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Proposal for a

COUNCIL REGULATION

fixing for 2026, 2027 and 2028 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks, applicable in Union waters and, for Union fishing vessels, in certain non-Union waters

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

1. CONTEXT OF THE PROPOSAL

• Reasons for and objectives of the proposal

Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013[1] of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) ('the Basic Regulation') sets out objectives that are to be applied among others when establishing fishing opportunities, i.e. catch and fishing effort limits. The aim is to ensure that EU fisheries are ecologically as well as economically and socially sustainable. The European Parliament and the Council adopted Regulations (EU) 2018/973[2] and (EU) 2019/472[3] establishing multiannual plans ('MAPs') for the North Sea and for the Western Waters ('North Sea MAP' and 'Western Waters MAP'), specifying for certain stocks how to reach those objectives when fixing fishing opportunities.

The fishing opportunities are to be fixed for most stocks every year and for certain stocks every two to four years.

Some of the fishing opportunities are to be fixed autonomously by the EU, while some are to be fixed following bilateral or multilateral negotiations with non-EU countries.

This proposal aims to fix fishing opportunities for certain:

– stocks for which the fishing opportunities are fixed autonomously by the EU;

– stocks that are: (i) jointly managed with the United Kingdom (UK) in the North Sea and the North-Western Waters, including deep-sea stocks in those areas; (ii) jointly managed with Norway and the UK in the North Sea; (iii) jointly managed with Norway in the Skagerrak-Kattegat; or (iv) subject to North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) coastal States consultations;

– stocks managed by regional fisheries management organisations (RFMOs); and

– stocks in waters of non-EU countries.

Approach for setting fishing opportunities

Fishing opportunities are fixed in accordance with Article 16(4) of the Basic Regulation referring to the CFP objectives and the North Sea and Western Waters MAPs.

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1 Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the Common Fisheries Policy, amending Council Regulations (EC) No 1954/2003 and (EC) No 1224/2009 and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 2371/2002 and (EC) No 639/2004 and Council Decision 2004/585/EC (OJ L 354, 28.12.2013, p. 22, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2013/1380/oj).

2 Regulation (EU) 2018/973 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 July 2018 establishing a multiannual plan for demersal stocks in the North Sea and the fisheries exploiting those stocks, specifying details of the implementation of the landing obligation in the North Sea and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 676/2007 and (EC) No 1342/2008 (OJ L 179, 16.7.2018, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2018/973/oj).

3 Regulation (EU) 2019/472 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 March 2019 establishing a multiannual plan for stocks fished in the Western Waters and adjacent waters, and for fisheries exploiting those stocks, amending Regulations (EU) 2016/1139 and (EU) 2018/973, and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 811/2004, (EC) No 2166/2005, (EC) No 388/2006, (EC) No 509/2007 and (EC) No 1300/2008 (OJ L 83, 25.3.2019, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2019/472/oj).

The Commission publishes a communication each year that provides an overview of the status of relevant stocks based on scientific advice and explains its approach to proposing fishing opportunities. The most recent annual communication is entitled *'Sustainable fishing in the EU: state of play and orientations for 2026'* (COM(2025) 296 final).

The Commission proposes fishing opportunities that are based on scientific advice as well as in accordance with the approach outlined in the annual communication and in this proposal.

Between 28 May and 27 June 2025, in response to the Commission's request, the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) provided its annual or multiannual scientific advice on a number of stocks covered by this proposal[4].

Fishing opportunities available to the EU are allocated among Member States in accordance with Article 16(1) of the Basic Regulation on the principle of relative stability.

Fishing opportunities to be proposed later

Fishing opportunities for autonomous EU stocks for which scientific advice is not yet available are marked 'pm' (*pro memoria*) in this proposal. Once the scientific advice becomes available, this proposal will be updated by means of Commission services' non-papers.

Equally, fishing opportunities for certain other stocks will be proposed in light of the outcome of consultations with non-EU countries that have not yet been concluded and the annual meetings of RFMOs that have not yet taken place. In relation to those consultations and annual meetings of RFMOs, the Commission proposes, and the Council adopts, positions to be expressed on behalf of the EU. For bilateral consultations with the UK on shared stocks and in the case of annual meetings of RFMOs, the Commission proposes, and the Council adopts, specifications of the multiannual EU positions[5].

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4 https://www.ices.dk/advice/Pages/Latest-Advice.aspx

5 Council Decision (EU) 2021/1875 of 22 October 2021 concerning the position to be adopted on behalf of the Union in the annual consultations with the United Kingdom to agree on total allowable catches (OJ L 378, 26.10.2021, p. 6, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2021/1875/oj).
Council Decision (EU) 2023/2900 of 11 December 2023 on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union in the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission and repealing Decision (EU) 2019/865 (OJ L, 2023/2900, 29.12.2023, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2023/2900/oj).
Council Decision (EU) 2023/2807 of 11 December 2023 on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union in the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas and repealing Decision (EU) 2019/868 (OJ L, 2023/2807, 15.12.2023, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2023/2807/oj).
Council Decision (EU) 2023/2812 of 11 December 2023 on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union in the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources and repealing Decision (EU) 2019/867 (OJ L, 2023/2812, 15.12.2023, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2023/2812/oj).
Council Decision (EU) 2023/2901 of 11 December 2023 on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union in the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission and repealing Decision (EU) 2019/860 (OJ L, 2023/2901, 29.12.2023, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2023/2901/oj).
Council Decision (EU) 2023/2826 of 11 December 2023 on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union in the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation and repealing Decision (EU) 2019/859 (OJ L, 2023/2826, 29.12.2023, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2023/2826/oj).
` Council Decision (EU) 2024/366 of 16 January 2024 on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union in the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission and the meeting of the Parties to the

Since the consultations with non-EU countries have not yet been concluded or the annual meetings of certain RFMOs have not yet taken place, the text of relevant recitals and provisions of Council Regulation (EU) 2025/202[6] is included in this proposal in square brackets and fishing opportunities are marked 'pm'. However, dates and cross-references are updated for the provisions.

Once the consultations with non-EU countries are concluded or the annual meetings of the RFMOs have taken place, this proposal will be updated by means of Commission services' non-papers.

Landing obligation

In accordance with Article 15 of the Basic Regulation, all stocks for which there are catch limits have been subject to the landing obligation since 1 January 2019. That means that all catches, including catches below the minimum conservation reference sizes, should be brought and retained on board the fishing vessels, recorded, landed and counted against the quotas where applicable. However, the Basic Regulation provides for certain exemptions from the landing obligation. Based on joint recommendations by the Member States, the Commission has adopted delegated regulations specifying details of the implementation of the

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Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Programme and repealing Decision (EU) 2019/812 (OJ L, 2024/366, 19.1.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2024/366/oj).
Council Decision (EU) 2023/2823 of 11 December 2023 on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union in the South-East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation and repealing Decision (EU) 2019/861 (OJ L, 2023/2823, 15.12.2023, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2023/2823/oj).
Council Decision (EU) 2023/2810 of 11 December 2023 on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) and repealing Decision (EU) 2019/862 (OJ L, 2023/2810, 15.12.2023, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2023/2810/oj).
Council Decision (EU) 2023/2828 of 11 December 2023 on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union in the annual Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Pollock Resources in the Central Bering Sea and repealing Decision (EU) 2019/866 (OJ L, 2023/2828, 15.12.2023, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2023/2828/oj).
Council Decision (EU) 2023/2888 of 11 December 2023 on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union in the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement and repealing Decision (EU) 2019/858 (OJ L, 2023/2888, 21.12.2023, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2023/2888/oj).
Council Decision (EU) 2023/2801 of 11 December 2023 on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization and repealing Decision (EU) 2019/863 (OJ L, 2023/2801, 19.12.2023, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2023/2801/oj).
Council Decision (EU) 2024/395 of 16 January 2024 on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union in the Extended Commission of the Convention for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna and repealing Decision (EU) 2019/824 (OJ L, 2024/395, 24.1.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2024/395/oj).
Council Decision (EU) 2023/2826 of 11 December 2023 on the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union in the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation and repealing Decision (EU) 2019/859 (OJ L, 2023/2826, 29.12.2023, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2023/2826/oj).
Council Decision (EU) 2022/392 of 3 March 2022 concerning the position to be taken on behalf of the European Union within the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (OJ L 79, 9.3.2022, p. 31, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2022/392/oj).

6 Council Regulation (EU) 2025/202 of 30 January 2025 fixing for 2025 and 2026 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks, applicable in Union waters and, for Union fishing vessels, in certain non-Union waters, and amending Regulation (EU) 2024/257 as regards fishing opportunities for 2025 (OJ L, 2025/202, 31.1.2025, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2025/202/oj).

landing obligation for certain fisheries allowing for discards on the basis of *de minimis* or high survivability exemptions[7].

Since the introduction of the landing obligation and in accordance with Article 16(2) of the Basic Regulation, fishing opportunities have to reflect the change from amount landed to amount caught, given that discarding is in principle no longer allowed.

Considering the required application of the landing obligation, the Commission proposes total allowable catches (TACs) on the basis of the ICES catch advice. The proposed EU quotas take account of discards based on established exemptions; these quantities will not be landed and counted against the quotas, and are therefore deducted from the EU quotas. Pending the calculation of those quantities, EU quotas for autonomous EU stocks are marked 'pm' in this proposal. Moreover, for stocks for which ICES provides only landings advice, the Commission proposes TACs on the basis of that advice.

Year-to-year flexibility

Articles 3 and 4 of Council Regulation (EC) No 847/96[8] provide for year-to-year flexibility for quotas for stocks with both 'analytical assessments' and 'precautionary assessments'[9]. In accordance with Article 2 of that Regulation, when fixing TACs the Council is to decide which stocks will not be subject to Articles 3 and 4 of that Regulation, on the basis of the biological status of stocks and commitments reached with non-EU countries.

The Commission proposes to exclude year-to-year flexibility pursuant to Articles 3 and 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 for stocks: (i) with analytical assessments with a biomass below B_{lim}[10]; (ii) with precautionary assessments for which ICES recommends either zero catches or suspending the targeted fishery; (iii) for which only by-catches or scientific fisheries will be permitted; and (iv) for which the EU and the relevant non-EU country or countries have not agreed on the application of year-to-year flexibility or have excluded the application of such flexibility on the basis of the biological status of stocks.

Article 15(9) of the Basic Regulation provides for further year-to-year flexibility for quotas. However, to avoid excessive flexibility that would undermine the achievement of the CFP objectives, Articles 3 and 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 and Article 15(9) of the Basic Regulation should not apply cumulatively.

Year-to-year flexibility for quotas pursuant to Article 15(9) of the Basic Regulation should also be excluded for stocks for which year-to-year flexibility pursuant to Articles 3 and 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 is excluded.

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7 Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/2459 of 22 August 2023 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2018/973 of the European Parliament and of the Council by specifying details of the landing obligation for certain fisheries in the North Sea for the period 2024-2027 (OJ L, 2023/2459, 06.11.2023, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2023/2459/oj).
Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/2623 of 22 August 2023 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2019/472 of the European Parliament and of the Council by specifying details of the landing obligation for certain fisheries in Western Waters for the period 2024-2027 (OJ L, 2023/2623, 22.11.2023, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2023/2623/oj).

8 Council Regulation (EC) No 847/96 of 6 May 1996 introducing additional conditions for year-to-year management of TACs and quotas (OJ L 115, 9.5.1996, p. 3, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/1996/847/oj).

9 Definitions are provided below.

10 'B_{lim}' is the spawning stock biomass reference point below which there may be reduced reproductive capacity.

Recreational fisheries

Recreational fisheries can have a significant impact on stocks where they take a significant part of the total catches of the stocks. For such stocks, it is therefore appropriate to take into account all activities that may have an impact on the stock, irrespective of whether or not those activities are commercial or recreational. In order to achieve the CFP objectives and, where relevant, pursuant to Article 10(4) of the North Sea MAP and Article 11 of the Western Waters MAP, the Commission proposes measures also for recreational fisheries, including from shore.

- **Consistency with existing policy provisions in the policy area**

The proposed measures are consistent with the objectives and rules set out in the Basic Regulation, the North Sea and Western Waters MAPs, and Council Regulation (EC) No 1100/2007[11] ('the Eel Regulation').

- **Consistency with other EU policies**

The proposed measures are consistent with other EU policies, in particular Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council[12] ('the Marine Strategy Framework Directive'). That Directive aims to contribute to achieving good environmental status (GES) for descriptor 3 in particular, which requires all commercially exploited fish and shellfish to be within safe biological limits.

2. LEGAL BASIS, SUBSIDIARITY AND PROPORTIONALITY

- **Legal basis**

The legal basis of this proposal is Article 43(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).

- **Subsidiarity (for non-exclusive competence)**

The proposal falls under the exclusive competence of the EU as referred to in Article 3(1)(d) TFEU. The subsidiarity principle therefore does not apply.

- **Proportionality**

The proposal fixes fishing opportunities and allocates those to Member States in accordance with the objectives and rules set out in the Basic Regulation and the North Sea and Western Waters MAPs as well as the outcomes of certain annual meetings of RFMOs that have already taken place. As a result, the fishing opportunities should be fixed on the basis of the best available scientific advice, taking into account biological and socio-economic considerations in mixed fisheries where possible.

Pursuant to Article 16(6) and (7) and Article 17 of the Basic Regulation, Member States are to decide how the fishing opportunities available to them may be allocated to fishing vessels flying their flag in accordance with certain criteria set out in those Articles. Member States

[11] Council Regulation (EC) No 1100/2007 of 18 September 2007 establishing measures for the recovery of the stock of European eel (OJ L 248, 22.9.2007, p. 17, ELI: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2007/1100/oj).

[12] Directive 2008/56/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (Marine Strategy Framework Directive) (OJ L 164, 25.6.2008, p. 19, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2008/56/oj).

therefore have the necessary margin of discretion when distributing the allocated quotas, in line with their preferred social/economic model for using the fishing opportunities available to them.

- **Choice of instrument**

A regulation is considered the most appropriate instrument as it makes it possible to set requirements that apply directly to Member States and relevant economic operators. This will help ensure that the requirements are implemented in a timely and harmonised way, leading to greater legal certainty.

3. RESULTS OF *EX POST* EVALUATIONS, STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS AND IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- ***Ex post* evaluations/fitness checks of existing legislation**

Not applicable.

- **Stakeholder consultations**

(a) Consultation methods, main sectors targeted and general profile of respondents

The Commission has consulted stakeholders, in particular through the advisory councils, on the basis of its annual communication *'Sustainable fishing in the EU: state of play and orientations for 2026'*.

(b) Summary of responses and how they were taken into account

Stakeholders' responses to the above annual communication set out their views on the Commission's evaluation of the state of the resources and on the appropriate management response. The Commission considered those responses when formulating this proposal.

- **Collection and use of expertise**

ICES expert groups and decision-making bodies have developed a framework for ICES scientific advice. That framework is based on the best available science and peer reviewed by independent experts. ICES scientific advice is issued on the basis of that framework and with a view to allow the implementation of the objectives and rules of the Basic Regulation and the North Sea and Western Waters MAPs, as requested by the Commission.

ICES scientific advice essentially depends on data:

– (i) For stocks for which comprehensive data sets are available, allowing full analytical, age-/length-structured assessments, ICES produces estimates of the sizes of the stocks and forecasts on how various exploitation scenarios will affect these stock sizes ('catch scenarios tables'). On that basis, ICES estimates adjustments to the fishing opportunities that will bring the stock to a level that can produce the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) with a given fishing pattern and under current average environmental conditions. For such stocks, where possible, the scientific advice sets out the range of fishing mortality values resulting in MSY ('range of F_{MSY}'), as defined in the MAPs[13].

[13] Range of fishing mortality values resulting in MSY in the long term with a given fishing pattern and under current average environmental conditions without significantly affecting the reproduction process for the stock in question.

– (ii) For stocks for which less data is available, ICES does not provide catch scenarios but identifies longer-term trends in recruitment, biomass and fishing mortality. On that basis, it estimates fishing opportunities in line with MSY, based on MSY proxies.

– (iii) For other stocks for which limited data is available, when advising on the level of fishing opportunities, ICES relies on the precautionary approach to fisheries management and applies a certain methodology[14]. For such stocks for which more data is available, ICES identifies longer-term trends in recruitment, biomass and fishing mortality, but does not estimate MSY proxies. For such stocks for which the least data is available, ICES identifies trends in catches or landings.

ICES assessments for stocks under points (i) and (ii) are referred to as 'analytical assessments' and the advice is referred to as 'MSY advice'. Assessments for stocks under point (iii) are referred to as 'precautionary assessments' and the advice is referred to as 'precautionary advice'.

For stocks under point (i), ICES publishes advice annually. However, for stocks under points (ii) and (iii), ICES neither performs a stock assessment nor publishes advice annually. For stocks under points (ii) and (iii), ICES assesses longer-term trends. As a result, ICES considers that the assessed status of those stocks will not be subject to major changes during the advice period. For those stocks, the advice published by ICES is the best available scientific advice for the entire advice period. For the autonomous EU stocks for which ICES publishes advice that remains valid for several years, the Commission proposes to set annual TACs covering the entire advice period, i.e. a period of two to three years ('multiannual TACs').

One of the objectives of the CFP is to restore stocks to levels that can deliver MSY and to maintain them at those levels. This objective is incorporated expressly in Article 2(2), second subparagraph, of the Basic Regulation, which provides that this *'shall be achieved […] by 2020 for all stocks'*. The Commission therefore proposes to fix fishing opportunities for target stocks under the MAPs, and for target stocks not covered by the MAPs, based on the MSY advice.

Fishing opportunities for target stocks in the North Sea and Western Waters[15] and for which there is MSY advice are also to be set on the basis of the relevant MAPs. Those define a range of fishing mortality values resulting in MSY ('range of F_{MSY}') and therefore offer a degree of flexibility under specific conditions. The Commission has asked ICES to provide scientific advice that can be used to implement the flexibility, including to assess whether the conditions for using that flexibility are met. The upper range of F_{MSY} values may be used for fixing TACs if the biomass of the stock in question is above MSY $B_{trigger}$[16] and only if, based on scientific advice or evidence, it is necessary to:

– achieve the objectives set out in the relevant MAP in the case of mixed fisheries; or

– avoid serious harm to a stock caused by intra- or inter-species stock dynamics; or

– limit high year-to-year fluctuations.

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14 See in particular the document *ICES approach to advice on fishing opportunities*; https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.22240624.v3

15 Stocks listed in Articles 1(1) of the North Sea and the Western Waters MAP.

16 'MSY $B_{trigger}$' is the biomass level below which management action is to be taken to allow a stock to rebuild above the level capable of producing MSY in the long term.

Where the stock's biomass is below MSY $B_{trigger}$, the fishing opportunities should be fixed at a level corresponding to the fishing mortality that is reduced proportionally to take into account the decrease in the biomass.

