

# Common fisheries policy: collection and management of fisheries data, Community framework

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The European Commission presented its report on the implementation of the Community Framework for the collection and management of data needed to conduct the common fisheries policy. The results from the 2002 exercise demonstrated that Member States have invested considerable effort in the implementation of the data collection Regulation 1639/2001 and devoted much time into the preparation of their national programmes. At the same time it is evident that these programmes are highly variable in quality and completeness. For some Member States a significant effort is still needed to be applied in order to fulfil the entire Regulation requirements. It will take some time to achieve a systematic data collection programme with a good control of its quality. Consequently, it has not been possible yet to measure the appropriateness of the methods used. Nevertheless, considerable progress has been made in a short period by the Member States in general and it can be concluded that the data collection Regulation 1639/2001 has demonstrated its relevance and necessity. The scientific community welcomed this new initiative and fully support it. The data collection framework should therefore be continued. The existing data collection framework system could be reinforced without requiring the collection of any new data, in particular by increasing the data quality control and the use of the data collected, and by introducing improved co-ordination at national and international level. To take into account the recommendations given by the STECF during its mid-term review meeting in July 2003, however, some modifications should be made in the short term (e. g. precision level as a goal, introduction of new species and surveys, consequences of the implementation of Recovery Plans and considerations on commercial catch per unit effort). It is appropriate to extend the range of data collected under this data collection Regulation to take into account these recommendations. This requires amending the existing Commission Regulation 1639/2001. This extension of scope and the implementation of the international co-ordination will raise the costs of the national Programmes. Moreover, the accession of new Member States will have consequences for the budget necessary to achieve the objectives of the data collection framework. As a consequence, an increase of the budget of the data collection Regulation 1639/2001 for the year 2005 is required and will be subject of a proposal by the Commission.