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Illegal fisheries

EU must get serious on global illegal fishing

The European Parliament fisheries committee today adopted a report by Greens/EFA MEP Isabella Lövin on illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. The report highlights the particular responsibility of the EU to step up efforts to combat IUU fishing both by pushing for greater international efforts and by properly implementing EU rules. After the vote, **Isabella Lövin** said:

"With many fish stocks around the world already perilously threatened, illegal fishing could be the final straw. While the EU now has stronger rules on IUU fishing, IUU is a global problem, accounting for up to one-third of annual marine catches; the EU needs to do more to promote effective international cooperation to combat illegal fishing.

"Given the mobility of fishing vessels, fish stocks, fish products and financing, only international cooperation can be effective and this report suggests various ways in which international community should cooperate to end illegal fishing. We need to ensure that ruthless operators cannot simply change the flag of their vessels to avoid their responsibilities.

"As the EU imports over 60 percent of its seafood, it is all the more clear that international cooperation is necessary. Last month's agreement with the US on combating illegal fishing is an important step in the right direction. There is a need for a common import policy among the major fish importing nations - notably, the EU, the US and Japan - with complete traceability and requirements for catch documents for all fish. This should be complemented by global registers for fish DNA to prevent mislabelling."

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