Pursuant to Article 4(6) of the North Sea MAP and Article 4(7) of the Western Waters MAP, fishing opportunities for target stocks should be fixed to ensure that there is less than a 5% probability of the biomass falling below B_{lim}. Where MSY advice is available, and that advice is based on full analytical, age-/length-structured assessments, ICES may indicate such probabilities, in the short-term, in its advice. To ensure that the probability is achieved, the fishing mortality of the target stock may have to be reduced accordingly or the targeted fishery may have to be suspended.

For target stocks with precautionary assessments and for which MSY advice is not available, the Commission proposes to fix fishing opportunities based on the precautionary advice, which is the best available scientific advice and which is advice in line with the precautionary approach to fisheries management.

Fishing opportunities for by-catch stocks are proposed on the basis of the MSY advice, where available. For by-catch stocks with precautionary assessments and for which MSY advice is not available, this proposal again makes use of the precautionary advice. Fishing opportunities for by-catch stocks in the North Sea and Western Waters should also be fixed on the basis of the relevant MAPs.

When fixing fishing opportunities for by-catch stocks, mixed fisheries considerations should also be taken into account pursuant to Article 5(3) of the North Sea and Western Waters MAPs and Article 16(4) of the Basic Regulation, in conjunction with Article 2(1) and (5), points (c) and (f), of that Regulation.

- **Impact assessment**

The scope of the fishing opportunities regulation is limited by Article 43(3) TFEU.

This proposal seeks to avoid short-term approaches in favour of long-term sustainability. It takes account of initiatives by stakeholders and advisory councils that have been positively reviewed by ICES. The Commission's CFP reform proposal was based on an impact assessment (SEC(2011) 891) that considered that even though achievement of the MSY objective was a necessary condition for environmental, economic and social sustainability, those three objectives cannot be achieved in isolation.

As regards fishing opportunities for RFMOs stocks and for stocks jointly managed with non-EU countries, this proposal essentially implements internationally agreed measures. Any aspects that are relevant to assessing possible impacts of the fishing opportunities are dealt with in the preparation and conduct of international negotiations in which the EU's fishing opportunities are agreed with non-EU countries.

- **Regulatory fitness and simplification**

Not applicable.

- **Fundamental rights**

The proposal complies with fundamental rights and in particular those recognised by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

4. BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS

The proposal has no budgetary implications.

5. OTHER ELEMENTS

- **Implementation plans and monitoring, evaluation and reporting arrangements**

Monitoring and compliance will be ensured in accordance with Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009[17], as amended by Regulation (EU) 2023/2842 of the European Parliament and of the Council[18].

- **Detailed explanation of the specific provisions of the proposal**

Autonomous EU stocks

TAC (species as well as ICES and other zones)	**TAC code**	**Proposed TAC for 2026 (tonnes)**	**Proposed TAC change from 2025**	**Explanation**
Anglerfishes (*Lophiidae*) Southern Bay of Biscay and Iberian waters 8c, 9 and 10; EU waters of Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (CECAF) 34.1.1	ANF/8C3411	5 340	-2%	ICES provides MSY advice[19] for two different species of anglerfish in this area: black-bellied anglerfish (*Lophius budegassa*) and white anglerfish (*Lophius piscatorius*). The Commission proposes to set the TAC at the level of the sum of the MSY advice and F_{MSY} point value[20] for both species.

17 Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 of 20 November 2009 establishing a Community control system for ensuring compliance with the rules of the common fisheries policy, amending Regulations (EC) No 847/96, (EC) No 2371/2002, (EC) No 811/2004, (EC) No 768/2005, (EC) No 2115/2005, (EC) No 2166/2005, (EC) No 388/2006, (EC) No 509/2007, (EC) No 676/2007, (EC) No 1098/2007, (EC) No 1300/2008, (EC) No 1342/2008 and repealing Regulations (EEC) No 2847/93, (EC) No 1627/94 and (EC) No 1966/2006 (OJ L 343, 22.12.2009, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2009/1224/oj).

18 Regulation (EU) 2023/2842 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 November 2023 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009, and amending Council Regulations (EC) No 1967/2006 and (EC) No 1005/2008 and Regulations (EU) 2016/1139, (EU) 2017/2403 and (EU) 2019/473 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards fisheries control (OJ L, 2023/2842, 20.12.2023, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/2842/oj).

19 https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.27202503.v1
https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.27202701.v1

20 'F_{MSY} point value' is the value of the estimated fishing mortality that with a given fishing pattern and under current average environmental conditions gives the long-term MSY.

TAC (species as well as ICES and other zones)	TAC code	Proposed TAC for 2026 (tonnes)	Proposed TAC change from 2025	Explanation
Hake (*Merluccius merluccius*) Southern Bay of Biscay and Iberian waters 8c, 9 and 10; EU waters of CECAF 34.1.1	HKE/8C3411	17 445	Rollover	ICES provides MSY advice[21] for this stock. The Commission proposes to roll over the TAC of 2025 and set the TAC in line with the MSY advice, between the F_{MSY} point value and the highest value within the range of F_{MSY} ('MSY F_{upper}'). It proposes to set the TAC in the upper range of F_{MSY}, between F_{MSY} point and MSY F_{upper}, in accordance with Article 4(5), point (a), of the Western Waters MAP and taking into account that hake is the most limiting species in the mixed fisheries[22]. In addition, the Commission proposes to set the TAC below MSY F_{upper}: (i) in order to protect the stock in the long-term, for which TACs have been set above the F_{MSY} point value since 2022; and (ii) as in the fisheries that target hake, pollack is a by-catch and the biomass of that latter stock remains below $I_{trigger}$[23] and decreased from 2023 to 2024 according to ICES.
Horse mackerel (*Trachurus* spp.) Iberian waters 9	JAX/09.	56 520	-5%	ICES provides MSY advice[24] for this stock. The Commission proposes to set the TAC in line with the MSY advice.
Megrims (*Lepidorhombus* spp.) southern Bay of Biscay and Iberian waters 8c, 9 and 10; EU waters of CECAF 34.1.1	LEZ/8C3411	4 986	+12%	ICES provides MSY advice[25] for two different species of megrim in this area: *Lepidorhombus whiffiagonis* and *Lepidorhombus Boscii*. The Commission proposes to set the TAC at the level of the sum of the MSY advice and F_{MSY} point value for both species.

21 https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.27202647.v1

22 https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.24212058.v1

23 '$I_{trigger}$ is the biomass index trigger value, which is a proxy for MSY Btrigger, the biomass level below which management action is to be taken to allow a stock to rebuild above the level capable of producing MSY in the long term.

24 https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.27202659.v1

25 https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.27202695.v1
https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.27202665.v1

TAC (species as well as ICES and other zones)	TAC code	Proposed TAC for 2026 (tonnes)	Proposed TAC change from 2025	Explanation
Plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*) Kattegat	PLE/03AS.	2 349	Rollover	ICES provides MSY advice[26] for this stock. This TAC represents a proportion (34%) of the ICES advice for plaice in the Kattegat and Baltic Sea. That figure is based on the catch distribution in 2024 set out in the ICES advice. The Commission proposes to set the TAC in line with the MSY advice and below the lowest value within the range of F_{MSY} ('MSY F_{lower}'). It proposes to set the TAC below MSY F_{lower}, as in the fisheries that target Norway lobster, cod and sole are by-catches and there is a zero-catch advice for the latter stocks.
Plaice Bay of Biscay and Iberian waters 8, 9 and 10; Union waters of CECAF 34.1.1	PLE/8/3411	For 2026, 2027 and 2028: 99	-20%	ICES cannot provide information on stock size or fishing pressure, and provides precautionary advice[27] for this stock. The latest advice published by ICES is valid for 2026, 2027 and 2028. The Commission proposes to set the TACs for 2026, 2027 and 2028 in line with the precautionary advice.

26 https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.27202773.v1
27 https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.27202791.v1

Pollack Bay of Biscay 8a, 8b, 8d and 8e	POL/8ABDE.	For 2026 and 2027: 712	-26%	The ICES advice covers three TACs. ICES provides MSY advice[28] for this stock. The latest advice published by ICES is valid for 2026 and 2027. In that advice ICES notes that the biomass index of that stock remains below $I_{trigger}$ (79% of $I_{trigger}$ and 104% of I_{loss}[29]) and decreased by 11% from 2023 to 2024. In addition, in an assessment[30] regarding those TACs for 2026 and 2027, the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee on Fisheries (STECF) reviewed an expert contract report on those TACs[31]. According to the expert contract report, and assuming average fishing behaviour in 2021-2023: - if those TACs were set for 2026 and 2027 cumulatively at the level advised by ICES[32] (i.e. 703 tonnes), the obligation to land all catches, including by-catches of that stock, would cause one or more fishing vessels in mixed fisheries to stop fishing even if they still have quota for other species, which in turn would lead to a premature closure of certain fisheries; - specifically: (i) relevant French fisheries in the Bay of Biscay are projected to close on 11 September; (ii) relevant Spanish fisheries in the Cantabrian Sea on 5 September; and (iii) relevant Spanish fisheries in Iberian waters on 13 September; - those closures are projected to lead to a reduction in terms of the total value of landings for all species for the relevant fleet segments of 32%, 28% and 27% respectively, and to *'significant effects on their socio-economic performance'*[33]; and - the TACs needed to allow fisheries to operate until the end of the year are projected to be 834 tonnes, 148 tonnes and 164 tonnes respectively.

28 https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.27202806.v1

29 I_{loss} is generally defined as the lowest observed index value, which is a proxy for B_{lim}.

30 https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/d/stecf/stecf-plen-24-02

31 https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/d/stecf/stecf-plen-24-02-background

32 Cumulatively and assuming the current distribution of the overall amount between TACs.

33 Summary of expert contract report in STECF assessment.

				In its assessement: *'STECF observes that the data used to conduct this analysis does not capture or represent the current fishing patterns in this region as the 2024 data year was not available. In the absence of this data an average of 2021 – 2023 was used as a proxy value to describe the current fishing patterns. STECF is aware that 2024 was likely a year with different fishing patterns compared to the previous years, not least due to the closure of the French fishery in February 2024 (simulated in the ad hoc … [report]), and a substantial decrease in the pollack TAC.'* However, in its assessment STECF also noted that the *'report was completed appropriately given the available data'*. Pursuant to Article 5(3) of the Western Waters MAP, and in order to strike a balance between maintaining mixed fisheries, in view of the potentially severe socio-economic impacts of failing to do so, and the need to achieve a good biological status for that stock, taking account of the difficulty of fishing all stocks in a mixed fishery at MSY, the Commission therefore proposes to set those TACs for 2026 and 2027 exclusively for by-catches and cumulatively at the level of recent landings (in 2024, according to ICES, i.e. 923 tonnes). As set out in the expert contract report, if TACs were set at such a level[34]: - (i) relevant French fisheries in the Bay of Biscay are projected to close on 16 December; (ii) relevant Spanish fisheries in the Cantabrian Sea on 22 September; and (iii) relevant Spanish fisheries in Iberian waters on 30 November; and - those closures are projected to lead to a reduction in terms of the total value of landings for all species for the relevant fleet segments of 5%, 23% and 7% respectively. Moreover, as those TACs are exclusively for by-catches, it is proposed to exclude year-to-year flexibility pursuant to Articles 3 and 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 for those TACs.
Pollack Cantabrian Sea 8c	POL/08C.	For 2026 and 2027: 80	-26%	See the explanation above for pollack in the Bay of Biscay.

[34] The expert contract assumes that the TACs are cumulatively set at the level of 896 tonnes rather than at the level of 923 tonnes.

Pollack Iberian waters 9 and 10; Union waters of CECAF 34.1.1	POL/9/3411 and POL/93411P (additional quantity for Portugal)	For 2026 and 2027: 98 and 33 (additional quantity for Portugal)	-26% and -26%	See the explanation above for pollack in the Bay of Biscay.
Seabass Bay of Biscay 8a and 8b	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	ICES provides MSY advice[35] for this stock and for this area. Moreover, in the fisheries that target seabass, pollack is a by-catch and the biomass of that latter stock remains below $I_{trigger}$ and decreased from 2023 to 2024 according to ICES. The Commission therefore proposes: - that, when determining their quotas for commercial fisheries, France and Spain should jointly ensure that the sum of those quotas, commercial discards, recreational landings and recreational dead discards does not exceed MSY F_{lower} for total removals for ICES divisions 8a and 8b (Bay of Biscay), i.e. 5 286 tonnes; and - to maintain the 1 fish / fisher and day bag limit for recreational fisheries.
Common sole (*Solea solea*) Bay of Biscay 8a and 8b	SOL/8AB.	2 482	-1%	ICES provides MSY advice[36] for this stock. The Commission proposes to set the TAC in line with the MSY advice and the F_{MSY} point value, reduced proportionally to take into account the current decrease in the biomass (biomass is forecast for 2026 to be approximately 91% of MSY $B_{trigger}$ and as a result the advised total catch corresponds to the F_{MSY} point value reduced by 9%).

35 https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.25019186.v1
36 https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.27202887.v1

Sole Southern Bay of Biscay and Iberian waters 8c, 8d, 8e, 9 and 10; Union waters of CECAF 34.1.1	SOO/8CDE34	For 2026 and 2027: 388	-28%	The TAC covers three species of sole in this area; common sole (*Solea solea*) and two other sole species. ICES only provides MSY advice[37] for common sole in this area. The latest advice published by ICES is valid for 2026 and 2027. For 2026 and 2027, the Commission proposes to set a sub-TAC for common sole, i.e. for the species for which ICES provides advice. The Commission proposes to set that sub-TAC in line with the MSY advice (i.e. 190 tonnes). It also proposes to set the TAC in line with the advice for common sole and taking into account the catch shares of the three species of sole (49% common sole and 51% other sole species). The catch shares are based on the catch shares in 2022-2024 set out in the ICES advice.
Whiting Bay of Biscay 8	WHG/08.	For 2026 and 2027: 990	-27%	ICES provides MSY advice[38] for whiting in ICES subarea 8 and division 9a (Bay of Biscay and Iberian waters). The latest advice published by ICES is valid for 2026 and 2027. The Commission proposes to set the TACs for 2026 and for 2027 in line with the MSY advice.

Stocks listed in Annex 36, Table F, of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement

In addition, the Commission proposes fishing opportunities for certain stocks listed in Annex 36, table F, of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community, of the one part, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, of the other part[39] ('the Trade and Cooperation Agreement'). That Annex lists stocks that are only present in one Party's waters.

37 https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.27202890.v1

38 https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.27202953.v1

39 Trade and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community, of the one part, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, of the other part (OJ L 149, 30.4.2021, p. 10, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_internation/2021/689(1)/oj).

TAC (species as well as ICES and other zones)	TAC code	Proposed TAC for 2026 (tonnes)	Proposed TAC change from 2025	Explanation
Red seabream (*Pagellus bogaraveo*) Azores waters 10	SBR/10-	382	-3%	ICES provides MSY advice[40] for this stock. The latest advice published by ICES is valid for 2026 and 2027. The Commission proposes to set the TAC for 2026 in line with the MSY advice.
Undulate ray Bay of Biscay 8 - TAC under TAC for skates and rays in 8 and 9	RJU/8-C. - TAC under SRX/89-C.	33	Rollover	ICES cannot provide information on stock size or fishing pressure, and provides precautionary advice[41] for this stock. The latest advice published by ICES is valid for 2025-2028. The Commission proposes to set the TAC for 2026 exclusively for by-catches at the same level as that set by the Council in 2024 on the basis of the advice valid for 2025-2028. In addition, the Commission proposes to maintain for 2026 the additional quantities for sentinel fisheries to allow fisheries-based data collection at the same level as for 2025. Those additional quantities aim to improve the fisheries-based scientific data available.
Undulate ray Iberian waters 9 - TAC under TAC for skates and rays in 8 and 9	RJU/9-C. - TAC under SRX/89-C.	50	Rollover	ICES cannot provide information on stock size or fishing pressure, and provides precautionary advice[42] for this stock. The latest advice published by ICES is valid for 2025-2028. The Commission proposes to set the TAC exclusively for by-catches for 2026 at the same level as that set by Council in 2024 on the basis of the advice valid for 2025 to 2028. In addition, the Commission proposes to maintin for 2026 the additional quantity for sentinel fisheries to allow fisheries-based data collection at the same level as for 2025. That additional quantity aims to improve the fisheries-based scientific data available.

40 https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.29542103.v1

41 https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.25019615.v1
https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.25019618.v1

42 https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.25019621.v1

Eel

ICES provides advice for the entire natural range of European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*), which includes the north-east Atlantic and the Mediterranean. Given the critical status of European eel, ICES:

– (i) For the past two decades has consistently advised to keep the anthropogenic mortality of European eel as close to zero as possible throughout its natural range.

– (ii) Has been advising since 2021[43] that, when the precautionary approach is applied, there should be zero catches of eel in all habitats. This concerns both recreational and commercial catches and includes catches of glass eels for restocking and aquaculture.

– (iii) On 30 May 2022 advised[44] that, despite Member States' efforts, no overall progress had been made in achieving the 40% silver eel biomass escapement objective across the entire EU pursuant to Article 2(4) of the Eel Regulation. In addition, ICES advised that conservation efforts should be focused on measures that, by definition, have a high probability of reducing mortality and increasing escapement.

ICES advice for 2026 will be published on 4 November 2025.

A consecutive three-month closure period for eel fishing was laid down in the annual fishing opportunities regulations for the EU marine and brackish waters of the north-east Atlantic (from 2018 to 2022). Council Regulation (EU) 2023/194[45] extended the closure period to 6 months for any eel fishing activity in EU marine and brackish waters of the north-east Atlantic. Furthermore, it prohibited all recreational eel fisheries in those waters. Council Regulations (EU) 2024/257[46] and (EU) 2025/202 maintained those measures and, in order to ensure the effective protection of silver eel migrating from the Baltic Sea to the North Sea, required that the coastal Member States of ICES subarea 3, i.e. Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Finland and Sweden, should agree on effective closure periods for silver eel. Moreover, Regulation (EU) 2024/257 clarified the conditions for the application of the derogation for continued limited eel fisheries during the eel migration period.

Given the continued critical status of the European eel, the Commission proposes for 2026 to maintain the measures for eel set out in Regulation (EU) 2025/202. This proposal will be updated after ICES has published its scientific advice for European eel in the north-east Atlantic and the Mediterranean for 2026.

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43 Latest advice for 2025: https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.27100516.v1

44 https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.advice.19902958

45 Council Regulation (EU) 2023/194 of 30 January 2023 fixing for 2023 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks, applicable in Union waters and, for Union fishing vessels, in certain non-Union waters, as well as fixing for 2023 and 2024 such fishing opportunities for certain deep-sea fish stocks (OJ L 28, 31.1.2023, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/194/oj).

