

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0288/10
by Michail Tremopoulos (Verts/ALE)
to the Commission

Subject: Ban on the international trade in bluefin tuna

The International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) met recently in Recife, Brazil. It decided at this meeting to reduce the annual catch of bluefin tuna to 13 500 metric tonnes in 2010 compared to 22 000 in 2009. However, this decision can only seal the fate of the bluefin tuna, since the scientific data support a total cessation of fishing for this species if it is to have any chance of recovery by 2019. In addition, the fishing season for live bluefin tuna by purse seining fleets has been reduced to one month, which however still falls within the reproductive period, i.e. from 15 May to 15 June.

According to international environmental organisations, such as the WWF¹ and Greenpeace², but also the FAO³, the only hope of saving the bluefin tuna now lies in banning the international trade in this species by registering it in Annex 1 of the CITES Convention (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) which will be decided on in Qatar in March 2010.

On the basis of the above, will the Commission say:

Which measures and negotiating positions does it intend to adopt for the CITES Conference so as to save this endangered species?

¹ http://www.wwf.gr/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=619:2009-11-17-10-46-44&catid=70:2008-09-16-12-10-46&Itemid=90.

² <http://www.greenpeace.org/greece/marine-reserves/news/save-tuna>.

³ http://www.panda.org/what_we_do/footprint/smart_fishing/sustainable_fisheries/bluefin_tuna/?184061/UN-experts-back-proposal-for-bluefin-tuna-trade-ban.