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Press release | 10.06.2010

Bluefin tuna fishery closure

A necessary step, but too little too late

After scarcely a week of fishing, the *purse seine*bluefin tuna quotas (1) allocated to European fishermen in the Mediterranean have been reached. Maria Damanaki, European Commissioner for Fisheries, acting on behalf of the commission has been compelled to close the fishery to prevent further weakening of already steadily decreasing stocks. Green MEPs, however, insist that the fishery should not have been opened in the fist place.

Commenting on the closure, Green MEPs **Jean Paul Besset** and **Raül Romeva** said:

"That the *purse seine* quotas have been reached in just a few days clearly shows the excess fishing capacity of the fleet, a scandal when you consider how many of these vessels have received subsidies from the European taxpayer. We call upon the EU to push for a moratorium on fishing for bluefin tuna at the next meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tuna (ICCAT) which meets in Paris in November. The survival of bluefin tuna in our seas depends upon it."

Next Thursday in Strasbourg the EP will debate and vote on **Raül Romeva's** report "A catch documentation programme for bluefin tuna (Thunnus thynnus)".

Note to editors:

1) *Purse seine*refers to a type of net and fishing system.

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Opinion

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