46 Council Regulation (EU) 2024/257 of 10 January 2024 fixing for 2024, 2025 and 2026 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks, applicable in Union waters and, for Union fishing vessels, in certain non-Union waters, and amending Regulation (EU) 2023/194 (OJ L, 2024/257, 11.1.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/257/oj).

2025/0338 (NLE)

Proposal for a

COUNCIL REGULATION

fixing for 2026, 2027 and 2028 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks, applicable in Union waters and, for Union fishing vessels, in certain non-Union waters

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 43(3) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

Whereas:

(1) The Council is to adopt measures on the fixing and allocation of fishing opportunities, including certain conditions functionally linked to those fishing opportunities, as appropriate. In accordance with Article 16(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council[47], fishing opportunities are to be fixed in accordance with the objectives and rules of the common fisheries policy (CFP), as set out in Article 2(2) of that Regulation, and Regulations (EU) 2018/973[48] and (EU) 2019/472[49] of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing multiannual plans (MAPs) for certain stocks fished in the North Sea and the Western Waters, and for fisheries exploiting those stocks. In accordance with Article 16(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, fishing opportunities are to be allocated among the Member States to ensure the relative stability of fishing activities of each Member State for each fish stock or fishery.

(2) The total allowable catches (TACs) should be established, in accordance with Article 3 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013: (i) on the basis of the best available scientific advice; (ii) based on a long-term perspective; (iii) taking into account regional specificities; and (iv) in the light of opinions expressed during the consultation of stakeholders.

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47 Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the Common Fisheries Policy, amending Council Regulations (EC) No 1954/2003 and (EC) No 1224/2009 and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 2371/2002 and (EC) No 639/2004 and Council Decision 2004/585/EC (OJ L 354, 28.12.2013, p. 22, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2013/1380/oj).

48 Regulation (EU) 2018/973 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 July 2018 establishing a multiannual plan for demersal stocks in the North Sea and the fisheries exploiting those stocks, specifying details of the implementation of the landing obligation in the North Sea and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 676/2007 and (EC) No 1342/2008 (OJ L 179, 16.7.2018, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2018/973/oj).

49 Regulation (EU) 2019/472 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 March 2019 establishing a multiannual plan for stocks fished in the Western Waters and adjacent waters, and for fisheries exploiting those stocks, amending Regulations (EU) 2016/1139 and (EU) 2018/973, and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 811/2004, (EC) No 2166/2005, (EC) No 388/2006, (EC) No 509/2007 and (EC) No 1300/2008 (OJ L 83, 25.3.2019, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2019/472/oj).

(3) Under Article 15 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, all stocks for which there are catch limits have been subject to the landing obligation since 1 January 2019, although certain exemptions apply. On the basis of joint recommendations by the Member States and pursuant to Article 15 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, the Commission adopted Delegated Regulations (EU) 2023/2459[50] and (EU) 2023/2623[51] laying down details for the implementation of the landing obligation for certain fisheries.

(4) Fishing opportunities for stocks covered by the landing obligation should take account of the fact that discarding is in principle no longer allowed. Therefore, they should be based on the scientific advice figure for total catches as provided by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), where available. The quantities that, by way of exemption from the landing obligation, may continue to be discarded should be deducted from that advice figure for total catches. Moreover, fishing opportunities for stocks for which ICES provides only landings advice should be set on the basis of that advice.

(5) The MAPs established by Regulation (EU) 2018/973 and (EU) 2019/472 set out targets and measures for the long-term management of the stocks covered by those MAPs. Fishing opportunities for the stocks listed in Article 1(1) of those Regulations ('target stocks') should be fixed in accordance with the range of fishing mortality values resulting in maximum sustainable yield (MSY) ('ranges of F_{MSY}'), or at a lower level, and, where relevant, in accordance with the biomass safeguards provided for in those Regulations. The ranges of F_{MSY} are set out in the relevant ICES advice. Fishing opportunities for target stocks for which ranges of F_{MSY} cannot be determined, as well as for stocks referred to in Article 1(4) of those Regulations ('by-catch stocks'), should be fixed in accordance with the objectives set out in Article 2(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 or, where no adequate scientific information is available, in accordance with the precautionary approach to fisheries management, as defined in Article 4(1), point (8), of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013.

(6) Pursuant to Article 4(6) of Regulation (EU) 2018/973 and Article 4(7) of Regulation (EU) 2019/472, fishing opportunities for target stocks should be fixed to ensure that there is less than 5% probability of the biomass falling below the limit biomass reference point (B_{lim})[52].

(7) In accordance with Article 7 of Regulation (EU) 2018/973 and Article 8 of Regulation (EU) 2019/472, where scientific advice indicates that the spawning stock biomass of any of the target stocks is: (i) below MSY $B_{trigger}$[53], remedial measures are to be taken, in particular the fishing opportunities should be fixed at a level corresponding to the fishing mortality that is reduced proportionally to take into account the decrease in the biomass; and (ii) below B_{lim}, further remedial measures are to be taken to ensure the rapid return of the stock to levels above those capable of producing MSY. In

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50 Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/2459 of 22 August 2023 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2018/973 of the European Parliament and of the Council by specifying details of the landing obligation for certain fisheries in the North Sea for the period 2024-2027 (OJ L, 2023/2459, 6.11.2023, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2023/2459/oj).

51 Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/2623 of 22 August 2023 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2019/472 of the European Parliament and of the Council by specifying details of the landing obligation for certain fisheries in Western Waters for the period 2024-2027 (OJ L, 2023/2623, 22.11.2023, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2023/2623/oj).

52 B_{lim} is the biomass below which there may be reduced reproductive capacity.

53 MSY $B_{trigger}$ is the biomass level below which management action is to be taken to allow a stock to rebuild above the level capable of producing MSY in the long term.

particular, those remedial measures can include suspending the targeted fishery for the stock in question and the adequate reduction of fishing opportunities for those or other stocks in the fisheries.

(8) There are certain stocks for which ICES advises zero catches or low catches, or ICES forecasts that a less than 5% probability of the biomass falling below B_{lim} could: (i) only be achieved with low catches; (ii) only be achieved with zero catches; or (iii) not even be achieved with zero catches. However, if TACs for those stocks were established at those levels, the obligation to land all catches, including by-catches from those stocks in mixed fisheries, may cause one or more fishing vessels to stop fishing even if they still have quota for other species, which in turn may lead to a premature closure of certain fisheries. Pursuant to Article 5(3) of Regulations (EU) 2018/973 and (EU) 2019/472 and Article 16(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, in conjunction with Article 2(1) and (5), points (c) and (f), of that Regulation and in order to strike a balance between maintaining mixed fisheries, in view of the potentially severe socio-economic impacts of failing to do so, and the need to achieve a good biological status for those stocks, taking account of the difficulty of fishing all stocks in a mixed fishery at MSY, it is appropriate to establish specific TACs for by-catches for those stocks. Those by-catch TACs should be set at levels that: (i) avoid the risk of a premature closure of fisheries due to fishing vessels' lack of quota for stocks caught as by-catch, where such a premature closure could have severe socio-economic impacts in the short-term; while also at the same time (ii) ensuring the conservation of the stocks concerned, where failing to conserve stocks could have severe long-term environmental and socio-economic impacts, as well as associated short-term socio-economic impacts. Those by-catch TACs should also be fixed at levels based on specific, reliable and verifiable evidence regarding potential premature closures, potential short-term socio-economic impacts as well as long-term environmental impacts. In order to reduce catches of the stocks for which by-catch TACs are set, fishing opportunities for the mixed fisheries in which fish from those stocks are by-caught should be set at levels that help the biomass of vulnerable stocks to recover to sustainable levels.

(9) In order to guarantee, to the extent possible, the use of fishing opportunities in mixed fisheries in accordance with Article 16(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, it is appropriate to establish a pool for quota exchanges for Member States that have no quota to cover their unavoidable by-catches in certain areas.

(10) In accordance with Articles 2(2) and 16(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, for stocks that are not covered by Regulations (EU) 2018/973 and (EU) 2019/472, where adequate scientific information is available, fishing opportunities should be fixed in line with the F_{MSY} point value[54] and, where relevant, at levels that restore stocks above levels capable of producing MSY. Where such information is not available, fishing opportunities should be fixed in line with the precautionary approach to fisheries management.

(11) For certain stocks, ICES advice remains valid for several years and that advice remains the best available scientific advice for the entire advice period. In those cases, annual TACs covering the entire advice period should be set ('multiannual TACs'). However, if new ICES advice becomes available during that period, it should be

[54] 'F_{MSY} point value' is the value of the estimated fishing mortality that with a given fishing pattern and under current average environmental conditions gives the long-term MSY.

ensured that the multiannual TACs remain consistent with the new advice, as soon as possible after the publication of such new ICES advice. Moreover, it should be ensured that the annual deductions from the advice figure for total catches to take account of exemptions from the landing obligation remain consistent with the available data.

(12) In accordance with Article 4(3) of Regulation (EU) 2019/472, Spain and France are to jointly ensure that, when determining their quotas for commercial fisheries for European seabass (*Dicentrarchus labrax*) in ICES divisions 8a and 8b, the sum of those quotas, commercial discards, recreational landings and recreational dead discards do not exceed the lowest value within the range of F_{MSY} ('MSY F_{lower}') for total removals for that area, i.e. 5 286 tonnes. In order to allow the Commission to monitor the correct application of the objectives and rules set out in Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 and in Regulation (EU) 2019/472, Member States should submit to the Commission information regarding those quotas.

(13) Additional measures for recreational fisheries for European seabass in ICES divisions 8a and 8b should be maintained, in view of the significant impact of recreational fisheries on the fishing mortality for that stock.

(14) There are certain stocks for which ICES advises catches above a low level. However, if TACs for those stocks were established at those levels, the obligation to land all catches, including by-catches from those stocks in mixed fisheries, may cause one or more fishing vessels to stop fishing even if they still have quota for other species, which in turn may lead to a premature closure of certain fisheries. Pursuant to Article 5(3) of Regulations (EU) 2018/973 and (EU) 2019/472 and Article 16(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, in conjunction with Article 2(1) and (5), points (c) and (f), of that Regulation and in order to strike a balance between maintaining mixed fisheries, in view of the potentially severe socio-economic impacts of failing to do so, and the need to achieve a good status for those stocks, taking account of the difficulty of fishing all stocks in a mixed fishery at MSY, it is appropriate to establish specific TACs for by-catches for those stocks. Those by-catch TACs should be set at levels that: (i) avoid the risk of a premature closure of fisheries due to fishing vessels' lack of quota for stocks caught as by-catch, where such a premature closure could have severe socio-economic impacts in the short-term; while also at the same time (ii) ensuring the conservation of the stocks concerned, where failing to conserve stocks could have severe long-term environmental and socio-economic impacts, as well as associated short-term socio-economic impacts. Those by-catch TACs should also be fixed based on specific, reliable and verifiable evidence regarding potential premature closures, potential short-term socio-economic impacts as well as long-term environmental impacts. In order to reduce catches of the stocks for which by-catch TACs are set, fishing opportunities for the mixed fisheries in which fish from those stocks are by-caught should be set at levels that help the biomass of vulnerable stocks to recover to sustainable levels.

(15) According to the relevant ICES advice, recreational catches of pollack (*Pollachius pollachius*) in ICES subarea 8 and division 9a are non-negligible. It is therefore appropriate to establish limits for recreational catches of pollack in ICES subareas 8, 9 and 10 and Union waters of Fishery Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic (CECAF) area 34.1.1.

(16) *[The recital and the relevant provisions will be updated after publication by ICES of its scientific advice for European eel for 2026.]* [In May 2022, ICES noted that,

despite Member States' efforts for the recovery of European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*), no overall progress had been made in achieving the 40 % silver eel biomass escapement objective across the entire Union, as required by Article 2(4) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1100/2007[55], and that no clear patterns for mortality were observed. In November 2025, ICES advised once again that, when the precautionary approach is applied, there should be zero catches of European eel in all habitats and at all life stages, throughout its natural range, which includes the north-east Atlantic and the Mediterranean. This concerns both recreational and commercial catches and includes catches of glass eels for restocking and aquaculture.]

(17) *[The recital and the relevant provisions will be updated after publication by ICES of its scientific advice for European eel for 2026.]* [Council Regulation (EU) 2023/194[56] extended to six months the closure period for any commercial eel fishing activity in Union marine and brackish waters of the north-east Atlantic. It also prohibited all recreational eel fisheries in those waters. It was considered that a six month closure period would better protect the stock than the Union and national measures implemented until 2022. It was also considered that the extended closure period would further the achievement of the escapement objective of at least 40 % of silver eels set out in Article 2(4) of Regulation (EC) No 1100/2007. Council Regulations (EU) 2024/257[57] and (EU) 2025/202[58] maintained those measures while clarifying the criteria for setting the closure period and the possible derogation for continued limited eel fisheries during the eel migration period. Given the continued critical status of the European eel, it is appropriate to maintain those measures in 2026.]

(18) *[The recital and the relevant provisions will be updated after publication by ICES of its scientific advice for European eel for 2026.]* [Pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 1100/2007, restocking of glass eel is a conservation measure chosen by certain Member States in their eel management plans. In order to enable those Member States to continue implementing that measure, glass eel catches in Union marine and brackish waters of the north-east Atlantic at the appropriate time of the year and possibly during their main migration period may be required. Therefore, Member States may allow continued glass eel fishing exclusively for restocking for an additional 50 days during the main migration period of glass eel.]

(19) In its advice for certain stocks of elasmobranchs (skates, sharks, rays) for 2026, ICES recommends zero catches, due to their poor conservation status or where even limited fishing activity could give rise to a serious conservation risk. Therefore, the fishing of such species should be prohibited. In addition, pursuant to Article 15(4), point (a), of

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55 Council Regulation (EC) No 1100/2007 of 18 September 2007 establishing measures for the recovery of the stock of European eel (OJ L 248, 22.9.2007, p. 17, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2007/1100/oj).

56 Council Regulation (EU) 2023/194 of 30 January 2023 fixing for 2023 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks, applicable in Union waters and, for Union fishing vessels, in certain non-Union waters, as well as fixing for 2023 and 2024 such fishing opportunities for certain deep-sea fish stocks (OJ L 28, 31.1.2023, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/194/oj).

57 Council Regulation (EU) 2024/257 of 10 January 2024 fixing for 2024, 2025 and 2026 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks, applicable in Union waters and, for Union fishing vessels, in certain non-Union waters, and amending Regulation (EU) 2023/194 (OJ L, 2024/257, 11.1.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/257/oj).

58 Council Regulation (EU) 2025/202 of 30 January 2025 fixing for 2025 and 2026 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks, applicable in Union waters and, for Union fishing vessels, in certain non-Union waters, and amending Regulation (EU) 2024/257 as regards fishing opportunities for 2025 (OJ L, 2025/202, 31.1.2025, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2025/202/oj).

Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, the landing obligation does not apply to species for which fishing is prohibited. When accidentally caught, those species should not be harmed and should be promptly released. Discarding of such elasmobranchs is not considered to raise their fishing mortality significantly and supports the conservation of those stocks as they have high survival rates when discarded.

(20) In order to maximise the use of fishing opportunities, it is appropriate to allow for the implementation of a flexible arrangement between certain TAC areas where the same biological stock is concerned.

(21) Articles 3 and 4 of Council Regulation (EC) No 847/96[59] provide for year-to-year flexibility for quotas for stocks subject to both 'precautionary TACs' and 'analytical TACs'. Under Article 2 of that Regulation, when fixing TACs, the Council is to decide to which stocks Articles 3 and 4 of that Regulation are not to apply, on the basis of the biological status of stocks and commitments reached with non-EU countries. Moreover, Article 15(9) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 provides for further year-to-year flexibility for all stocks that are subject to the landing obligation. In order to avoid excessive flexibility that would undermine the achievement of the objectives of the CFP, year-to-year flexibility for quotas pursuant to Articles 3 and 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 and Article 15(9) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 should not apply cumulatively. Finally, year-to-year flexibility under Article 15(9) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 should also be excluded for stocks for which year-to-year flexibility pursuant to Articles 3 and 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 is excluded.

(22) Where a stock is fished by one Member State only, it is appropriate to empower that Member State to fix a TAC for that stock, in accordance with Article 2(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). Such empowerment is appropriate, provided that, when determining the TAC level, the Member State complies with the objectives and rules set out in Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 and in Regulations (EU) 2018/973 and (EU) 2019/472. In order to allow the Commission to monitor the correct application of the objectives and rules set out in Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, and in Regulations (EU) 2018/973 and (EU) 2019/472, Member States should submit to the Commission information regarding those TACs. In addition, the Commission may request the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) to assess those TACs, and in the event that the STECF assesses those TACs as not being in compliance with the objectives and rules set out in Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 and in Regulations (EU) 2018/973 and (EU) 2019/472, Member States should amend the TACs on the basis of the STECF advice.

(23) It is necessary to establish the fishing effort limitations for sole in the Western Channel (ICES division 7e), in accordance with Article 12 of Regulation (EU) 2019/472.

(24) It is necessary to establish the fishing effort ceilings for bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) in part of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) Convention area, specifically in the Atlantic Ocean, east of 45°W, in

[59] Council Regulation (EC) No 847/96 of 6 May 1996 introducing additional conditions for year-to-year management of TACs and quotas (OJ L 115, 9.5.1996, p. 3, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/1996/847/oj).

accordance with Articles 6, 11, 13 and 16 of Regulation (EU) 2023/2053 of the European Parliament and of the Council[60].

(25) The use of fishing opportunities available to Union fishing vessels set out in this Regulation is subject to Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009[61], as amended by Regulation (EU) 2023/2842 of the European Parliament and of the Council[62], and in particular to Articles 33 and 34 of that Regulation, concerning the recording of catches and fishing effort, and the notification of data on the exhaustion of fishing opportunities. It is therefore necessary to specify the codes to be used by Member States when sending the Commission data on catches and fishing effort for stocks subject to this Regulation.

(26) *[The recital and the relevant provisions will be updated after the NEAFC annual meeting.]* [At its 2024 annual meeting, the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) adopted a TAC for NEAFC Contracting Parties for redfish (*Sebastes mentella*) in international waters of ICES subareas 1 and 2 for 2025, which may be fished for in the period from 1 July 2025 to 30 November 2025. The Union quota for redfish in that area for 2025 should be set at the level of that TAC. In addition, once the TAC is fully utilised by NEAFC Contracting Parties and the fishery is closed, Member States should prohibit directed fishery for redfish by fishing vessels flying their flag.]

