

Original: English

**REPORT BY THE EUROPEAN UNION ON ITS IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
DEROGATION TO VALIDATE EBCD FOR THE TRADE EVENTS AMONG ITS MEMBER
STATES (PARAGRAPH 5B OF ICCAT RECOMMENDATION [15-10])**

The eBCD has been implemented by ICCAT CPCs since 26 May 2016 for the bluefin tuna (BFT) caught by the purse seine vessels and traps, and since 1 July 2016 for the fish caught by other gears. The system is fully implemented by all operators as from January 2017. The European Union (EU) is pleased that this important objective was reached this year and that no major difficulties occurred during the initial implementation.

Recommendation [15-10] provides a derogation to validate BCDs for trades of BFT between Member States of the EU. This derogation is however restricted to specific cases (i.e. not applicable for whole fish). This derogation is considered important by the EU because it removes a significant administrative burden related to the validation of trades for small quantities of BFT. It also contributes towards achieving a more level playing field between the EU and the other ICCAT CPCs.

This derogation is up for review in 2017 and in the meantime the EU is required, under paragraph 5b of Recommendation [15-10] to provide the Commission with a report on its implementation.

For the year 2017, the data presented hereunder corresponds to the period 15th July 2016 to 30 June 2017 and was provided by EU-Member States by extracting relevant data through the functionality in eBCD.

The scope of this report has been restricted to Member States of the EU actively engaged in the fishery, since the trade originating from other Member States and documented in eBCD is for the time being negligible. In addition, we also concentrate on the trade events for BFT sold from a Member States to another, in order to avoid duplication and also because the selling Member States is responsible for the possible validation of the trade in eBCD.

1. A total of 15.868 trade events between Member States were recorded in eBCD as taking place between 1 July 2016 and 30 June 2017 for a quantity of 1,760 t.
2. Amongst these 15.868 trade events, 2.200 (14%) were validated and 13.266 (84%) exempted from validation.
3. It is important to note that amongst the trade exempted from validation, this was due to the fish having been tagged in 85% of the cases (11.286) and to the use of the derogation under paragraph 5b of Recommendation [15-10] in 15 % of the exemptions (1980).
4. In terms of verifications of the information in the eBCDS, the procedures vary between Member States but generally 100% of the landings are being inspected, and all catches are being officially weighed. In addition, before validation, all relevant documentations are being crosschecked including logbook data, landing declarations, sales notes, ICCAT authorizations etc. At the point of exit and entry from and into Member States, verifications include crosschecks with airbills and sales notes, as well as physical verifications. Even when validation is not required, many Member States verify the validation of the catch or the tags details; just as they analyze the coherence of the timing of the validation messages as well as the possible alert messages in eBCD.
5. To date, there has been no detection of irregular activities resulting from the verification process undertaken by Member States.
6. Data extraction functionalities cross checks and verifications through the eBCD system itself should enable MS to establish improved risk assessment procedures to specifically target trade events for verification.