

# Procedure file

Basic information	
CNS - Consultation procedure Regulation	2004/0252(CNS) Procedure completed
Monitoring fisheries activities and conservation of fisheries resources: electronic recording and reporting of fishing activities, remote sensing	
Repealed by <a href="#">2008/0216(CNS)</a>	
Subject 3.15.01 Fish stocks, conservation of fishery resources 3.15.04 Management of fisheries, fisheries, fishing grounds 3.15.07 Fisheries inspectorate, surveillance of fishing vessels and areas	

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	<b>PECH</b> Fisheries		25/11/2004
		PSE <a href="#">CASACA Paulo</a>	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	<b>ENVI</b> Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	<a href="#">Agriculture and Fisheries</a>	<a href="#">2774</a>	19/12/2006
	<a href="#">Agriculture and Fisheries</a>	<a href="#">2763</a>	20/11/2006
European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner	
	<a href="#">Maritime Affairs and Fisheries</a>	BORG Joe	

Key events			
28/10/2004	Legislative proposal published	<a href="#">COM(2004)0724</a>	Summary
17/11/2004	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
11/07/2005	Vote in committee		Summary
18/07/2005	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading	<a href="#">A6-0238/2005</a>	
06/09/2005	Results of vote in Parliament		
06/09/2005	Decision by Parliament	<a href="#">T6-0316/2005</a>	Summary
19/12/2006	Act adopted by Council after consultation of Parliament		
19/12/2006	End of procedure in Parliament		

### Technical information

Procedure reference	2004/0252(CNS)
Procedure type	CNS - Consultation procedure
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Regulation
	Repealed by <a href="#">2008/0216(CNS)</a>
Legal basis	EC Treaty (after Amsterdam) EC 037
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	PECH/6/24707

### Documentation gateway

Legislative proposal	<a href="#">COM(2004)0724</a>	28/10/2004	EC	Summary
Amendments tabled in committee	<a href="#">PE357.975</a>	14/06/2005	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading	<a href="#">A6-0238/2005</a>	18/07/2005	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading	<a href="#">T6-0316/2005</a> <a href="#">OJ C 193 17.08.2006, p. 0026-0067 E</a>	06/09/2005	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	<a href="#">SP(2005)4139</a>	20/10/2005	EC	

### Additional information

European Commission	<a href="#">EUR-Lex</a>
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### Final act

[Regulation 2006/1966](#)

[OJ L 409 30.12.2006, p. 0001](#) Summary

[Corrigendum to final act 32006R1966R\(01\)](#)

[OJ L 036 08.02.2007, p. 0003](#)

## Monitoring fisheries activities and conservation of fisheries resources: electronic recording and reporting of fishing activities, remote sensing

**PURPOSE** : to improve the electronic recording and reporting of fishing activities and on means of remote sensing.

**PROPOSED ACT** : Council Regulation.

**CONTENT** : the European Community is at the forefront in introducing modern technologies in order to improve management and monitoring of fisheries activities. Since 1992 it promoted the introduction of the satellite-based vessel monitoring system (VMS) as a tool to efficiently control its fishing fleet, irrespective of where it is operating, and third country fleets when operating within Community waters. After a series of pilot projects, the fitting on board of a vessel localisation device became mandatory for certain categories of vessels. As of 1 January 2005, save few exceptions, all Community vessels greater than 15 metres in length overall will be subject to VMS and cannot fish without an operational satellite localisation device on board.

A further step towards the utilisation of modern technologies is now proposed. The rational exploitation of fisheries resources, which is one of the main aims of the Common Fisheries Policy, requires accurate and timely reporting of information relating to fishing activities, such as

quantities of catches on board, species, time spent at fishing, the area where catches have been taken and the gears used. This essential information is currently collected by the masters of the fishing vessels by recording it with a pen on a paperbound logbook. The same procedure is used when catches are transhipped, landed, transported or sold.

As a consequence, in order to be gathered, analysed and transmitted to the authorities in charge of managerial or control tasks, this information needs to be digitalised. This process is slow, costly and conducive to typing mistakes which can hinder the quality of the data.

In order to make it more efficient, accurate and less expensive, the Commission favours an electronic recording and reporting system which will replace the current manual and cumbersome process. This system will be designed to alleviate the administrative burden on the masters and the main actors of the commercial chain and dramatically simplify the tasks of the national authorities.

Pilot projects on electronic recording and reporting of information relating to fisheries activities have been carried out in recent years. Some have already been conducted with conclusive results, others are still ongoing. There is no doubt about the feasibility of the electronic recording of fishing activities. Specific software is already available on the market. What is necessary now is a legislative text laying down the minimal requirements.

The setting of technical specifications, which are required in order to satisfy Community and third countries legislation, is the aim of an international project on secured and harmonised electronic logbook. This project is currently being carried out and specifications will be made available in 2005. A Commission Regulation will amend the current legislation on logbook and other recording requirements accordingly.

With a view to facilitating the introduction of this technology, the Community may grant financial assistance to fishermen as well as to national authorities under the framework of Decision 2004/465/EC, as it did in the past in order to promote the setting up of the vessel monitoring systems.

