

# CAPE

Coalition pour des Accords  
de Pêche Équitables

# CFFA

Coalition for Fair Fisheries  
Arrangements

December 6th, 2007

*Court of Auditors report:*  
**EU Common Fisheries Policy falls short on IUU:  
remedies urgently required**

On December 4th 2007, the European Court of Auditors published a Special Report<sup>1</sup>, exposing the failure by Member States to effectively control fishing activities by their fleets and demonstrates the urgent need to seriously strengthen EU control and inspection systems. Despite claims that existing rules are sufficient to prevent or seriously limit Illegal, Unreported, unregulated (IUU) fishing by EU fleets, the Court of Auditor's report states that "*despite recent improvements, the control, inspection and sanction mechanisms in place are not capable of ensuring that the rules on managing the fisheries resources, ... are effectively applied.*" adding that "*If the political authorities want the CFP to achieve its objective of sustainable exploitation of the fisheries resources, the present control, inspection and sanction mechanisms must be strengthened considerably* []."

In that context, Development NGOs reiterate their support to the proposal for a Council Regulation establishing a system to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing<sup>2</sup>. In addition, the Commission tabled a proposal on the management of '*Authorisations for fishing activities of Community fishing vessels outside Community waters and the access of third country vessels to Community waters*' which, we feel, contains effective control measures and sanctions complementing those in the proposal on IUU fishing. In particular, we welcome the fact that the Commission recognises that the Community has a responsibility, as flag state, in the correct application of the fisheries agreements with third countries. Therefore, we fully support the proposal that fishing authorisations for vessels that have not complied with their obligations during the preceding year, or that have been blacklisted as "IUU vessel", should be refused.

In its response to the Commission's consultation on IUU fishing<sup>3</sup>, the EU Advisory

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<sup>1</sup> Special Report No 7/2007

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=ECA/07/35&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

<sup>2</sup> In 2008, the Commission will also proceed to the much needed review and revision of the Control Regulation.

<sup>3</sup> ACFA OPINION ON A NEW STRATEGY ENVISAGED BY THE COMMISSION FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST ILLEGAL, UNREPORTED AND UNREGULATED (IUU) FISHING ACFA – EP(07)38 Final - Brussels, 30 March 2007

Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture stated that it considers that the effectiveness of the existing rules and controls should be assessed before introducing new legislative provisions, particularly for EU fleets. In the light of the findings and conclusions of the Court of Auditors' report, it is obvious that new and stricter measures are needed, including for EU fleets.

The Commission's proposal on IUU fishing already outlines some solutions and the review and revision of the Control Regulation in 2008 will provide the opportunity to adopt further corrective action.

In the light of the Court of Auditor's report, Development NGOs expect appropriate proposals made by the Commission to be supported by Member States and the EU fishing industry to speedily remedy to the current situation.

Failing that, how could the EU justify taking repressive action, including restrictive trade measures against other States, their vessels and companies without being attacked for discrimination, and rightly so?

As stated in CFFA's preliminary comments on the Commission proposal on IUU fishing, CFFA deplored the absence of concrete measures proposed to ensure that developing countries have the capacity to comply with the proposed measures whether they relate to control of fishing activities in their waters and/or the certification of fisheries products caught in their waters or processed on their territory and destined for the EU market.

It is CFFA's understanding that the Commission is currently drawing up an analysis of the profile of all its partner countries with the objective of identifying, among others, their control capacity and needs as well as preparing a guide to explain the new responsibilities the proposed IUU measures would impose. The Commission may also propose to organise training programmes at regional level as well as accompanying measures and cooperation arrangements for the implementation of such measures.

Development NGOs are not aware of a consultation process on these matters and call on the Commission to ensure the participation of all stakeholders, especially in partner countries and in particular artisanal fishermen and fishing communities who are the main victims of IUU fishing and are also best placed to identify needs and solutions adapted to the context in which they operate.

For more information

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