(27) *[The recital and the relevant provisions will be updated after the NEAFC annual meeting.]* [Mackerel (*Scomber scombrus*), blue whiting (*Micromesistius poutassou*) and Atlanto-Scandian herring (*Clupea harengus*) in the north-east Atlantic are subject to coastal States consultations on the fisheries management for those stocks, and are stocks that are also managed by NEAFC. The Union participated in those consultations on the basis of the positions endorsed by the Council on 10 October 2024. The outcome of those consultations was documented in Agreed Records for Atlanto-Scandian herring in the north-east Atlantic for 2025 signed on 18 October 2024, for blue whiting in the north-east Atlantic for 2025 signed on 16 October 2024 and for mackerel in the north-east Atlantic for 2025 signed on 22 October 2024. At its annual meeting in 2024, NEAFC adopted recommendations on conservation and management measures for Atlanto-Scandian herring, blue whiting, and mackerel for 2025. It is therefore appropriate to set the TACs for Atlanto-Scandian herring, blue whiting and mackerel in the north-east Atlantic for 2025 at the level of fishing

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60 Regulation (EU) 2023/2053 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 September 2023 establishing a multiannual management plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean, amending Regulations (EC) No 1936/2001, (EU) 2017/2107, and (EU) 2019/833 and repealing Regulation (EU) 2016/1627 (OJ L 238, 27.9.2023, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/2053/oj).

61 Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 of 20 November 2009 establishing a Community control system for ensuring compliance with the rules of the common fisheries policy, amending Regulations (EC) No 847/96, (EC) No 2371/2002, (EC) No 811/2004, (EC) No 768/2005, (EC) No 2115/2005, (EC) No 2166/2005, (EC) No 388/2006, (EC) No 509/2007, (EC) No 676/2007, (EC) No 1098/2007, (EC) No 1300/2008, (EC) No 1342/2008 and repealing Regulations (EEC) No 2847/93, (EC) No 1627/94 and (EC) No 1966/2006 (OJ L 343, 22.12.2009, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2009/1224/oj).

62 Regulation (EU) 2023/2842 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 November 2023 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009, and amending Council Regulations (EC) No 1967/2006 and (EC) No 1005/2008 and Regulations (EU) 2016/1139, (EU) 2017/2403 and (EU) 2019/473 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards fisheries control (OJ L, 2023/2842, 20.12.2023, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/2842/oj).

opportunities agreed in the respective coastal States Agreed Records and NEAFC recommendations.]

(28) *[The recital and the relevant provisions will be updated after the ICCAT annual meeting.]* [At its 2024 annual meeting, the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) maintained existing measures for certain stocks in the ICCAT Convention area. In addition, ICCAT increased the TACs for 2025 compared to 2024 for bigeye tuna (*Thunnus obesus*) and North Atlantic swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*). Moreover, ICCAT moved the closure for using fish aggregating devices (FADs) for fishing for tropical tunas to later in the year and reduced its duration to 45 days. Those measures should be implemented in Union law.]

(29) *[The recital and the relevant provisions will be updated after the CCAMLR annual meeting.]* [At its 2024 annual meeting, the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) adopted catch limits for stocks in the CCAMLR Convention area for the period from 1 December 2024 to 30 November 2025. Those measures should be implemented in Union law.]

(30) At its 2025 annual meeting, the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) established the following measures in its Area of Competence for 2026: (i) it maintained the existing measures adopted for yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacares*); (ii) it reviewed the catch limits for bigeye tuna; and (iii) it adopted catch limits for skipjack tuna (*Katsuwonus pelamis*). Those measures should be implemented in Union law. [The Union quota for skipjack tuna in the IOTC Area of Competence for 2026 should be allocated to Member States in line with the agreement reached between the Member States concerned on the allocation key for that stock, which takes into account [X]].

(31) The annual meeting of the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO) is scheduled for 2 to 6 March 2026. Consequently, existing measures in the SPRFMO Convention area that are functionally linked to the TACs should be temporarily maintained until the annual meeting takes place and the 2026 TACs are established.

(32) At its 2025 annual meeting, the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) changed some of the existing measures applicable in the IATTC Convention area while maintaining the number of drifting FADs for 2026. Those measures should be implemented in Union law.

(33) *[The recital and the relevant provisions will be updated after the CCSBT annual meeting.]* [At its 2023 annual meeting, the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT) adopted the TAC for Southern bluefin tuna (*Thunnus maccoyii*) for a three-year period from 2024 to 2026. That measure should be implemented in Union law for 2025.]

(34) *[The recital and the relevant provisions will be updated after the SEAFO annual meeting.]* [At its 2024 annual meeting, the South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (SEAFO) maintained for the period 2025-2026 the TACs in the SEAFO Convention area set for 2024. However, the TAC of Patagonian toothfish (*Dissostichus eleginoides*) in SEAFO subarea D was increased by 13 tonnes for 2025 compared to 2024. Those measures should be implemented in Union law.]

(35) *[The recital and the relevant provisions will be updated after the WCPFC annual meeting.]* [At its 2024 annual meeting, the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries

Commission (WCPFC) maintained for 2025 the measures adopted for 2024. Those measures should be implemented in Union law.]

(36) At its 47th annual meeting in 2025, the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO) adopted fishing opportunities for certain stocks in the NAFO Convention area for 2026. It also maintained for 2026 measures that are functionally linked to the fishing opportunities of shortfin squid (*Illex illecebrosus*) in NAFO subareas 3 and 4 and yellowtail flounder (*Limanda ferruginea*) in NAFO divisions 3LNO, aiming at minimising the levels of by-catches of non-target species and without which the fishing opportunities for those stocks would have to be reduced to protect the non-target species. Those measures should be implemented in Union law.

(37) At its 2025 annual meeting, the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA) revised the existing measures for deep-water sharks, including the existing closure of fishing areas and the list of shark species for which directed fishing in the SIOFA Agreement Area is prohibited. In addition, SIOFA adopted a new measure for benthic fisheries, which includes closing certain areas for all bottom fishing activities and in certain areas only allowing bottom longline fishing. Those measures should be implemented in Union law.

(38) Under Article 498(2) of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community, of the one part, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, of the other part[63] ('the Trade and Cooperation Agreement'), the Union and the United Kingdom are to hold annual consultations to agree, by 10 December of each year, the TACs for the following year for the stocks listed in Annex 35 to the Trade and Cooperation Agreement. If such TACs are not agreed on by 10 December, the Parties are to immediately resume consultations with the continued aim of agreeing on the TACs, as required by Article 499(1) of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement.

(39) *[The recital and the relevant provisions will be updated after the conclusion of consultations between the Union and the United Kingdom.]* [In 2024, the Union and the United Kingdom held bilateral consultations on the setting of a large number of TACs for 2025 for stocks listed in Annex 35 to the Trade and Cooperation Agreement. Those consultations were conducted pursuant to Article 498(2), (4) and (6) of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement. The Union participated in those consultations on the basis of the Union position endorsed by the Council on 7 October 2024, and in accordance with Commission services non-papers endorsed by the Council on 5, 8, 19 November and 2 December 2024. The outcome of the consultations was documented in a written record signed on 6 December 2024. The relevant fishing opportunities should therefore be fixed at the levels set out in that written record, and the other measures functionally linked to the fishing opportunities also set out in that written record should be implemented in Union law.]

(40) *[The recital and the relevant provisions will be updated after the conclusion of consultations between the Union, the United Kingdom and Norway.]* [In 2024, the Union, the United Kingdom and Norway held trilateral consultations on six shared and jointly managed stocks occurring within the areas under their jurisdiction, with the aim of agreeing on the management of those stocks, including the fishing opportunities for 2025. Those consultations were conducted between 4 November and 2 December 2024, on the basis of the Union position endorsed by the Council

63 OJ L 149, 30.4.2021, p. 10, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_internation/2021/689(1)/oj

on 7 October 2024, and in accordance with the Commission services non-paper endorsed by the Council on 8 November 2024. The outcome of the consultations was documented in an agreed record signed by the Heads of Delegation on 2 December 2024. The relevant fishing opportunities should be set at the level agreed with the United Kingdom and Norway, and the other provisions of that agreed record should be implemented in Union law.]

(41) *[The recital and the relevant provisions will be updated after the conclusion of consultations between the Union and Norway.]* [The Union held bilateral consultations with Norway on seven shared and jointly managed stocks in the Skagerrak (cod (*Gadus morhua*), haddock (*Melanogrammus aeglefinus*), herring (*Clupea harengus*), Northern shrimp (*Pandalus borealis*), plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*), sprat (*Sprattus sprattus*) and whiting (*Merlangius merlangus*)), to agree on the management of those stocks and fishing opportunities for 2025, as well as exchange of quotas and access arrangements. Those consultations, conducted on the basis of the Union position endorsed by Council on 4 October 2024, were concluded on 5 December 2024 and the outcome was documented in three agreed records signed by the Heads of Delegation on 5 December 2024. The relevant fishing opportunities should be set at the level agreed with Norway, and the other provisions of those agreed records should be implemented in Union law.]

(42) *[The recital and the relevant provisions will be updated after the conclusion of consultations between the Union, and the Government of Greenland and the Government of Denmark.]* [In accordance with the procedure provided for in the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union, of the one part, and the Government of Greenland and the Government of Denmark, of the other part, and the implementing Protocol thereto[64], the Parties agreed to establish the level of fishing opportunities available for the Union in Greenland waters for 2025 at the level agreed and provided in that implementing Protocol, to be confirmed by exchange of letters, as provided for in Article 12(8) of that Agreement, after the application, on a provisional basis, of the implementing Protocol thereto by the Parties. The relevant fishing opportunities should therefore be fixed at the level set out in the implementing Protocol, and taking into account the transfers to Norway agreed in bilateral fisheries consultations between the Union and Norway for 2025.]

(43) The Treaty of 9 February 1920 relating to Spitsbergen (Svalbard) (the '1920 Treaty of Paris') grants equal and non-discriminatory access to resources around Svalbard for all Parties to that Treaty, including with respect to fishing. The Union's position concerning that access has been outlined in several *notes verbales* to Norway, with the most recent being dated 26 February 2021, 28 June 2021, 1 August 2022, and 26 October 2023. As regards the fishing opportunities for snow crabs (*Chionoecetes* spp.) around Svalbard, it is appropriate to limit the number of fishing vessels that are authorised to conduct such fishing activities, ensuring that the exploitation of snow crabs around Svalbard is consistent with non-discriminatory management rules set by Norway, which holds sovereignty and jurisdiction in the area in accordance with the relevant provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the 1920 Treaty of Paris. The allocation of such fishing opportunities among Member

64 Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the European Union, of the one part, and the Government of Greenland and the Government of Denmark, of the other part (OJ L 175, 18.5.2021, p. 3, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_internation/2021/793/oj).

States is limited to 2026. In the Union, the primary responsibility for ensuring compliance with applicable law lies with flag Member States.

(44) *[The recital and the relevant provisions on stocks in the north-east Arctic will be updated once the relevant information becomes available.]* [As regards the fishing opportunities for cod in the north-east Arctic, it is appropriate to set the Union quota for cod in Svalbard waters and international waters of ICES subarea 1 and division 2b for 2025 on the basis of the reference TAC for that stock and the Union's historical fishing share of 2,8274 %. That Union quota should be allocated to the Member States in accordance with Council Decision 87/277/EEC[65], subject to the adaptations necessary due to the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the Union as set out in Annex 36, table E, to the Trade and Cooperation Agreement.]

(45) *[The recital and the relevant provisions on fishing opportunities in Union waters to fishing vessels flying the flag of Venezuela will be updated once the relevant information becomes available.]* [In accordance with the Union's Declaration addressed to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on the granting of fishing opportunities in Union waters to fishing vessels flying the flag of Venezuela in the exclusive economic zone off the coast of French Guiana, approved on behalf of the Union by Council Decision (EU) 2015/1565[66], it is necessary to fix the maximum number of fishing authorisations for snapper available to Venezuela in Union waters for 2025.]

(46) In order to ensure uniform conditions for the implementation of this Regulation, implementing powers should be conferred on the Commission to authorise individual Member States to manage fishing effort allocations in accordance with a kilowatt per day system, to grant additional days at sea for the permanent cessation of fishing activities and for enhanced scientific observer coverage and to establish spreadsheet formats for the collection and transmission of information on transfers of days at sea between fishing vessels flying the flag of a Member State. Those powers should be exercised in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council[67].

(47) To ensure continuous application and prevent legal uncertainty during the period between the end of the year and the date of entry into force of the Regulation fixing the fishing opportunities for the subsequent year, the provisions of this Regulation concerning prohibitions and closed seasons should continue to apply at the beginning of 2027 until the entry into force of the Regulation fixing the fishing opportunities for 2027. For the same reasons, provisions applying from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2027 or 31 December 2028 should continue to apply at the beginning of 2028 or 2029 until the entry into force of the Regulation fixing the fishing opportunities for 2028 or 2029.

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65 Council Decision 87/277/EEC of 18 May 1987 on the allocation of the catch possibilities for cod in the Spitsbergen and Bear Island area and in Division 3M as defined in the NAFO Convention (OJ L 135, 23.5.1987, p. 29, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/1987/277/oj).

66 Council Decision (EU) 2015/1565 of 14 September 2015 on the approval, on behalf of the European Union, of the Declaration on the granting of fishing opportunities in EU waters to fishing vessels flying the flag of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in the exclusive economic zone off the coast of French Guiana (OJ L 244, 19.9.2015, p. 55, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2015/1565/oj).

67 Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 laying down the rules and general principles concerning mechanisms for control by Member States of the Commission's exercise of implementing powers (OJ L 55, 28.2.2011, p. 13, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2011/182/oj).

(48) To avoid the interruption of fishing activities and safeguard the livelihood of fishers, this Regulation should apply with effect from 1 January 2026. For reasons of urgency and to provide legal certainty as soon as possible, this Regulation should enter into force on the day of its publication.

(49) Certain international measures that create or restrict fishing opportunities for the Union were adopted by the relevant regional fisheries management organisations (RFMOs) at the end of 2025 and became applicable before the entry into force of this Regulation. The provisions of this Regulation that implement such measures in Union law should therefore apply retroactively. In particular, as the fishing season in the CCAMLR Convention area runs from 1 December to 30 November, and as certain fishing opportunities or prohibitions in the CCAMLR Convention area are laid down for a period starting from 1 December 2025, the relevant provisions of this Regulation should apply from that date. In addition, the fishing season for toothfishes in the SIOFA Agreement Area runs from 1 December to 30 November, and as the TACs for that group of species are established for a period starting from 1 December 2025, the TACs should apply from that date. Such retroactive application does not prejudice the principle of legitimate expectation as it is forbidden for fishing vessels flying the flag of the Contracting Party to fish in the CCAMLR Convention area and the SIOFA Agreement Area without authorisation,

HAS ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

TITLE I
GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1
Subject matter

1. This Regulation fixes fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks, applicable in Union waters and, for Union fishing vessels, in certain non-Union waters.

2. The fishing opportunities referred to in paragraph 1 include:

   (a) catch limits for the year 2026 and, where specified in this Regulation, also for 2027 and 2028;

   (b) fishing effort limits for the year 2026, except the fishing effort limits set out in Annex II, which are to apply from 1 February 2026 to 31 January 2027;

   (c) fishing opportunities for the period from 1 December 2025 to 30 November 2026 for certain stocks in the CCAMLR Convention area and for certain stocks in the SIOFA Agreement Area; and

   (d) fishing opportunities for the period from 1 June 2026 to 31 May 2027 in the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC) Convention area.

Article 2
Scope

1. This Regulation applies to the following fishing vessels:

   (a) Union fishing vessels; and

   (b) third country fishing vessels in Union waters.

2. This Regulation also applies to:

(a) certain recreational fisheries expressly referred to in the relevant provisions of this Regulation; and

(b) commercial fisheries from shore.

Article 3
Definitions

For the purposes of this Regulation, the definitions in Article 4 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 shall apply. In addition, the following definitions shall apply:

(a) ‘third country fishing vessel’ means a fishing vessel flying the flag of, and registered in, a third country;

(b) ‘recreational fisheries’ means non-commercial fishing activities exploiting marine biological resources in the context of recreation, tourism or sport;

(c) ‘international waters’ means waters outside the sovereignty or jurisdiction of any State;

(d) ‘total allowable catch’ (TAC) means:

(i) in fisheries subject to the exemption from the landing obligation referred to in Article 15(4) to (7) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, the quantity of fish that may be landed from each stock each year;

(ii) in all other fisheries, the quantity of fish that may be caught from each stock each year;

(e) ‘quota’ means a proportion of a TAC that is allocated to the Union, a Member State or a third country;

(f) ‘analytical assessment’ means a quantitative evaluation of trends in a given stock, based on data about the stock’s biology and exploitation, including based on proxies, which scientific review has indicated to be of sufficient quality to provide scientific advice;

(g) ‘analytical TAC’ means a TAC for which an analytical assessment is available;

(h) ‘precautionary TAC’ means a TAC for which an analytical assessment is not available but rather an assessment based on the precautionary approach is available or no assessment is available;

(i) ‘mesh size’ means the mesh size of fishing nets as defined in Article 6, point (34), of Regulation (EU) 2019/1241 of the European Parliament and of the Council[68];

(j) ‘Union fishing fleet register’ means the register set up by the Commission pursuant to Article 24(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013;

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68 Regulation (EU) 2019/1241 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 109 on the conservation of fisheries resources and the protection of marine ecosystems through technical measures, amending Council Regulations (EC) No 1967/2006, (EC) No 1224/2009 and Regulations (EU) No 1380/2013, (EU) 2016/1139, (EU) 2018/973, (EU) 2019/472 and (EU) 2019/1022 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 894/97, (EC) No 850/98, (EC) No 2549/2000, (EC) No 254/2002, (EC) No 812/2004 and (EC) No 2187/2005, (OJ L 198, 25.7.2019, p. 105, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2019/1241/oj).

(k) ‘fishing logbook’ means the logbook referred to in Article 14 of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009;

(l) ‘instrumented buoy’ means a buoy clearly marked with a unique reference number allowing identification of its owner and equipped with a satellite tracking system to monitor its position;

(m) ‘operational buoy’ means any instrumented buoy, previously activated, switched on and deployed at sea on a drifting fish aggregating device (FAD) or log, which transmits positions and other available information such as echo-sounder estimates.

Article 4
Fishing zones

For the purposes of this Regulation, the following fishing zone definitions apply:

(a) ‘ICES (International Council for the Exploration of the Sea) zones’ means the geographical areas specified in Annex III to Regulation (EC) No 218/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council[69];

(b) ‘Skagerrak’ means the geographical area bounded on the west by a line drawn from the Hanstholm lighthouse to the Lindesnes lighthouse and on the south by a line drawn from the Skagen lighthouse to the Tistlarna lighthouse and from that point to the nearest point on the Swedish coast;

(c) ‘Kattegat’ means the geographical area bounded on the north by a line drawn from the Skagen lighthouse to the Tistlarna lighthouse and from that point to the nearest point on the Swedish coast and on the south by a line drawn from Hasenøre to Gnibens Spids, from Korshage to Spodsbjerg and from Gilbjerg Hoved to Kullen;

(d) ‘functional unit 16 of ICES subarea 7’ means the geographical area bounded by rhumb lines sequentially joining the following positions:

– 53°30'N 15°00'W,

– 53°30'N 11°00'W,

– 51°30'N 11°00'W,

– 51°30'N 13°00'W,

– 51°00'N 13°00'W,

– 51°00'N 15°00'W;

(e) ‘functional unit 25 of ICES division 8c’ means the geographical sea area bounded by rhumb lines sequentially joining the following positions:

– 43°00'N 9°00'W,

– 43°00'N 10°00'W,

– 43°30'N 10°00'W,

– 43°30'N 9°00'W,

69 Regulation (EC) No 218/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2009 on the submission of nominal catch statistics by Member States fishing in the north-east Atlantic (OJ L 87, 31.3.2009, p. 70, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2009/218/oj).

