Press release | 18.03.2010

Bluefin tuna

CITES vote ‘catastrophic’ for both bluefin tuna and fishing industry

Under the immediate economic pressures of the fishing industry and the Japanese sushi market, a majority at the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) conference today rejected (1) a motion to list the endangered bluefin tuna on its Appendix 1, which would have introduced a ban in the international trade of the species. This decision will stand unless there is a U-turn on the final day of the CITES meeting in Doha, Qatar.

Spanish Green MEP **Raül Romeva**, EU Parliament rapporteur for the bluefin tuna issue, commented :

‘Today's vote is catastrophic for both the bluefin tuna and the long-term future of the fishermen who depend on it. It is senseless and scandalous that short-term economic interests are being allowed to drive the bluefin tuna to extinction. For the sake of providing sushi now, the fishing industry appears willing to commit hara-kiri in the near future.

The EU must now do everything it can to save the future of this fish at the next ICCAT meeting in November 2010. The only way to give the bluefin tuna a chance of survival is to urgently close the fishery.’

Notes to editors:

(1) 20 votes in favour of Appendix 1 listing, 68 votes against and 30 abstentions.

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