation 1446/99/EC of 24 June 1999. In order to ensure that the provisions on statistical documents are more easily readable and applied uniformly, Regulation 858/94/EC should be repealed and its provisions incorporated in this proposal.