– 44°00'N 9°00'W,

– 44°00'N 8°00'W,

– 43°30'N 8°00'W;

(f) ‘functional unit 26 of ICES division 9a’ means the geographical area bounded by rhumb lines sequentially joining the following positions:

– 43°00'N 8°00'W,

– 43°00'N 10°00'W,

– 42°00'N 10°00'W,

– 42 00'N 8°00'W;

(g) ‘functional unit 27 of ICES division 9a’ means the geographical area bounded by rhumb lines sequentially joining the following positions:

– 42°00'N 8°00'W,

– 42°00'N 10°00'W,

– 38°30'N 10°00'W,

– 38°30'N 9°00'W,

– 40°00'N 9°00'W,

– 40°00'N 8°00'W;

(h) ‘functional unit 30 of ICES division 9a’ means the geographical area under the jurisdiction of Spain in the Gulf of Cádiz and in the adjacent waters of ICES division 9a;

(i) ‘functional unit 31 of ICES division 8c’ means the geographical sea area bounded by rhumb lines sequentially joining the following positions:

– 43°30'N 6°00'W,

– 44°00'N 6°00'W,

– 44°00'N 2°00'W,

– 43°30'N 2°00'W;

(j) ‘Gulf of Cádiz’ means the geographical area of ICES division 9a east of longitude 7° 23' 48″ W;

(k) ‘CCAMLR (Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources) Convention area’ means the geographical area defined in the Convention on the conservation of Antarctic marine living resources[70];

(l) ‘CECAF (Committee for Eastern Central Atlantic Fisheries) areas’ means the geographical areas specified in Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 216/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council[71];

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70 OJ L 252, 5.9.1981, p. 27, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/convention/1981/691/oj. The Union approved the CCAMLR Convention by Council Decision 81/691/EEC of 4 September 1981 on the conclusion of the Convention on the conservation of Antarctic marine living resources (OJ L 252, 5.9.1981, p. 26, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/1981/691/oj).

(m) ‘IATTC (Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission) Convention area’ means the geographical area defined in the Convention for the Strengthening of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission established by the 1949 Convention between the United States of America and the Republic of Costa Rica (Antigua Convention) [72];

(n) ‘ICCAT (International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas) Convention area’ means the geographical area defined in the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas[73];

(o) ‘IOTC (Indian Ocean Tuna Commission) Area of Competence’ means the geographical area defined in the Agreement for the establishment of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission[74];

(p) ‘NAFO (Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation) Convention Area’ and ‘NAFO areas’ means the geographical areas defined in the Convention on future Multilateral Cooperation in the North-West Atlantic Fisheries[75];

(q) ‘NAFO Regulatory Area’ means the part of the NAFO Convention Area which is beyond national jurisdiction;

(r) ‘NPFC Convention area’ means the geographical area defined in the Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fisheries Resources in the North Pacific Ocean[76];

(s) ‘SEAFO (South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation) Convention area’ means the geographical area defined in the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Fishery Resources in the South-East Atlantic Ocean[77];

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71 Regulation (EC) No 216/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2009 on the submission of nominal catch statistics by Member States fishing in certain areas other than those of the North Atlantic (OJ L 87, 31.3.2009, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2009/216/oj).

72 OJ L 224, 16.8.2006, p. 24, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/convention/2005/26/oj. The Union approved the Convention for the Strengthening of IATTC by Council Decision 2006/539/EC of 22 May 2006 on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Community of the Convention for the Strengthening of the Inter American Tropical Tuna Commission established by the 1949 Convention between the United States of America and the Republic of Costa Rica (OJ L 224, 16.8.2006, p. 22, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2006/539/oj).

73 OJ L 162, 18.6.1986, p. 34, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/convention/1986/238(1)/oj. The Union acceded to the ICCAT by Council Decision 86/238/EEC of 9 June 1986 on the accession of the Community to the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, as amended by the Protocol annexed to the Final Act of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries of the States Parties to the Convention signed in Paris on 10 July 1984 (OJ L 162, 18.6.1986, p. 33, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/1986/238/oj).

74 OJ L 236, 5.10.1995, p. 25, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_internation/1995/399/oj. The Union acceded to the IOTC by Council Decision 95/399/EC of 18 September 1995 on the accession of the Community to the Agreement for the establishment of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (OJ L 236, 5.10.1995, p. 24, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/1995/399/oj).

75 OJ L 378, 30.12.1978, p. 2, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/convention/1978/3179/oj. The Union acceded the NAFO Convention by Council Regulation (EEC) No 3179/78 of 28 December 1978 concerning the conclusion by the European Economic Community of the Convention on Future Multilateral Cooperation in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries (OJ L 378, 30.12.1978, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/1978/3179/oj).

76 OJ L 55, 28.2.2022, p. 14. The Union acceded to the Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fisheries Resources in the North Pacific Ocean by Council Decision (EU) 2022/314 of 15 February 2022 on the accession of the European Union to the Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fisheries Resources in the North Pacific Ocean (OJ L 55, 28.2.2022, p. 12, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2022/314/oj).

(t) ‘SIOFA (Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement) Agreement Area’ means the geographical area defined in the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement[78];

(u) ‘SPRFMO (South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation) Convention area’ means the geographical area defined in the Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fishery Resources in the South Pacific Ocean[79];

(v) ‘WCPFC (Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission) Convention area’ means the geographical area defined in the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean[80];

(w) ‘high seas of the Bering Sea’ means the geographical area of the high seas of the Bering Sea beyond 200 nautical miles from the baselines from which the breadth of the territorial seas of the coastal States of the Bering Sea is measured;

(x) ‘overlap area between IATTC and WCPFC Convention areas’ means the geographical area defined by the following limits:

– longitude 150° W,

– longitude 130° W,

– latitude 4° S,

– latitude 50° S.

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77 OJ L 234, 31.8.2002, p. 40, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/convention/2001/319/oj. The Union approved the SEAFO Convention by Council Decision 2002/738/EC of 22 July 2002 on the conclusion by the European Community of the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Fishery Resources in the South-East Atlantic Ocean (OJ L 234, 31.8.2002, p. 39, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2002/738/oj).

78 OJ L 196, 18.7.2006, p. 15, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_internation/2006/496/oj.The Union approved the SIOFA by Council Decision 2008/780/EC of 29 September 2008 on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Community, of the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (OJ L 268, 9.10.2008, p. 27, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2008/780/oj).

79 OJ L 67, 6.3.2012, p. 3, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/convention/2012/130/oj. The Union approved the SPRFMO Convention by Council Decision 2012/130/EU of 3 October 2011 on the approval, on behalf of the European Union, of the Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fishery Resources in the South Pacific Ocean (OJ L 67, 6.3.2012, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2012/130(1)/oj).

80 OJ L 32, 4.2.2005, p. 3, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/convention/2005/75/oj. The Union acceded to the WCPFC by Council Decision 2005/75/EC of 26 April 2004 on the accession of the Community to the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (OJ L 32, 4.2.2005, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2005/75(1)/oj).

TITLE II
FISHING OPPORTUNITIES FOR UNION FISHING VESSELS

Chapter I
General provisions

Article 5
TACs and allocations

1. The TACs for Union fishing vessels in Union waters and certain non-Union waters, their allocation among Member States and, where appropriate, the conditions functionally linked thereto are set out in Annex I.

2. Union fishing vessels may be authorised by the coastal State concerned to fish in waters under the fisheries jurisdiction of the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Norway and in the fishing zone around Jan Mayen subject to the TACs set out in Annex I to this Regulation and subject to the conditions provided for in Article 22 of this Regulation, in Part A of Annex V to this Regulation and in Regulation (EU) 2017/2403 of the European Parliament and of the Council[81] and in delegated acts adopted by the Commission on the basis of that Regulation.

3. Union fishing vessels may be authorised by the United Kingdom to fish in waters under its fisheries jurisdiction subject to the TACs in Annex I to this Regulation, the conditions provided for in Article 22 of this Regulation and in Regulation (EU) 2017/2403 and in delegated acts adopted by the Commission on the basis of that Regulation.

Article 6
TACs to be determined by Member States

1. The TACs set out in Annex I to this Regulation shall, where specified in that Annex, be determined by the Member State concerned.

2. The TACs to be determined by a Member State referred to in paragraph 1 shall:

   (a) be consistent with the objectives and rules set out in Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 and in Regulations (EU) 2018/973 and 2019/472, in particular the objective of sustainable exploitation of the stock; and

   (b) result in an exploitation of the stock that is:

      (i) if an analytical assessment is available, in line with MSY, with as high a probability as possible; or

      (ii) if an analytical assessment is unavailable or incomplete, consistent with the precautionary approach to fisheries management.

[81] Regulation (EU) 2017/2403 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2017 on the sustainable management of external fishing fleets, and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1006/2008 (OJ L 347, 28.12.2017, p. 81, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2017/2403/oj).

3. By 15 March each Member State concerned shall submit the following information to the Commission:

(a) the TACs that it has determined;

(b) the data that it has collected, assessed and used as a basis for the determination of the TACs; and

(c) details as to how the determined TACs comply with the conditions laid down in paragraph 2.

4. Where appropriate, the Commission may request STECF:

(a) to assess the information referred to in paragraph 3, points (b) and (c); and

(b) to assess whether the TACs determined by Member States comply with the conditions laid down in paragraph 2.

5. If, according to the advice of STECF, the information submitted by Member States is deemed insufficient, the Member States concerned shall submit to the Commission new information, together with supporting information justifying that new information in relation to the STECF advice, no later than one month after the publication of the STECF advice.

6. If, according to the advice of STECF, the TACs determined by Member States do not comply with the conditions laid down in paragraph 2, the Member States concerned shall amend, on the basis of the STECF advice, the TACs they have determined and submit to the Commission these amended TACs, together with supporting information justifying the amended TACs on the basis of the STECF advice, no later than one month after the publication of that advice, where relevant, together with the new data referred to in paragraph 5.

Article 7

Conditions for landing catches and by-catches

1. Catches that are not subject to the landing obligation under Article 15 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 shall be retained on board or landed only if they:

(a) have been taken by fishing vessels flying the flag of a Member State that has a quota and that quota has not been exhausted; or

(b) make up a share of a Union quota that has not been allocated among Member States and that has not been exhausted.

2. For the purposes of the derogation from the obligation to count catches against the relevant quotas, as provided for in Article 15(8) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, the stocks of non-target species within safe biological limits referred to in that Article are identified in Annex I to this Regulation.

Article 8

Quota exchange mechanism for TACs for unavoidable by-catches

1. In order to take account of the landing obligation and to make quotas for certain by-catches available to Member States without a quota, the quota exchange mechanism set out in paragraphs 2 to 5 shall apply to the TACs identified in Annex IA.

2. 6 % of each quota from the TACs for cod (*Gadus morhua*) in the Celtic Sea (COD/7XAD34), cod in the West of Scotland (COD/5BE6A), whiting (Merlangius merlangus) in the Irish Sea (WHG/07A.) and plaice (*Pleuronectes platessa*) in ICES divisions 7h, 7j and 7k (PLE/7HJK.), and 3 % of each quota from the TAC for whiting in the West of Scotland (WHG/56-14), allocated to each Member State, shall be made available for a pool for quota exchanges ('the pool'), which shall open on 1 January. Member States without a quota shall have exclusive access to the pool until 31 March.

3. The quantities drawn from the pool may not be exchanged or transferred to the following year. After 31 March, any unused quantities shall be returned to the Member States that initially contributed to the pool.

4. Member States without a quota shall provide in return quotas for stocks listed in Annex IA, Part C, unless the Member State without a quota and the Member State contributing to the pool agree otherwise.

5. The quotas referred to in paragraph 4 shall be of equivalent commercial value, determined on the basis of a market exchange rate or other mutually acceptable exchange rates. In the absence of alternatives, the equivalent commercial value shall be determined on the basis of average Union prices from the previous year, as provided by the European Market Observatory for Fisheries and Aquaculture Products.

6. Where the quota exchange mechanism set out in paragraphs 2 to 5 does not allow Member States to cover their unavoidable by-catches to a similar extent, Member States shall endeavour to agree on quota exchanges pursuant to Article 16(8) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, ensuring that quotas exchanged are of equivalent commercial value.

Article 9
Fishing effort limits in the Western Channel

1. For the period referred to in Article 1(2), point (b), of this Regulation, fishing effort limitations for sole in the Western Channel (ICES division 7e) are set out in Annex II.

2. At the request of a Member State in accordance with point 7.4 of Annex II, the Commission may adopt an implementing act by which it allocates to that Member State a number of days at sea in addition to those referred to in point 5 of Annex II, on which it may authorise a fishing vessel under its flag to be present in ICES division 7e when carrying on board any regulated gear. The Commission shall adopt that implementing act in accordance with the examination procedure referred to in Article 59(2) of this Regulation.

3. At the request of a Member State, the Commission may adopt an implementing act by which it allocates to that Member State a maximum of three days at sea between 1 February 2026 and 31 January 2027, in addition to those referred to in point 5 of Annex II, on which a fishing vessel may be present in ICES division 7e on the basis of an enhanced programme of scientific observer coverage, as referred to in point 8.1 of Annex II. It shall make such an allocation on the basis of the description submitted by that Member State in accordance with point 8.3 of Annex II and following consultation with the STECF. That implementing act shall be adopted in

accordance with the examination procedure referred to in Article 59(2) of this Regulation.

[Articles 10, 15 to 18 of this Regulation will be updated after the conclusion of the consultations between the Union and the United Kingdom, as well as between the Union, United Kingdom and Norway.]

[*Article 10*
Measures on European seabass fisheries
in ICES divisions 4b, 4c and 6a and ICES subarea 7

1. It shall be prohibited for Union fishing vessels, as well as for any commercial fisheries from shore, to fish for European seabass (*Dicentrarchus labrax*) in ICES divisions 4b and 4c and in ICES subarea 7 or to retain on board, tranship, relocate or land European seabass caught in that area.

2. The prohibition set out in paragraph 1 shall not apply to by-catches of European seabass in shore-based commercial netting activities. This exemption applies to historic numbers of beach nets set at pre-2017 levels. Shore-based commercial netting activities shall not target European seabass, and only unavoidable by-catches of European seabass may be landed.

3. By way of derogation from paragraph 1, in January and from 1 April to 31 December, Union fishing vessels in ICES divisions 4b, 4c, 7d, 7e, 7f and 7h may fish for, retain on board, tranship, relocate or land European seabass caught in that area with the following gear and within the following limits:

   (a) using demersal trawls[82], for unavoidable by-catches not exceeding 3,8 tonnes per fishing vessel and per year and 10 % of the weight of the total catches of marine organisms on board caught by the fishing vessel concerned per fishing trip;

   (b) using seines[83], for unavoidable by-catches not exceeding 3,8 tonnes per fishing vessel and per year and 10 % of the weight of the total catches of marine organisms on board caught by the fishing vessel concerned per fishing trip;

   (c) with regards to Union fishing vessels that have recorded catches of European seabass using hooks and lines during the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 September 2016, using hooks and lines[84], not exceeding 6,8 tonnes per fishing vessel and per year;

   (d) with regards to Union fishing vessels that have recorded catches of European seabass using fixed gillnets during the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 September 2016, using fixed gillnets[85], for unavoidable by-catches not exceeding 1,8 tonnes per fishing vessel and per year.

   In the case of a replacement of a Union fishing vessel, Member States may allow the derogations to apply to another Union fishing vessel provided that the number of

82 All types of demersal trawls (OTB, OTT, PTB, TBB, TBN, TBS and TB).
83 All types of seines (SSC, SDN, SPR, SV, SB and SX).
84 All long lines or pole and line or rod and line fisheries (LHP, LHM, LLD, LL, LTL, LX and LLS).
85 All fixed gillnets and traps (GTR, GNS, GNC, FYK, FPN and FIX).

Union fishing vessels subject to each of the derogations and their overall fishing capacity do not increase.

4. The catch limits set out in paragraph 3 shall not be transferable between fishing vessels.

5. In recreational fisheries, including from shore, in ICES divisions 4b, 4c, 6a and 7a to 7k:

   (a) from 1 February to 31 March:

      (i) only catch-and-release fishing with a rod or a handline for European seabass shall be allowed;

      (ii) it shall be prohibited to retain, relocate, tranship or land European seabass caught in that area;

   (b) in January and from 1 April to 31 December:

      (i) not more than two specimens of European seabass may be caught and retained per fisher per day;

      (ii) the minimum size of European seabass retained shall be 42 cm;

      (iii) fixed nets shall not be used to catch or retain European seabass.

6. Paragraph 5 shall apply without prejudice to more stringent national measures on recreational fisheries.]

Article 11

Measures for European seabass fisheries in the Bay of Biscay

1. When determining their fishing opportunities for commercial fisheries for European seabass in the Bay of Biscay (ICES divisions 8a and 8b), Spain and France shall jointly ensure that the sum of those, commercial discards, recreational landings and recreational dead discards do not exceed 5 286 tonnes. Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 shall apply to those fishing opportunities.

2. By 15 March, Spain and France shall inform the Commission of the fishing opportunities referred to in paragraph 1 and how those fishing opportunities comply with that paragraph.

3. Catches in commercial fisheries under the fishing opportunities referred to in paragraph 1 shall be reported by Spain and by France (BSS/8AB).

4. In recreational fisheries, including from shore, in ICES divisions 8a and 8b:

   (a) a maximum of one specimen of European seabass may be caught and retained per fisher per day; and

   (b) fixed nets shall not be used to catch or retain European seabass.

5. Paragraph 4 shall apply without prejudice to more stringent national measures on recreational fisheries.

Article 12

Measures for pollack in ICES subareas 8, 9 and 10 and Union waters of CECAF area 34.1.1

1. A minimum conservation reference size of 42 cm shall apply for catches of pollack (*Pollachius pollachius*) in ICES subareas 8, 9 and 10 and Union waters of CECAF area 34.1.1.

2. In recreational fisheries, including from shore, in ICES subareas 8, 9 and 10 and Union waters of CECAF area 34.1.1:

   (a) a maximum of two specimens of pollack may be caught and retained per fisher per day; once that ceiling has been reached, 'catch and release' fishing may be carried out; and

   (b) no specimens of pollack are permitted to be caught and retained from 1 January to 30 April; 'catch and release' fishing may nevertheless be carried out during that period.

