



EUROPEAN UNION

Delegation of the European Commission to South Africa

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Press Release

.../for immediate release

EU provides training in fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing

Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing has increasingly calamitous effects globally. Its impacts are often disastrous for marine biodiversity and invariably threaten sustainable exploitation of living aquatic resources. It also has serious socio-economic consequences for coastal states, particularly developing countries, as local fishing industries lose out to illegal operators. The plunder of marine resources by such IUU operators results in unfair competition and threatens the livelihood of many legitimate and law-abiding fishing communities.

The European Commission has been vigilant in the fight against this world-wide phenomenon for over a decade. Inspired by the FAO's International Plan of Action (2001) to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing, the European Commission developed its 2002 Action Plan. With limited progress at international level, the European Community then adopted a Regulation to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing ("the IUU Regulation") on 29 September 2008 which will enter into force on 1 January 2010.

This IUU Regulation is a transparent and non-discriminatory instrument. It is applicable to the commercial exploitation of fishery resources in all maritime waters by vessels linked to the European Community either through trade to and from its territory, or through the involvement of EC nationals in said fishing activities conducted under any flag. It also provides a comprehensive legal basis for operational co-operation between third countries and the European Community to combat IUU fishing more efficiently.

The European Commission is honouring its commitment to assist third countries implement the Regulation ahead of its formal adoption. In line with its information campaign for third countries and stakeholders, the Commission has organised a seminar in Johannesburg (4-5 March) at which experts from the European Commission are training officials in how to implement the Regulation effectively. The training is financed by the Commission and 18 countries throughout Southern Africa, the Arabic Peninsula and the western part of the Indian Ocean have accepted this invitation. This seminar provides an opportunity to increase awareness on the Regulation and to have a full exchange of views on its future implementation.

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