Furthermore, the Commission proposes to take advantage of the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) in order to track fishing vessels operating in a given fishing zone which may be in breach of national or Community legislation. Remotely sensed images may be used to detect such vessels. This technology is not new since it is already in use in other fields. Pilot projects focused on fishing activities have been carried out and they have proved to be successful. The objective is to cross-check the status of fishing vessels detected, thanks to this technology (Vessel Detection System), with position reports from VMS. Fisheries Monitoring Centres may wish to further investigate as regards those vessels which do not transmit position reports.

## Monitoring fisheries activities and conservation of fisheries resources: electronic recording and reporting of fishing activities, remote sensing

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The committee adopted the report by Paulo CASACA (PES, PT) broadly approving the proposal under the consultation procedure, subject to a number of amendments:

- information contained in the electronic record should be made available for scientific research, but should not contain secret commercial information. Moreover, confidentiality should be ensured so that fishermen will have confidence in the new system;
- the Commission should provide a detailed financial table explaining how the system will be financed;
- the Community should grant financial assistance to fishermen and national authorities in order to facilitate the purchase of equipment, its installation and special training;
- the regulation should enter into force on 1 January 2008 and not on 1 January 2006, as proposed by the Commission. MEPs argued that the implementation of the system could not be achieved for another three years at least.

## Monitoring fisheries activities and conservation of fisheries resources: electronic recording and reporting of fishing activities, remote sensing

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The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by Paulo CASACA (PES, PT) and made a few amendments to the Commission's proposal:

- recitals had stated that pilot projects on electronic recording and reporting as well as on remote sensing have proved to be valid and cost-effective. Parliament deleted this and stated that such methods of monitoring still require a series of adjustments before definitive conclusions can be reached as to their use;
- the master's obligation to record and send information by electronic means will exempt the master of the vessel from any obligation to record such information on paper.

There are some new clauses:

- information will be made available for scientific research, but such information will not contain sensitive or secret commercial information, and confidentiality must be ensured for all information electronically recorded and transmitted by the masters;
- Community Agencies may use the images in order to carry out their duties and shall share those images to the greatest extent possible;
- the Commission will specify in a detailed financial table the source of the financing as well as the total costs and how those are shared between the Community and the Member States;
- The Community will grant a financial assistance to national authorities and fishermen with a view to facilitating the purchase of equipment, its installation and special training;
- The Commission must finance, jointly with the Member States, the costs relating to the installation of Vessel Monitoring Systems in vessels of

more than 15 metres in length (overall) and to the sending of messages directly linked to the electronic logbook;

-the entry into force of the legislation is set at 1 January 2008, rather than 1 January 2006.

## Monitoring fisheries activities and conservation of fisheries resources: electronic recording and reporting of fishing activities, remote sensing

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**PURPOSE:** to establish an obligation to electronically record and transmit relevant information relating to fishing activities, including landing or transshipments of catches and sales note, and an obligation to set up a means of remote sensing.

**LEGISLATIVE ACT:** Council Regulation 1966/2006/EC on electronic recording and reporting of fishing activities and on means of remote sensing.

**CONTENT:** the Council unanimously adopted a regulation on electronic recording and reporting of fishing activities and on means of remote sensing. The Regulation comes about as a result of the need properly to monitor fisheries activities through the most appropriate means. Control on quantities caught is mainly carried out by collecting information on catches, landings, transshipments, transports and sales, while control on fishing effort is mainly carried out by collecting information on the characteristics of the vessel, time spent on fishing and gears used.

Pilot projects on electronic recording and reporting as well as on remote sensing have been carried out during recent years by Member States and other countries. They have proved to be valid and cost-effective.

The Regulation establishes the conditions under which electronic recording and reporting, as well as means of remote sensing, must be used for control purpose. The Regulation provides for the following:

- the obligation for fishing vessels exceeding 24 meters in length to electronically record and transmit data after 24 months following the entry into force of the implementing rules. For fishing vessels exceeding 15 meters in length, the phasing-in period will be 42 months following the entry into force of the implementing rules;
- as from 1 January 2009 and where there is clear evidence of a cost benefit in relation to the traditional control means for the detection of fishing vessels operating illegally, Member States will ensure that their Fisheries Monitoring Centres possess the technical capacity to match the positions derived by remotely sensed images sent to earth by satellites or other equivalent systems with the data received by the vessel monitoring system, in order to assess the presence of fishing vessels in a given area;
- the obligation to electronically record and transmit sales notes and, where appropriate, take-over declarations will apply from 1 January 2009 to registered buyers, registered auctions, or other entities or persons authorised by Member States that are responsible for the first sale of fishery products with an annual financial turnover in first sales of fishery products in excess of EUR 400 000.

As regards the financial implications of the implementation of the ERS and remote sensing, the Commission made a statement to the effect that capital and training costs linked to ERS and VDS/remote sensing are eligible for EC financing under regulation 861/2006/EC establishing Community financial measures for the implementation of the common fisheries policy and in the area of the Law of the Sea.

The formats which national competent authorities will use to exchange information for control and inspection purposes will be defined in detailed implementing rules.

**ENTRY INTO FORCE :** 06/01/2007.