3. Paragraph 1 applies without prejudice to more stringent national measures on recreational fishing.

[Article 13 will be updated after publication by ICES of its scientific advice for European eel for 2026.]

Article 13

Measures on European eel fisheries in Union waters of ICES subareas 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9

1. This Article applies to Union marine and brackish waters of ICES subareas 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9, and to adjacent Union brackish waters, including estuaries, coastal lagoons and transitional waters.

2. This Article does not apply to commercial fishing operations conducted for the exclusive purpose of scientific investigations with or without a fishing vessel, provided that those investigations are carried out in compliance with the conditions set out in Article 25 of Regulation (EU) 2019/1241 and that the STECF has confirmed to the Commission and the Member States concerned that such scientific investigations are justified on scientific grounds.

3. It shall be prohibited to engage in commercial fishing activities for European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) at all life stages for a period of at least six months between 1 April 2026 and 31 March 2027. In addition, Members States and fishers shall undertake all reasonable efforts to minimise and where possible eliminate incidental catch of European eel. When accidentally caught, specimens of European eel shall not be harmed and shall be promptly released. To that effect, the Member State concerned, either individually or jointly, shall determine one or more closure periods subject to the following conditions:

   (a) where appropriate, the closure period or periods may differ between Member States or within one Member State from one fishing area to another in order to take account of the geographical and temporal migration pattern of European eel at its different life stages;

   (b) the closure period or periods shall last for a consecutive or non-consecutive time span of at least six months, which shall apply to all fishers concerned in the relevant fishing area;

(c) the closure period or periods shall be consistent with the conservation objectives set out in Regulation (EC) No 1100/2007, and with national management plans established pursuant to Article 2 of that Regulation; and

(d) the closure period or periods shall cover the main migration period or periods, including the respective peak, of European eel at the respective life stage in the Member State concerned.

4. By way of derogation from paragraph 3, point (d), for European eel of an overall length of 12 cm or more, the Member States concerned may allow fishing activities for up to a total of 30 consecutive or non-consecutive days, which shall apply to all fishers concerned in the relevant fishing area, during the main migration period. In that case, the Member States concerned shall determine an additional closure of an equivalent period of time during the main migration period or, subsidiarily, just before or after it. In cases where a Member State allows fishing for non-consecutive days, the fishing gear shall be taken out of the water between any period of non-consecutive days.

5. By way of further derogation from paragraph 3, point (d), the Member State concerned may allow fishing for European eel of an overall length of 12 cm or more when migrating from Union waters to their spawning grounds in the Sargasso Sea ('downstream migration') for up to a total of 50 consecutive or non-consecutive days. That shall apply to all fishers concerned in the relevant fishing area, during the main migration period, under the following cumulative conditions:

(a) such fishing activity shall only be allowed when the only access to marine waters necessarily passes through non-Union brackish waters;

(b) the catches taken in ICES subdivisions 22-32 shall meet the minimum conservation reference size of 35 cm, in accordance with Annex VIII, Part A, to Regulation (EU) 2019/1241;

(c) any eel that is sexually mature and is caught shall not be harmed, shall be transported without undue delay and shall be immediately released to nearby Union marine waters at a place designated by the Member State concerned, which would allow them to continue downstream migration;

(d) any incidentally caught eel that is not sexually mature shall not be harmed and shall be immediately released back into the water; and

(e) the fishing activity shall be undertaken with the involvement of a national scientific body.

6. For European eel of an overall length of 12 cm or more in ICES subarea 3, the closure period or periods referred to in paragraph 3 and the derogation thereof referred to in paragraph 4 shall be agreed by all the Member States concerned so as to ensure an effective protection of European eel on its migration from the Baltic Sea into the North Sea. In the absence of such an agreement by 1 April 2026, the closure period shall be 15 September 2026 to 15 March 2027 in Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Finland and Sweden, and without the possibility of the derogation referred to in paragraph 4.

7. By way of further derogation from paragraph 3, point (d), for European eel of an overall length of less than 12 cm, the Member States concerned may allow fishing activities for up to a total of 30 consecutive or non-consecutive days, which shall apply to all fishers concerned in the relevant fishing area, during the main migration

period. In addition, the Member States concerned may allow fishing exclusively for restocking for up to an additional 50 days during the main migration period. In both cases, the Member States concerned shall determine an additional closure of an equivalent period of time during the main migration period or, subsidiarily, just before or after it. In cases where a Member State allows fishing for non-consecutive days, the fishing gear shall be taken out of the water between any period of non-consecutive days.

8. Recreational fisheries of European eel at all life stages shall be prohibited.

9. The Member States concerned, either individually or jointly, shall inform the Commission:

(a) by 1 May, of the closure period or periods determined in accordance with paragraphs 3 to 7, together with the supporting information justifying the chosen period or periods;

(b) within two weeks of their adoption, of national measures relating to the closure period or periods that were determined in accordance with paragraphs 3 to 7;

(c) within eight weeks before the start of the closure period or periods determined in accordance with paragraphs 3 to 7, of the fishing activities held in accordance with paragraph 5: (i) the place or places and date or dates of the fishing activities; (ii) the expected number and type of operators, and the national scientific body involved; and (iii) the designated place or places for release;

(d) within a maximum of eight weeks from the end of the fishing activities held in accordance with paragraph 5: (i) the number and type of operators; (ii) the number of sexually mature eels caught during those fishing activities; (iii) the number of eels that are not sexually mature caught during those fishing activities; and (iv) the number of sexually mature eels that were tagged.

Article 14
Special provisions on allocations of fishing opportunities

1. The allocation of fishing opportunities among Member States set out in this Regulation shall be without prejudice to:

(a) exchanges pursuant to Article 16(8) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013;

(b) deductions and additions pursuant to Article 37 of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009;

(c) reallocations pursuant to Articles 12 and 47 of Regulation (EU) 2017/2403;

(d) additional landings allowed under Article 3 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 and Article 15(9) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013;

(e) quantities withheld in accordance with Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 and Article 15(9) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013;

(f) deductions and adjustments pursuant to Articles 105, 106, 107 and 107a of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009; and

(g) quota transfers and exchanges pursuant to Articles 23 and 53 of this Regulation.

2. Stocks subject to precautionary or analytical TACs for the purposes of the year-to-year management of TACs and quotas provided for in Regulation (EC) No 847/96 are identified in Annex I to this Regulation.

3. Except where otherwise specified in Annex I to this Regulation, Article 3 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall apply to stocks subject to a precautionary TAC, and Article 3(2) and (3) and Article 4 of that Regulation shall apply to stocks subject to an analytical TAC.

4. Articles 3 and 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply where a Member State uses the year-to-year flexibility provided for in Article 15(9) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013.

[Article 15
Closed fishing seasons for sandeels

Commercial fishing for sandeels (*Ammodytes* spp.) with demersal trawl, seine or similar towed gears with a mesh size of less than 16 mm shall be prohibited in ICES divisions 2a and 3a and in ICES subarea 4 from 1 January to 31 March and from 1 August to 31 December.]

[*Article 16*
Remedial measures for cod in the North Sea

1. The areas closed to fishing, except with pelagic gear (purse seines and trawls), and the periods during which the closures apply are set out in Annex IV.

2. Fishing vessels fishing with bottom trawls and seines with minimum mesh size of at least 70 mm in ICES divisions 4a and 4b or at least 90 mm in ICES division 3a, and longlines[86] shall be prohibited from fishing in Union waters of ICES division 4a, north of latitude 58°30′00″N and south of latitude 61°30′00″N, and in Union waters of ICES divisions 3a.20 (Skagerrak), 4a and 4b, north of latitude 57°00′00″N and east of longitude 5°00′00″E.

3. By way of derogation from paragraph 2, fishing vessels referred to in that paragraph may fish in the areas referred to in that paragraph provided that they fulfil at least one of the following criteria:

   (a) their cod catches do not account for more than 5 % of their total catches per fishing trip; fishing vessels whose cod catches did not exceed 5 % of their total catches in 2017–2019 are presumed to comply with this criterion provided that they continue to use the same gear that they used in that period; this presumption may be rebutted;

   (b) a regulated and highly selective bottom trawl or seine is used, resulting, according to a scientific study, in at least a 30 % reduction in cod catches compared to fishing vessels fishing with the baseline mesh size for towed gears, as specified in Part B, point 1.1, of Annex V to Regulation (EU) 2019/1241; such studies may be evaluated by the STECF and in the case of a negative evaluation, the gears concerned shall no longer be considered valid for use in the areas referred to in paragraph 2 of this Article;

[86] Gear codes: OTB, OTT, OT, TBN, TBS, TB, TX, PTB, SDN, SSC, SX, LL, LLS.

(c) for fishing vessels fishing with bottom trawls and seines with mesh sizes equal to or larger than 100 mm (TR1), the following highly selective gears are used:

(i) belly trawls with a minimum belly mesh size of 600 mm;

(ii) raised fishing line (0,6 m);

(iii) horizontal separating panel with large mesh escape panel;

(d) for fishing vessels fishing with bottom trawls and seines with mesh sizes equal to or larger than 70 mm in ICES division 4a and 90 mm in ICES division 3a, and less than 100 mm (TR2), the following highly selective gears are used:

(i) horizontal sorting grid with maximum 50 mm bar spacing separating flatfish and roundfish, with an unblocked fish outlet for roundfish;

(ii) seltra panel with 300 mm square-mesh size;

(iii) sorting grid with maximum 35 mm bar spacing, with an unblocked fish outlet;

(e) fishing vessels are subject to a national cod avoidance plan to sustain cod catches in line with the fishing mortality corresponding to the fishing opportunities fixed, based on scientific advice levels, through spatial or technical measures, or a combination thereof; such plans shall be assessed no later than two months following their implementation, by the STECF in the case of Member States or by the relevant national scientific body in the case of third countries, and, where deemed necessary, further revised if such assessments find that the objective of the national cod avoidance plan will not be met.

4. Member States shall enhance the monitoring and surveillance of fishing vessels referred to in paragraph 2 in order to ensure compliance with the conditions laid down in paragraph 3.

5. This Article does not apply to fishing operations conducted for the exclusive purpose of scientific investigations, provided that those investigations are carried out in compliance with Article 25 of Regulation (EU) 2019/1241.]

[*Article 17*

Technical measures for the Celtic Sea, the Irish Sea and the West of Scotland

1. The following shall apply to fishing vessels fishing with bottom trawls and seines in ICES divisions 7f, 7g, the part of 7h north of latitude 49° 30′ North and the part of 7j north of latitude 49° 30′ North and east of longitude 11° West:

(a) fishing vessels fishing with bottom trawls or seines shall use gear with one of the following mesh sizes:

(i) 110 mm cod-end with 120 mm square-mesh panel;

(ii) 100 mm T90 cod-end;

(iii) 120 mm cod-end;

(iv) 100 mm with 160 mm square-mesh panel;

(b) in addition, fishing vessels fishing with bottom trawls whose catches weighed before any discards consist of at least 20 % of haddock (*Melanogrammus aeglefinus*) shall use a fishing gear that is constructed with a minimum of one

metre spacing between the fishing line and ground gear. Member States may exempt from the application of this point fishing vessels fishing with bottom trawls whose catches, weighed before any discards, consist of less than 1,5 % of cod, provided those vessels are subject to a progressive increase of observer coverage at sea up to at least 20 % of all their fishing trips;

(c) fishing vessels fishing with bottom trawls or seines with catches comprising more than 30 % of Norway lobster (*Nephrops norvegicus*) shall use one of the following gears:

(i) 300 mm squared mesh panel; fishing vessels below 12 metre in length over all may use a 200 mm square mesh panel;

(ii) seltra panel;

(iii) sorting grid with a 35 mm bar spacing or a similar Net grid selectivity device;

(iv) 100 mm cod-end with a 100 mm square mesh panel;

(v) dual cod-end with the uppermost cod-end constructed with T90 mesh of at least 100 mm and fitted with a separation panel with a maximum mesh size of 300 mm;

(d) fishing vessels fishing with bottom trawls or seines with catches comprising more than 55 % of whiting or more than 55 % of anglerfish (*Lophiidae*), hake (*Merluccius merluccius*) or megrim (*Lepidorhombus* spp.) combined, shall use one of the following gears:

(i) 100 mm cod-end with a 100 mm squared mesh panel;

(ii) 100 mm T90 cod-end and extension piece.

2. The following shall apply to fishing vessels fishing with bottom trawls or seines in ICES divisions 6a and 5b, within Union waters, east of 12°W (West of Scotland) in Norway lobster fisheries:

(a) fishing vessels shall use a square mesh panel (positioning retained) of at least 300 mm for fishing vessels deploying a cod-end mesh size less than 100 mm; for fishing vessels below 12 m in length over all or with engine power of 200 kW or less, the panel overall length may be 2 m and the panel 200 mm;

(b) fishing vessels with catches comprising more than 30 % of Norway lobster shall use a square mesh panel (positioning retained) of at least 160 mm for fishing vessels deploying a cod-end mesh size of 100-119 mm.

3. The following shall apply to fishing vessels fishing with bottom trawls or seines in ICES division 7a (Irish Sea):

(a) fishing vessels fishing with bottom trawls or seines with a cod-end mesh size equal to or larger than 70 mm and smaller than 100 mm and with catches comprising more than 30 % of Norway lobster shall use one of the following gears:

(i) 300 mm square mesh panel; fishing vessels below 12 metres in length over all may use a 200 mm squared mesh panel;

(ii) seltra panel;

(iii) sorting grid with 35 mm bar spacing;

(iv) CEFAS net grid;

(v) flip-flap trawl;

(b) fishing vessels equal to or greater than 12 metres in length overall operating with bottom trawls or seines with catches comprising more than 10 % of haddock, cod and skates and rays (*Rajiformes*) combined, shall use 120 mm cod-end.

4. The catch percentages in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Article shall be calculated as the proportion by live weight of all marine biological resources landed after each fishing trip, in accordance with Article 15 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 and Article 27(2) of Regulation (EU) 2019/1241.

5. It shall be prohibited for fishing vessels to fish with bottom trawls and seines in the following zones:

(a) in ICES divisions 7b and 7c;

(b) in the area west of 5° W longitude in ICES division 7e; and

(c) in ICES divisions from 7f to 7k.

This prohibition shall not apply to fishing vessels where:

(a) they use a cod-end mesh size of at least 100 mm; or

(b) their by-catches of cod do not exceed 1,5 %, as assessed by the STECF, when fishing outside the areas referred to in paragraph 1.]

[*Article 18*
Technical measures for red seabream in ICES subareas 6 to 8

1. A minimum conservation reference size of 36 cm shall apply for the catches of red seabream (*Pagellus bogaraveo*) in ICES subareas 6 to 8.

2. A minimum conservation reference size of 40 cm shall apply for the recreational catches of red seabream in ICES subareas 6 and 7.

3. From 1 January to 30 June, all fishing for red seabream in ICES subareas 6, 7 and 8 shall be prohibited to fishing vessels flying the French flag.

4. From 1 February to 30 September, fishing with bottom set longlines (LLS) and bottom trawls (OTB) shall be prohibited in the western area of the Cantabrian Sea, opposite to Asturias and Galicia.

5. Recreational fisheries for red seabream shall be prohibited within the following geographical areas: Area RF 1 (Cariño/Celeiro), Area RF 2 (Ribadeo), Area RF 3 (Navia), Area RF 4 (Ensenada Canero), Area RF 5 (Ensenada de Cabrera/Ría San Martín de la Arena), Area RF 6 (Ría de Treto), Area RF 7 (Bilbao/Plentzia) and Area RF 8 (Bermeo/Mundaka).]

Article 19
Technical measures for Northern prawn in the Skagerrak

1. If the proportion of juveniles of Northern prawn (*Pandalus borealis*), as referred to in Article 5(2) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/2201[87], is more than 30 % of the overall catch of that species, control authorities may recommend a real-time closure on the basis of one sample, as referred to in that Article.

2. Trawlers targeting Northern prawn with a size selective Nordmøre grid, as referred to in Article 6(2) of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/2201, shall be subject to the closed area, as referred to in that Article.

3. The closed area, as referred to in Article 7(b) of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/2201, shall not exceed 100 square nautical miles.

4. The area, as referred to in Article 8(2) of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/2201, shall be closed for 21 days after which it shall automatically cease to apply at midnight UTC.

5. Demersal trawls with a mesh size of at least 32 mm targeting Northern prawn, which are equipped with a Nordmøre sorting grid with a maximum bar spacing of 19 mm and without a fish retention device, as referred to in Article 11 of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/2201, shall be subject to the closed, as referred to in Article 6(1) of that Regulation.

Article 20
Prohibited species

1. Union fishing vessels shall not fish for, retain on board, tranship or land the following species:

   (a) starry ray (*Amblyraja radiata*) in United Kingdom and Union waters of ICES subarea 4 and division 7d, United Kingdom waters of division 2a and Union waters of division 3a;

   (b) splendid alfonsino (*Beryx splendens*) in NAFO subarea 6;

   (c) sand tiger shark (*Carcharias taurus*) in all waters other than the Mediterranean;

   (d) common skate (*Dipturus batis*) complex (*Dipturus* cf. *flossada* and *Dipturus* cf. *intermedia*) in United Kingdom and Union waters of ICES subareas 4, 6, 7 and 8, United Kingdom waters of division 2a and subarea 5 and Union waters of subareas 3, 9 and 10;

   (e) great lanternshark (*Etmopterus princeps*) in United Kingdom and Union waters of ICES subarea 4, United Kingdom waters of division 2a and international waters of subareas 1 and 14;

   (f) tope shark (*Galeorhinus galeus*) when taken with longlines in United Kingdom and Union waters of ICES subareas 4, United Kingdom waters of division 2a, United Kingdom and international waters of subarea 5, United Kingdom,

[87] Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/2201 of 1 October 2019 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2019/1241 of the European Parliament and of the Council with detailed rules for the implementation of real-time closures for Northern prawn fisheries in the Skagerrak (OJ L 332, 23.12.2019, p. 3, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2019/2201/oj).

Union and international waters of subareas 6 to 8, and international waters of subareas 12 and 14;

(g) orange roughy (*Hoplostethus atlanticus*) in United Kingdom, Union and international waters of ICES subareas 1 to 10, 12 and 14;

(h) porbeagle (*Lamna nasus*) in all waters;

(i) thornback ray (*Raja clavata*) in Union waters of ICES division 3a;

(j) undulate ray (*Raja undulata*) in United Kingdom and Union waters of ICES subarea 6 and Union waters of ICES subarea 10;

(k) whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*) in all waters;

(l) common guitarfish (*Rhinobatos rhinobatos*) in the Mediterranean; and

(m) deep-sea species listed in Annex IA, Part D, in Union, United Kingdom and international waters of ICES zones 1, 2 (except United Kingdom waters of division 2a), 5 to 10, 12 and 14, and CECAF areas 34.1.1, 34.1.2 and 34.2, as well as in Union and United Kingdom waters of ICES division 2a and subarea 4, where specified in that Annex.

