

Conservation of fishery resources: protection of juveniles of marine organisms

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The Committee has adopted the report by Robin Teverson (ELDR, UK) on the proposal for a Council regulation amending for the second time Regulation 850/98 for the conservation of fishery resources through technical measures for the protection of juveniles of marine organisms. The Commission believes that the only effective means of controlling the mesh size of fishing nets, and thereby restricting the catch of young undersized fish, is to introduce the so-called "one net rule". However, given the need for some vessels to operate in more than one region or to fish for more than one species during the same trip, the Commission proposal lays down four allowed mesh size combinations with percentage permitted composition of catch for each fishing region. However, in order to reinforce the effective control and enforcement of these provisions, the Commission is proposing that if two nets are carried, complying with the approved combinations, the mandatory use of the log book should be extended to previously exempt vessels. The Commission is proposing that Member States be required to report to it by 31 May 2001 on the application of the rules. The Fisheries Committee believes the Commission should then present appropriate proposals if necessary to Council and Parliament.