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Press release | 12.06.2013

Illegal fisheries

EU blacklist must be expanded after EP all clear

The European Parliament today approved a new rapid procedure for listing countries not cooperating in the fight against illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing (IUU). This clears the way for the Commission to add additional countries to the current list (1) and to publish the list of vessels involved. Commenting after the vote, Green fisheries spokesperson and EP draftsperson/rapporteur for the file **Räul Romeva** stated:

“The EU's illegal fishing blacklist is a crucial tool for clamping down on illegal fishing and MEPs have today given the go-ahead to a rapid procedure for adding countries to this list. With IUU fishing a major threat to vulnerable fish stocks, transparency of those states and boats involved is a crucial measure for tackling the problem. These proposals will clear the way for the EU to add other countries (like South Korea) to the list of non-cooperating states, with listed countries facing possible sanctions.

"The Commission must expand the current list to include other countries for which there is clear evidence of illegal fishing. With repeated cases of illegal fishing and related human rights abuses, notably in West African waters, the European Commission must add South Korea to the blacklist. It must also finally publicly list those vessels engaging in IUU fishing: this would be crucial to support efforts to address the problem.

“IUU fishing remains a major threat accounting for up to one-third of global catches. While the EU has introduced tougher rules, illegal fishing continues to be a major problem, also within the EU fishing industry. EU fisheries companies have vessels flagged in or operating out of some of the countries listed today (and other countries with a lax approach to illegal fishing), enabling them to evade EU regulations.

“If the countries on the list do not make swift improvements, the Commission must propose sanctions, including – but not limited to – trade sanctions. All non-cooperating countries must be treated in the same way, regardless of EU interests or special ties”

(1) The list comprises 8 countries: Belize, the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Fiji, the Republic of Guinea, the Republic of Panama, the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, the Togolese Republic and the Republic of Vanuatu.

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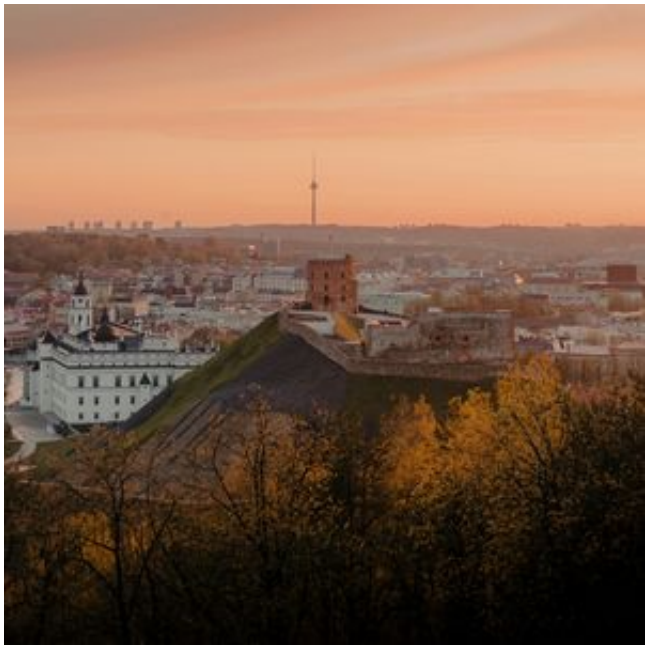
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