Multi-annual recovery plan for bluefin tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean

2007/0058(CNS) - 03/04/2007 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to adopt a Community recovery plan for bluefin tuna.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Regulation.

CONTENT: as a member of the ICCAT "International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas" the Community is obliged to implement ICCAT recommendations into Community law. In 2006, the ICCAT adopted a 15 year recovery plan for bluefin tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean. This plan provides for a reduction of the TAC level until 2010; restrictions on fishing within certain areas and time periods; a new minimum size; measures concerning sport and recreational fishing activities; and control measures such as the ICCAT Scheme of Joint International Inspection. As a provisional measure, the Community adopted a Regulation to apply the recovery plan for the year 2007 only.

The purpose of this proposal is to implement the fifteen year ICCAT recovery plan on a permanent basis for the entire duration of the plan. The proposal is in keeping with the general pattern of the sustainable exploitation of tuna stocks in compliance with the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy and contributes to sustainable development.

In summary, the proposed Regulation:

- lays down the general rules for Community application of the "Multiannual recovery Plan for Bluefin Tuna" as recommended by the ICCAT. The plan covers the Eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean;

- has as its objective to achieve a biomass corresponding to the maximum sustainable yield (Bmsy) with greater than 50% probability;

- sets TACs per year according to the following scheme: in 2008 – 28.500 tonnes; in 2009 – 27.500 tonnes; and in 2010 – 25.500 tonnes;

- allows the Member States to allocate their bluefin tuna quota to fishing vessels flying their flag;

- sets out detailed arrangements concerning: closed fishing season; the use of planes; minimum sizes; sampling plans for bluefin tuna; by-catches; recreational fishing; sport fishing; the registering of vessels authorised to fish for bluefin tuna; the registering of tuna traps authorised to fish for bluefin tuna; designated ports for landing; recording requirements; joint fishing operations; catch reports; landings; transhipments; caging operations; trap activities; port or farm inspections; cross checking; observer programmes and the ICCAT scheme of joint international inspection.

The proposal has no implications on the Community budget.