# Opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee on 'Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU) 2017/2107 laying down management, conservation and control measures applicable in the Convention area of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) and Regulation (EU) …/2022 establishing a multiannual management plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean'

*(COM(2022) 171 final — 2022/0111(COD))*

(2022/C 365/10)

Rapporteur working alone: **Javier GARAT PÉREZ**

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| Referrals | European Parliament, 2.5.2022<br>Council, 23.5.2022 |
| Legal basis | Articles 43(2) and 304 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union |
| Section responsible | Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment |
| Adopted in section | 31.5.2022 |
| Outcome of vote (for/against/abstentions) | 63/0/0 |
| Adopted at plenary | 15.6.2022 |
| Plenary session No | 570 |
| Outcome of vote (for/against/abstentions) | 211/1/4 |

## 1. Conclusions and recommendations

1.1. The EESC considers it appropriate and necessary to transpose into EU law the recommendations adopted by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), given that the EU is a contracting party to the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas and in order to comply with the conservation and enforcement measures adopted at its annual meetings in 2006, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2021.

1.2. The EESC believes it is essential that all contracting parties comply with the recommendations adopted by ICCAT in order to ensure a level playing field for all operators.

## 2. Gist of the Commission proposal

2.1. The main aim of the proposal is for the EU to transpose into its law the new conservation and enforcement measures adopted by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (hereinafter ICCAT) at its annual meetings in 2006, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2021, as a contracting party to the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (hereinafter the ICCAT Convention) since 14 November 1997.

2.2. The ICCAT Convention establishes a regional framework for the conservation and management of tuna and tuna-like species in the Atlantic Ocean and adjacent waters and allows for the adoption of recommendations that are binding on the contracting parties.

2.3. The proposal amends Regulation (EU) 2017/2107 of the European Parliament and of the Council [1], which already incorporated ICCAT management, conservation and control measures, as regards measures concerning the following species: tropical tuna, northern and southern albacore, sailfish and blue and white marlin.

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[1] Regulation (EU) 2017/2107 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2017 laying down management, conservation and control measures applicable in the Convention area of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), and amending Council Regulations (EC) No 1936/2001, (EC) No 1984/2003 and (EC) No 520/2007 (OJ L 315, 30.11.2017, p. 1).

2.4. It also reviews billfish data reporting, shortfin mako sharks, the health and safety of observers in ICCAT regional programmes, the responsibilities of scientific observers and updates to the ICCAT species list.

2.5. Furthermore, the proposal also amends Regulation (EU) …/2022 establishing a multiannual management plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean concerning the Farm Member State annual carryover declaration and certain caging obligations.

2.6. In order to swiftly incorporate future ICCAT recommendations into EU law, the power to adopt acts is to be delegated to the Commission with regard to the following aspects: tropical tuna capacity limitations and the reporting of its annual capacity fishing plan; the annual carryover for bigeye tuna, North and Southern Atlantic Albacore tuna and North and South Atlantic swordfish; management plans for fish-aggregating devices (FADs); the number of instrumental buoys; requirements for and prohibition of FAD periods; restrictions on the number of vessels fishing for North Atlantic Albacore; the conditions for catching and retaining shortfin mako sharks; sea turtle survival; the minimum percentage of observer coverage and percentage coverage measurement; and amending the list of ICCAT species.

3. **General comments**

3.1. The EESC deems it appropriate and necessary to incorporate into EU law the ICCAT recommendations made at its annual meetings in 2006, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2021, as the EU is a contracting party to the ICCAT Convention and such action would therefore reflect the scope of its powers and the binding nature of these recommendations.

3.2. The EESC believes it is essential that all contracting parties comply with the recommendations adopted by ICCAT in order to ensure a level playing field for all operators.

Brussels, 15 June 2022.

*The President*
*of the European Economic and Social Committee*
Christa SCHWENG