

Conservation of fishery resources: catch documentation programme for bluefin tuna, *Thunnus thynnus*

2009/0116(COD) - 03/08/2009 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to establish a catch documentation programme for bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*).

PROPOSED ACT: Council Regulation.

CONTENT: as part of the measures to regulate fisheries of bluefin tuna, improve the quality and reliability of statistical data and prevent, deter and eliminate illegal fishing, the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) adopted at its annual meeting in Marrakesh (Morocco) on 24 November 2008, Recommendation No 08-12 amending Recommendation No 07-10 on a bluefin tuna catch documentation programme. This Recommendation entered into force on 17 June 2009.

The proposal aims to establish a Community bluefin tuna catch documentation programme in order to support the implementation of conservation and management measures adopted by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT).

Member States shall require a completed bluefin tuna catch document for each bluefin tuna landed at its ports, delivered to, and harvested from its farms.

Each consignment of bluefin tuna domestically traded, imported into or exported or re-exported from the territory of the Community shall be accompanied by a validated catch document, except in certain cases involving tagging as specified in the text, and, as applicable, an ICCAT transfer declaration or a validated bluefin tuna re-export certificate.

Any such landing, transfer, delivery, harvest, domestic trade, import, export or re-export of bluefin tuna without a completed and validated catch document or a re-export certificate shall be prohibited. The proposal states also that Member States shall ensure that each bluefin tuna consignment which is re-exported from their territory be accompanied by a validated re-export certificate. However, in cases where farmed bluefin tuna is imported live, the re-export certificate shall not apply.

The proposal contains provisions on validation and tagging as well as on communication and verification of documentation and transmission of data.

The current ICCAT bluefin tuna statistical programme, which only covers import and export, was not designed to provide a mechanism to offer direct control on bluefin tuna fisheries. In order to ensure that the provisions in the ICCAT bluefin tuna catch documentation programme are applied uniformly, the relevant provisions of Regulation (EC) No 1984/2003 introducing a system for the statistical monitoring of trade in bluefin tuna, swordfish and bigeye tuna within the Community must be repealed and replaced by this draft Regulation.