2. When accidentally caught, specimens of the species referred to in paragraph 1 shall not be harmed and shall be promptly released.

Article 21
Data transmission

When Member States submit by electronic means to the Commission or the body designated by it data relating to catches and fishing effort pursuant to Articles 33 and 34 of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009, they shall use the stock codes set out in the Annexes to this Regulation.

Chapter II
Fishing authorisations in third country waters

Article 22
Fishing authorisations

1. The maximum numbers of fishing authorisations for Union fishing vessels in third-country waters, where applicable, are set out in Part A of Annex V.

2. Where, in accordance with Article 16(8) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, a Member State, after notifying the Commission, transfers quota to another Member State in the fishing areas set out in Part A of Annex V to this Regulation, the transfer shall be accompanied, where relevant, by an appropriate transfer of fishing authorisations. The total number of authorisations for each fishing area, as set out in Part A of Annex V to this Regulation, shall not be exceeded. That transfer of fishing authorisations shall be notified by the transferring Member State to the Commission at the time of the notification to the Commission of the quota transfer.

Chapter III
Fishing opportunities managed by regional fisheries management organisations

SECTION 1
GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 23
Quota transfers or exchanges

1. Where the rules of a regional fisheries management organisation (RFMO) permit quota transfers or exchanges between the Contracting Parties to that RFMO, a Member State ('the Member State concerned') may discuss with a Contracting Party to that RFMO and establish a possible outline of an intended quota transfer or exchange, as appropriate. The Member State concerned shall notify the Commission of that outline.

2. On being notified in accordance with paragraph 1, the Commission may endorse the outline of the intended quota transfer or exchange. If the Commission endorses that outline, it shall express, without undue delay, the consent to be bound by the intended quota transfer or exchange. It shall notify the secretariat of the relevant RFMO of the transfer or exchange in accordance with the rules of that RFMO.

3. The Commission shall inform the Member States of any agreed quota transfer or exchange.

4. The fishing opportunities received or transferred by the Member State concerned under the quota transfer or exchange shall be deemed to be quotas added to, or deducted from, its allocation as of the moment when the transfer or exchange takes effect under the terms of the agreement with the relevant Contracting Party to the RFMO or in accordance with the rules of the relevant RFMO, as appropriate. Such transfers or exchanges shall not affect the distribution key for allocating fishing opportunities among Member States in accordance with the principle of relative stability of fishing activities.

[Sections 2 to 4, and 8 to 9 of this Regulation will be updated after the annual meetings of the RFMOs.]

[SECTION 2
NEAFC CONVENTION AREA

Article 24
Redfish in the Irminger Sea

1. In accordance with point 4.1 of Annex IV to Regulation (EU) 2024/2594 of the European Parliament and of the Council[88], all fishing activities shall be prohibited in

[88] Regulation (EU) 2024/2594 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 September 2024 laying down conservation, management and control measures applicable in the area covered by the Convention on future multilateral cooperation in the North-East Atlantic fisheries, amending Regulation (EU) 2019/1241 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Regulation

the area bounded by the following coordinates measured according to the WGS84 system:

Latitude	Longitude
63°00'N	30°00'W
61°30'N	27°35'W
60°45'N	28°45'W
62°00'N	31°35'W
63°00'N	30°00'W

2. Fishing vessels shall be prohibited from fishing, retaining on board, transhipping or landing in Union ports shallow pelagic and deep pelagic beaked redfish (*Sebastes mentella*) from the Irminger Sea and adjacent waters (ICES subareas 5, 12 and 14, and NAFO subareas 1 and 2). That prohibition shall also apply to Union fishing vessels also in third-country ports.

3. Union fishing vessels shall be prohibited from participating in transhipment operations involving the stocks referred to in paragraph 2.

4. Union vessels shall be prohibited from refuelling or providing support services to fishing vessels with catches of the stocks referred to in paragraph 2.

5. Fishing vessels having carried out directed fisheries for the stocks referred to in paragraph 2 shall not be authorised to land in Union ports.

6. Fishing vessels having carried out directed fisheries for the stocks referred to in paragraph 2 shall not be authorised for any fishing activities in Union waters.

7. Union fishing vessels shall be prohibited from participating in transhipment operations involving vessels having carried out directed fisheries of the stocks referred to in paragraph 2.

8. Union fishing vessels shall be prohibited from refuelling or providing support services to fishing vessels having carried out directed fisheries for the stocks referred to in paragraph 2.]

[SECTION 3
ICCAT CONVENTION AREA

Article 25
Fishing, farming and fattening capacity limitations

1. The number of Union bait boats and trolling boats authorised to fish actively for bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) between 8 kg/75 cm and 30 kg/115 cm in the eastern Atlantic shall be limited as set out in point 1 of Annex VI.

(EC) No 1224/2009, and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1236/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Regulations (EEC) No 1899/85 and (EEC) No 1638/87 (OJ L, 2024/2594, 8.10.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2594/oj).

2. The number of Union coastal artisanal fishing vessels authorised to fish actively for bluefin tuna between 8 kg/75 cm and 30 kg/115 cm in the Mediterranean shall be limited as set out in point 2 of Annex VI.

3. The number of Union fishing vessels fishing for bluefin tuna in the Adriatic Sea for farming purposes authorised to fish actively for bluefin tuna between 8 kg/75 cm and 30 kg/115 cm shall be limited as set out in point 3 of Annex VI.

4. The number of Union fishing vessels authorised to fish for, retain on board, tranship, transport or land bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean shall be limited as set out in point 4 of Annex VI.

5. The number of traps engaged in bluefin tuna fishery in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean shall be limited as set out in point 5 of Annex VI.

6. The number of authorised farms to operate for bluefin tuna and the maximum input of wild-caught bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean shall be limited as set out in point 6 of Annex VI.

7. The maximum number of Union fishing vessels authorised to fish for northern albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*) as a target species in accordance with Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2017/2107 of the European Parliament and of the Council[89] shall be limited as set out in point 7 of Annex VI to this Regulation.

8. The maximum number of Union fishing vessels of at least 20 m length fishing for bigeye tuna (*Thunnus obesus*) in the ICCAT Convention area shall be limited as set out in point 8 of Annex VI.

Article 26
Recreational fisheries

Where appropriate, Member States shall allocate a specific share from their allocated quotas to recreational fisheries, as set out in Annex ID.

Article 27
Sharks

1. In addition to the prohibitions established in Articles 32 to 36 of Regulation (EU) 2017/2107, it shall also be prohibited to engage in directed fishery for species of thresher sharks of the *Alopias* genus. That additional prohibition shall be without prejudice to the prohibition to retain on board, tranship or land any part or whole carcass for bigeye thresher sharks (*Alopias superciliosus*) set out in Article 32 of Regulation (EU) 2017/2107.

2. It shall be prohibited to retain on board, tranship or land any part or whole carcass of shortfin mako (*Isurus oxyrinchus*) in the Atlantic Ocean, north of 5°N, caught in fisheries in the ICCAT Convention area.

[89] Regulation (EU) 2017/2107 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2017 laying down management, conservation and control measures applicable in the Convention area of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), and amending Council Regulations (EC) No 1936/2001, (EC) No 1984/2003 and (EC) No 520/2007 (OJ L 315, 30.11.2017, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2017/2107/oj).

Article 28
FADs for tropical tunas

1. It shall be prohibited to use FADs in the ICCAT Convention area from 17 March to 30 April.

2. From 2 March to 16 March, Member States shall ensure that their fishing vessels do not deploy FADs.]

[SECTION 4
CCAMLR CONVENTION AREA

Article 29
Exploratory fisheries notifications for toothfish for the 2026-2027 fishing season

1. Member States may participate in, or authorise their fishing vessels to participate in, longline exploratory fisheries for toothfish (*Dissostichus* spp.) in FAO subareas 48.6, 88.1 and 88.2 and FAO divisions 58.4.1, 58.4.2 and 58.4.3a outside areas of national jurisdiction for fishing in the period from 1 December 2026 to 30 November 2027, in accordance with Article 7(2) to (7) of Council Regulation (EC) No 601/2004[90].

2. By way of derogation from the deadlines set out in Article 7(5) and (6) of Regulation (EC) No 601/2004, Member States intending to participate in, or authorise their fishing vessels to participate in, exploratory fisheries as referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall notify the CCAMLR Secretariat no later than 1 June 2026.

Article 30
Toothfish fishery during the 2025-2026 fishing season

1. In addition to the special requirements for exploratory fisheries set out in Article 7a of Regulation (EC) No 601/2004, fishing for toothfish in the period from 1 December 2025 to 30 November 2026 shall be limited to the Member States, subareas and number of fishing vessels set out in Table A in Annex VII, and the TACs, and by-catch limits set out in Table B in that Annex shall apply.

2. Direct fishing of shark species for purposes other than scientific research shall be prohibited. Any by-catch of shark, especially juveniles and gravid females, taken accidentally in the toothfish fishery shall be released alive.

3. Where applicable, fishing for toothfish in any small-scale research unit (SSRU) shall cease when the reported catch reaches the specified TAC, and the SSRU shall be closed to fishing for the remainder of the fishing season.

4. Fishing shall take place over a geographical and bathymetric range as large as possible, so as to obtain the information necessary to determine fishery potential and avoid an overconcentration of catch and fishing effort. However, fishing in FAO subareas 48.6, 88.1 and 88.2 shall be prohibited in depths of less than 550 m.

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90 Council Regulation (EC) No 601/2004 of 22 March 2004 laying down certain control measures applicable to fishing activities in the area covered by the Convention on the conservation of Antarctic marine living resources and repealing Regulations (EEC) No 3943/90, (EC) No 66/98 and (EC) No 1721/1999 (OJ L 97, 1.4.2004, p. 16, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2004/601/oj).

Article 31
Krill fishery during the 2026-2027 fishing season

1. For the purposes of Article 5a of Regulation (EC) No 601/2004, Member States intending to fish for krill (*Euphausia superba*) in the CCAMLR Convention area during the period from 1 December 2026 to 30 November 2027 shall notify the Commission thereof by 1 May 2026, using the form in Part B of the Appendix to Annex VII.

2. By way of derogation from the deadlines set out in Article 7(5) and (6) of Regulation (EC) No 601/2004, and on the basis of the information provided by the Member States concerned, the Commission shall submit the notifications to the CCAMLR Secretariat by 30 May 2026.

3. The notification referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall include the information provided for in Article 3(2) and (3) of Regulation (EC) No 601/2004 for each fishing vessel to be authorised to participate in the krill fishery.

4. A Member State intending to fish for krill in the CCAMLR Convention area shall notify the Commission thereof only in respect of authorised fishing vessels that, at the time of the notification:

   (a) are flying its flag; or

   (b) are flying the flag of another CCAMLR member and are expected to be flying the flag of that Member State at the time the fishery takes place.

5. Where an authorised fishing vessel notified to the CCAMLR Secretariat in accordance with paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 is prevented from participating in a krill fishery due to legitimate operational reasons or force majeure, the Member State concerned may authorise its replacement by another fishing vessel. In such a case, the Member State concerned shall immediately inform the CCAMLR Secretariat, with the Commission in copy, providing:

   (a) full details of the intended replacement fishing vessel(s), including the information provided for in Article 3(2) and (3) of Regulation (EC) No 601/2004; and

   (b) a comprehensive account of the reasons justifying the replacement and any relevant supporting evidence or references.]

SECTION 5
IOTC AREA OF COMPETENCE

Article 32
Limitation of fishing capacity
of fishing vessels fishing in the IOTC Area of Competence

1. The maximum number of Union fishing vessels fishing for tropical tunas in the IOTC Area of Competence and the corresponding capacity in gross tonnage shall be as set out in point 1 of Annex VIII.

2. The maximum number of Union fishing vessels fishing for swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*) and albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*) in the IOTC Area of Competence and the corresponding capacity in gross tonnage shall be as set out in point 2 of Annex VIII.

3. Member States may reallocate fishing vessels assigned to one of the fisheries referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2 to the other fishery, provided that they can demonstrate to the Commission that such change does not lead to an increase of fishing effort in respect of the fish stocks concerned.

4. Where a transfer of capacity to the fleet of a Member State is proposed, that Member State shall ensure that fishing vessels to be transferred are on the IOTC record of authorised fishing vessels or on the record of fishing vessels of other RFMOs managing tuna fisheries. Fishing vessels that appear on any RFMO's list of vessels that have engaged in illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing activities may not be transferred.

5. Member States may increase their fishing capacity beyond the ceilings referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2 only within the limits set out in the development plans submitted to the IOTC.

Article 33
Drifting FADs and supply vessels

1. Drifting FADs shall be equipped with instrumented buoys. The use of any other buoys, such as radio buoys, shall be prohibited.

2. A purse seine fishing vessel shall follow no more than 250 operational buoys at any time.

3. No more than 500 instrumented buoys shall be acquired annually for each purse seine fishing vessel. No purse seine fishing vessel shall have more than 400 instrumented buoys, both in stock and operational, at any time.

4. No more than three supply vessels shall operate in support of not fewer than 12 purse seine fishing vessels, all flying the flag of a Member State. This paragraph shall not apply to Member States using only one supply vessel.

5. A single purse seine fishing vessel shall not be supported by more than one supply vessel flying the flag of a Member State at any time.

6. The Union shall not register new or additional supply vessels in the IOTC record of authorised vessels.

SECTION 6
SPRFMO CONVENTION AREA

Article 34
Pelagic fisheries

1. Only those Member States that have actively exercised pelagic fisheries activities in the SPRFMO Convention area in 2007, 2008 or 2009 may fish for pelagic stocks in that area in accordance with the TACs set out in Annex IH.

2. The Member States referred to in paragraph 1 may use the fishing opportunities set out in Annex IH only if they send the following information to the Commission by the fifteenth day of the following month, so that the Commission can communicate it to the SPRFMO Secretariat:

   (a) a list of vessels actively fishing or engaged in transhipment in the SPRFMO Convention area;

(b) monthly catch reports.

SECTION 7
IATTC CONVENTION AREA

Article 35
Purse seine fisheries

1. Purse seine fishing vessels shall not fish for yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacares*), bigeye tuna (*Thunnus obesus*) or skipjack tuna (*Katsuwonus pelamis*):

   (a) either from 00.00 hours on 6 August 2026 to 24.00 hours on 8 October 2026 or from 00.00 hours on 9 November 2026 to 24.00 hours on 11 January 2027 in the area defined by the following limits:

   – the Pacific coastlines of the Americas,

   – longitude 150° W,

   – latitude 40° N,

   – latitude 40° S;

   (b) from 00.00 hours on 9 October 2026 to 24.00 hours on 8 November 2026 in the area defined by the following limits:

   – longitude 96° W,

   – longitude 110° W,

   – latitude 4° N,

   – latitude 3° S.

2. For each of the fishing vessels referred to in paragraph 1 and flying the flag of a Member State, that flag Member State shall inform the Commission before 1 April 2026 which of the closure periods referred to in paragraph 1, point (a), the fishing vessel has selected.

3. Purse seine fishing vessels fishing for tuna in the IATTC Convention area shall retain on board and then tranship or land all yellowfin, bigeye and skipjack tuna that they catch.

4. Paragraph 3 shall not apply:

   (a) where the fish is considered unfit for human consumption for reasons other than size;

   (b) during the final set of a trip, when there may be insufficient well space remaining to accommodate all the tuna caught in that set.

5. For each of the purse seine fishing vessels fishing in the IATTC Convention area and flying the flag of a Member State, that flag Member State shall transmit to the Commission by 1 February data on annual catches of bigeye tuna in the IATTC Convention area in the previous year. The Commission shall compile and promptly transmit that information to the IATTC Secretariat.

6. The closure periods referred to in paragraph 1 shall be extended for Union purse seine fishing vessels, on the basis of their catches of bigeye tuna in the IATTC Convention area during the previous year, as follows:

– for fishing vessels that caught between 1 200 tonnes and 1 499 tonnes, the closure period is extended by 10 days;

– for fishing vessels that caught between 1 500 tonnes and 1 799 tonnes, the closure period is extended by 13 days;

– for fishing vessels that caught between 1 800 tonnes and 2 099 tonnes, the closure period is extended by 16 days;

– for fishing vessels that caught between 2 100 tonnes and 2 399 tonnes, the closure period is extended by 19 days; and

– for fishing vessels that caught 2 400 tonnes or more, the closure period is extended by 22 days.

The extensions of the closure periods referred to in the first subparagraph apply as follows:

– for the closure period referred to in paragraph 1, point (a), the additional days are added before the start of that closure period; and

– for the closure period referred to in paragraph 1, point (b), the additional days are added after the end of that closure period.

For each of the fishing vessels concerned, the relevant flag Member State shall inform the Commission of the extensions of the closure periods when informing the Commission of the selected closure periods in accordance with paragraph 2.

Article 36
Drifting FADs

1. A purse seine fishing vessel shall have no more than the number of FADs set out in the table below active at any time in the IATTC Convention area. A FAD shall be considered active when it is deployed at sea, starts transmitting its location and is being tracked by the fishing vessel, its owner or operator. A FAD shall be activated only on board a purse seine vessel.

Fishing vessels with a capacity below 1 200 m^3	210 FADs
Fishing vessels with a capacity equal to or greater than 1 200 m^3	340 FADs

2. During the 15 days before the start of the closure period selected in accordance with Article 35(1), point (a), of this Regulation a purse seine fishing vessel shall, in the IATTC Convention area:

(a) refrain from deploying FADs;

(b) recover the same number of FADs as initially deployed.

Article 37
Catch limits for bigeye tuna in longline fisheries

The total annual catches of bigeye tuna in the IATTC Convention area by each Member State's longline fishing vessels are set out in Annex IL.

Article 38
Prohibition of fishing for oceanic whitetip sharks

1. In accordance with Article 8(1) of Regulation (EU) 2021/56 of the European Parliament and of the Council[91], it shall be prohibited to retain onboard, tranship, land, store, sell or offer for sale any part or whole carcass of oceanic whitetip sharks (*Carcharhinus longimanus*).

2. In accordance with Article 8(2) of Regulation (EU) 2021/56, whitetip sharks shall be, to the extent practicable, promptly released unharmed when brought alongside the vessel.

3. Fishing vessel operators shall record the number of releases with indication of status (dead or alive) and report that information to the Member State of which they are nationals. Member States shall transmit that information collected during 2025 to the Commission by 31 January 2026.

[SECTION 8
SEAFO CONVENTION AREA

Article 39
Prohibition of fishing for deep-water sharks

Directed fishing for the following deep-water sharks in the SEAFO Convention area shall be prohibited:

(a) ghost catshark (*Apristurus manis*);

(b) blurred smooth lanternshark (*Etmopterus bigelowi*);

(c) shorttail lanternshark (*Etmopterus brachyurus*);

(d) great lanternshark (*Etmopterus princeps*);

(e) smooth lanternshark (*Etmopterus pusillus*);

(f) skates (*Rajidae*);

(g) velvet dogfish (*Scymnodon squamulosus*);

(h) sharks of the *Selachimorpha* super-order;

(i) picked dogfish (*Squalus acanthias*).]

