

Conservation of Antarctic marine living resources: fishing control

2007/0001(CNS) - 08/01/2007 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to amend Council Regulation 601/2004/EC laying down certain control measures applicable to fishing activities in the area covered by the Convention on the conservation of Antarctic marine living resources and repealing Regulations 3943/90/EEC, 66/98/EC and 1721/1999/EC.

PROPOSED ACT : Council Regulation

CONTENT : The Community has been a Contracting Party to the Convention on the conservation of Antarctic marine living resources since 1981. Conservation measures adopted under this Convention are binding upon Contracting Parties. It is therefore necessary to transpose the measures for the conservation and management of fish stocks referred to in the Convention into Community law.

The conservation and management measures adopted by the Commission for the conservation of Antarctic marine living resources (CCAMLR) include a set of rules regarding the monitoring of fishing activities. The arrangements for the control of fishing activities in the Convention area have been transposed into Community legislation by Council Regulation 601/2004/EC. This instrument needs to be updated to bring it into line with the amended rules adopted at the CCMLR annual meetings in 2004 and 2005 and with the Community system of catch and effort reporting. Some of the new measures have already been included, on a provisional basis, in the annual TAC and Quota Regulation for 2006. For those measures it is now necessary to create a more permanent basis in Community legislation.

Most of rules introduced since 2004 are aiming at enhancing the monitoring of the vessels, which are authorised to conduct fishing activities in CCAMLR waters, and to combat illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing activities in the regulatory area. CCAMLR adopted many of these measures on the basis of proposals prepared by the Community, in cooperation with a number of other CCAMLR Parties. With the presentation of these proposals the Community continued its traditionally active role in fighting IUU fishing, which has become a serious threat for the vulnerable marine environment around the Antarctic Continent.

Other measures adopted in 2004 and 2005 include a prohibition of discharging various forms of waste in order to protect the environment and avoid incidental catches of seabirds. Furthermore, CCALMR decided to introduce a tagging programme with a view to improving the knowledge of the situation and the existing inter-linkages between various toothfish stocks in the Southern Ocean, which constitute the main species subject to commercial fishing activities.