[91] Regulation (EU) 2021/56 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 January 2021 laying down management, conservation and control measures applicable in the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Convention area and amending Council Regulation (EC) No 520/2007 (OJ L 24, 26.1.2021, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/56/oj).

[SECTION 9
WCPFC CONVENTION AREA

Article 40
Conditions for bigeye tuna, yellowfin tuna, skipjack tuna and South Pacific albacore fisheries

1. Member States shall ensure that no more than 403 fishing days are allocated to purse seine fishing vessels fishing for bigeye tuna (*Thunnus obesus*), yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacares*) and skipjack tuna (*Katsuwonus pelamis*) in the high seas areas between 20° N and 20° S of the WCPFC Convention area.

2. Union fishing vessels shall not target South Pacific albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*) in the WCPFC Convention area south of 20° S.

3. The maximum number of Union purse seine fishing vessels authorised to fish for tropical tuna in the high seas areas between 20° N and 20° S of the WCPFC Convention area shall not exceed the limits set out in Annex IX, Table 2.

Article 41
Management of fishing with FADs

1. In the part of the WCPFC Convention area located between 20° N and 20° S, purse seine fishing vessels, tender vessels, and any other vessels operating in support of purse seine fishing vessels, shall not deploy, service or set nets on FADs between 00.00 hours on 1 July 2026 and 24.00 hours on 15 August 2026.

2. In addition to the prohibition set out in paragraph 1, it shall be prohibited to set nets on FADs on the high seas of the WCPFC Convention area located between 20° N and 20° S for one additional month, from 00.00 hours on 1 April 2026 to 24.00 hours on 30 April 2026, or from 00.00 hours on 1 May 2026 to 24.00 hours on 31 May 2026, or from 00.00 hours on 1 November 2026 to 24.00 hours on 30 November 2026, or from 00.00 hours on 1 December 2026 to 24.00 hours on 31 December 2026.

3. The Member States concerned shall jointly determine which of the closure periods referred to in paragraph 2 shall apply to purse seine fishing vessels flying their flag. The Member States shall jointly inform the Commission by 15 February 2026 of the closure period selected. The Commission shall notify the secretariat of the WCPFC of the joint closure period selected by Member States concerned before 1 March 2026.

4. Each Member State shall ensure that none of its purse seine fishing vessels deploy at sea, at any time, more than 350 FADs with activated instrumented buoys. Buoys shall be activated exclusively on board a purse seine fishing vessel.

Article 42
Maximum number of Union fishing vessels authorised to fish for swordfish

The maximum number of Union fishing vessels authorised to fish for swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*) in areas of the WCPFC Convention area south of 20° S shall be as set out in Annex IX.

Article 43
Catch limits for swordfish in longline fisheries south of 20° S

Member States shall ensure that catches of swordfish south of 20° S by longliners in 2026 do not exceed the limit set out in table 2 of Annex IG. They shall also ensure that this does not result in a shift of the fishing effort for swordfish to the area north of 20° S.]

SECTION 10
BERING SEA

Article 44
Prohibition on fishing for pollock in the high seas of the Bering Sea

It shall be prohibited to fish for pollock (*Gadus chalcogrammus*) in the high seas of the Bering Sea.

SECTION 11
SIOFA AGREEMENT AREA

Article 45
Limits to bottom fishing

Member States shall ensure that fishing vessels flying their flag that fish in the SIOFA Agreement Area:

(a) limit their annual bottom fishing effort to the levels set out in Annex X;

(b) do not engage in bottom fishing except using demersal longlines;

(c) do not fish in the benthic fishery closures of Gulden Draak, Rusky, Fools-Flat, East Broken Ridge, Mid-Indian Ridge, Atlantis Bank, Bridle, Banana and Middle of What, as defined in Annex IK;

(d) do not fish in the benthic fishery closures of Walter's Shoal, Coral and Magneto, as defined in Annex IK, except with demersal longlines and on condition of having a scientific observer on board at all times while fishing in those areas; and

(e) do not fish using demersal longlines in subarea 5, as defined in Annex IK.

Article 46
Toothfish fishery measures

Member States shall ensure that fishing vessels flying their flag that fish for toothfish (*Dissostichus* spp.) in the SIOFA Agreement Area:

(a) do not fish in depths shallower than 500 metres;

(b) have at least one scientific observer on board at all times who shall have a target of observing 25 % of hooks hauled per line over the duration of the fishing deployment; and

(c) tag and release toothfish specimens at a rate of at least five fish per tonne of green weight caught; once 30 or more toothfish have been caught a minimum overlap statistic of at least 60 % shall apply for tag release.

Article 47
Prohibition of targeting deep-water sharks

Directed fishing for the following deep-water sharks in the SIOFA Agreement Area shall be prohibited:

(a) Portuguese dogfish (*Centroscymnus coelolepis*), except in the context of the by-catch allowance as set out in Annex IK;

(b) birdbeak dogfish (*Deania calceus*);

(c) gulper shark (*Centrophorus granulosus*);

(d) kitefin shark (*Dalatias licha*);

(e) Bach's catshark (*Bythaelurus bachi*);

(f) dark-mouth chimaera (*Chimaera buccanigella*);

(g) the Falkor chimaera (*Chimaera didierae*);

(h) seafarer's ghostshark (*Chimaera willwatchi*);

(i) longnose velvet dogfish (*Centroselachus crepidater*);

(j) largespine velvet dogfish (*Scymnodon macracanthus*);

(k) velvet dogfish (*Zameus squamulosus*);

(l) whitecheek lanternshark (*Etmopterus alphus*);

(m) smallbelly catshark (*Apristurus indicus*);

(n) Pacific longnose chimaera (*Harriotta raleighana*);

(o) narrowhead catshark (*Bythaelurus tenuicephalus*);

(p) frilled shark (*Chlamydoselachus anguineus*);

(q) bigeyed six-gill shark (*Hexanchus nakamurai*);

(r) smooth lanternshark (*Etmopterus pusillus*);

(s) southern sleeper shark (*Somniosus antarcticus*);

(t) goblin shark (*Mitsukurina owstoni*);

(u) blue-eye lanternshark (*Etmopterus viator*);

(v) blurred smooth lanternshark (*Etmopterus bigelowi*);

(w) leafscale gulper shark (*Centrophorus squamosus*);

(x) little gulper shark (*Centrophorus uyato*);

(y) shortspine spurdog (*Squalus mitsukurii*);

(z) longsnout dogfish (*Deania quadrispinosa*);

(za) arrowhead dogfish (*Deania profundorum*);

(zb) Cristina's skate (*Bathyraja tunae*);

(zc) paddlenose chimaera (*Rhinochimaera africana*);

(zd) dusky Snout catshark (*Bythaelurus naylori*).

SECTION 12
NPFC CONVENTION AREA

Article 48
Chub mackerel fishery

1. For Union fishing vessels fishing in the NPFC Convention area, flag Member States shall transmit the following aggregated data to the Commission by the following dates:

   (a) monthly catches under the catch limits for chub mackerel (*Scomber japonicus*) for all NPFC Contracting Parties for trawlers and purse seiners respectively, as set out in Annex IM when utilisation of those catch limits is below 60 %, by the seventh day of the following month; and

   (b) weekly catches of chub mackerel under those catch limits when utilisation of those catch limits is above 60 % and below 95 %, by Tuesday of the following week.

   The Commission shall compile and promptly transmit that information to the NPFC Executive Secretary.

2. Within two days of the issue date of notifications of the NPFC Executive Secretary that the utilisation of those catch limits has reached 95 %, the Commission shall close the fisheries under those catch limits.

3. The Commission shall compile and transmit annual catches of chub mackerel in the NPFC Convention area to the NPFC Executive Secretary by the end of February of the following year.

4. This Article shall apply in addition to the reporting obligations on catches set out in Article 33 of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009.

Article 49
Protection of sharks in the NPFC Convention area

1. Union fishing vessels fishing in the NPFC Convention area shall not fish for, retain on board, tranship or land sharks in the NPFC Convention area.

2. When accidentally caught, specimens of the species referred to in paragraph 1 shall not be harmed and shall be promptly released.

Article 50
Protection of anadromous fish in the NPFC Convention area

1. Union fishing vessels fishing in the NPFC Convention area shall not fish for, retain on board, tranship or land Chum salmon (*Oncorhynchus keta*), Coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*), Pink salmon (*Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*), Sockeye salmon (*Oncorhynchus nerka*), Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), Cherry salmon (*Oncorhynchus masou*) and Steelhead trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*).

2. When accidentally caught, specimens of the species referred to in paragraph 1 shall not be harmed and shall be promptly released.

TITLE III
FISHING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THIRD-COUNTRY FISHING VESSELS IN UNION WATERS

Article 51
Fishing vessels flying the flag of Norway or of the Faroe Islands

Fishing vessels flying the flag of Norway or of the Faroe Islands may be authorised by the Commission to fish in Union waters subject to the TACs set out in Annex I and subject to the conditions provided for in this Regulation and in Title III of Regulation (EU) 2017/2403 and delegated acts adopted by the Commission on the basis of that Regulation.

Article 52
Fishing vessels flying the flag of the United Kingdom, registered in the United Kingdom, the Bailiwick of Guernsey, the Bailiwick of Jersey or the Isle of Man, and licensed by a United Kingdom fisheries administration

Fishing vessels flying the flag of the United Kingdom, registered in the United Kingdom, the Bailiwick of Guernsey, the Bailiwick of Jersey or the Isle of Man, and licensed by a fisheries administration of the United Kingdom may be authorised by the Commission to fish in Union waters subject to the TACs set out in Annex I, and subject to the conditions provided for in this Regulation and in Regulation (EU) 2017/2403 and delegated acts adopted by the Commission on the basis of that Regulation.

Article 53
Quota transfers or exchanges with the United Kingdom

1. Any quota transfer or exchange between the Union and the United Kingdom shall take place in accordance with this Article.

2. A Member State intending to transfer or exchange quotas with the United Kingdom may discuss with the United Kingdom an outline of the quota transfer or exchange. The Member State concerned shall notify the Commission of that outline.

3. If the Commission endorses an outline of the quota transfer or exchange referred to in paragraph 2 notified by the Member State concerned, it shall express, without undue delay, the consent to be bound by such quota transfer or exchange. The Commission shall notify the Member States and the United Kingdom of the agreed quota transfer or exchange.

4. The fishing opportunities received from or transferred to the United Kingdom under the agreed quota transfer or exchange shall be deemed to be quotas added to, or deducted from, the allocation of the Member State concerned as of the moment when the quota transfer or exchange has been notified in accordance with paragraph 3. Such transfers or exchanges shall not affect the distribution key for allocating fishing opportunities among Member States in accordance with the principle of relative stability of fishing activities.

Article 54
Fishing vessels flying the flag of Venezuela

Fishing vessels flying the flag of Venezuela shall be subject to the conditions provided for in this Regulation and in Title III of Regulation (EU) 2017/2403 and delegated acts adopted by the Commission on the basis of that Regulation.

Article 55
Fishing authorisations

The maximum number of fishing authorisations for third-country fishing vessels operating in Union waters shall be as set out in Part B of Annex V.

Article 56
Conditions for landing catches and by-catches

The conditions laid down in Article 7 shall apply to the catches and by-catches of third-country fishing vessels fishing under the fishing authorisations referred to in Article 57.

Article 57
Prohibited species

1. Third-country fishing vessels shall not fish for, retain on board, tranship or land the following species where they are found in Union waters:

   (a) sand tiger shark (*Carcharias taurus*) in all Union waters;

   (b) starry ray (*Amblyraja radiata*) in Union waters of ICES divisions 3a and 7d, and Union waters of ICES subarea 4;

   (c) common skate (*Dipturus batis*) complex (*Dipturus* cf. *flossada* and *Dipturus* cf. *intermedia*) in Union waters of ICES subareas 3, 4 and 6 to 10;

   (d) tope shark (*Galeorhinus galeus*) when taken with longlines in Union waters of ICES subareas 4, 6, 7 and 8;

   (e) orange roughy (*Hoplostethus atlanticus*) in Union waters of ICES subareas 3, 4 and 6 to 10;

   (f) porbeagle (*Lamna nasus*) in all Union waters;

   (g) thornback ray (*Raja clavata*) in Union waters of ICES division 3a;

   (h) undulate ray (*Raja undulata*) in Union waters of ICES subareas 6 and 10;

   (i) common guitarfish (*Rhinobatos rhinobatos*) in Union waters of the Mediterranean;

   (j) whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*) in all Union waters; and

   (k) deep-sea species listed in Annex IA, Part D, in Union waters of ICES subareas 6 to 10 and CECAF areas 34.1.1, 34.1.2 and 34.2, as well as in Union waters of ICES subarea 4, where specified in that Annex.

2. When accidentally caught, specimens of the species referred to in paragraph 1 shall not be harmed and shall be promptly released.

TITLE IV
FINAL PROVISIONS

[Article 58 will be updated after the publication of scientific advice on unavoidable by-catches in mixed fisheries.]

[*Article 58*
Amendment of Regulation (EU) 2025/202

Regulation (EU) 2025/202, is amended as follows:

(1) The following Article 19a is inserted:

"*Article 19a*
Remedial measures for cod and common sole in the Kattegat

1. Union fishing vessels fishing in the Kattegat with bottom trawls[92] with minimum mesh size of 70 mm shall use one of the following selective gears:

   (a) sorting grid with maximum 35 mm bar spacing, with an unblocked fish outlet;

   (b) sorting grid with maximum 50 mm bar spacing separating flatfish and roundfish, with an unblocked fish outlet for roundfish;

   (c) seltra panel with 300 mm square-mesh size;

   (d) regulated highly selective gear, the technical attributes of which shall result, according to a scientific study assessed by the STECF, for fishing vessels exclusively carrying on board such a gear, in less than 1,5 % of catches of cod.

2. Union fishing vessels participating in a project run by a Member State and having functioning equipment for fully documented fisheries may use a gear in accordance with Part B of Annex V to Regulation (EU) 2019/1241. By 31 March, the Member State concerned shall communicate a list of such vessels to the Commission.

3. This Article does not apply to fishing operations conducted for the exclusive purpose of scientific investigations, provided that those investigations are carried out in compliance with Article 25 of Regulation (EU) 2019/1241."

(2) Article 63(e) is replaced by the following:

"(e) Article 19 shall apply from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025;"]

(3) The following Article 63(ea) is inserted:

"(ea) Article 19a shall apply from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2026;"]

[92] Gear codes: OTB, OTT, OT, TBN, TBS, TB, TX, PTB.

Article 59
Committee procedure

1. The Commission shall be assisted by the Committee for Fisheries and Aquaculture established by Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013. That committee shall be a committee within the meaning of Regulation (EU) No 182/2011.

2. Where reference is made to this paragraph, Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 shall apply.

Article 60
Transitional provisions

Articles 9 to 13, 15 to 20, 24, 27, 38, 39, 44, 45, 47, 49, 50, 57 of this Regulation shall continue to apply, *mutatis mutandis*, in 2027 until the entry into force of the Regulation fixing the fishing opportunities for 2026.

Article 61
Entry into force and application

This Regulation shall enter into force on the date of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

It shall apply from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2026.

However:

(a) Article 12(1) shall apply from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2026 or until the date on which a delegated act adopted in accordance with Article 15(2) of Regulation (EU) 2019/1241 and amending Annex VII, Part A, of that Regulation regarding the minimum conservation reference size for pollack in ICES subareas 8, 9 and 10 and Union waters of CECAF area 34.1.1 becomes applicable, whichever is earlier;

(b) Article 13(1) to (8) shall apply from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027;

(c) Article 13(9) shall apply from 1 January 2026 to 31 March 2027;

(d) Articles 17 and 18 shall apply from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2026 or until the date on which delegated acts adopted in accordance with Article 15(2) of Regulation (EU) 2019/1241 and amending Annexes VI and VII of that Regulation regarding technical measures for the Celtic Sea, the Irish Sea and the West of Scotland and technical measures for red seabream in ICES subareas 6, 7 and 8 become applicable, whichever is earlier;

(e) Article 19 shall apply from 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2027 or until the date on which a Commission Delegated Regulation amending Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/2201 becomes applicable, whichever is earlier;

(f) Article 23 shall apply from 1 January 2026 to 31 January 2027;

(g) Article 24 shall apply from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2026 or until the date on which a delegated act adopted in accordance with Article 54(1), point (m), of Regulation (EU) 2024/2594 and amending Annex IV of that Regulation on technical measures for redfish in the Irminger Sea and adjacent waters becomes applicable, whichever is earlier;

(h) Article 27(2) shall apply from 1 January 2026 until 31 December 2026 or the date on which an amendment to Regulation (EU) 2017/2107 introducing a prohibition to

retain on board, tranship or land any part or whole carcass of shortfin mako (*Isurus oxyrinchus*) in the Atlantic Ocean, north of 5°N, caught in fisheries in the ICCAT Convention area becomes applicable, whichever is earlier;

(i) Article 30 and Annex VII shall apply from 1 December 2025 to 30 November 2026;

(j) Article 35(1), point (a), shall apply from 1 January 2026 to 11 January 2027;

(k) Article 38(3) shall apply from 1 January 2026 until 31 December 2026 or the date on which an amendment to Regulation (EU) 2021/56 regarding the recording by fishing vessel operators of the number of releases of oceanic whitetip sharks within indication of status and the reporting of that information to the Member State of which they are nationals becomes applicable, whichever is earlier;

(l) Section 12 shall apply from 1 June 2026 to 31 May 2027 or until the date on which a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down corresponding measures becomes applicable;

(m) Annexes IA to IJ, and IL shall also apply in 2027 and 2028, where specified in those Annexes;

(n) Annex IA, Part B, Tables 116 to 118, footnotes 1, shall apply from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2026 or until the date on which a delegated act adopted in accordance with Article 15(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 regarding a derogation from the landing obligation for picked dogfish becomes applicable, whichever is earlier;

(o) Annex IK shall apply from 1 December 2025 to 30 November 2026, where specified in that Annex;

(p) Annexes IM and XI shall apply from 1 June 2026 to 31 May 2027;

(q) Annex II shall apply from 1 February 2026 to 31 January 2027;

(r) catch and effort limits fixed by this Regulation for the year 2026 and, where specified in this Regulation, also in 2027 and in 2028, shall continue to apply in 2026, and where relevant in 2027 and in 2028, exclusively for the purposes of:

  (i) exchanges pursuant to Article 16(8) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013;

  (ii) deductions and additions pursuant to Article 37 of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009;

  (iii) quantities withheld in accordance with Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 and Article 15(9) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013; and

  (iv) deductions and adjustments pursuant to Articles 105, 106, 107 and 107a of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009.

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States.

Done at Brussels,

For the Council
The President