

Fishing in the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) Agreement area: technical measures

2014/0213(COD) - 11/07/2014 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to transpose in Union law a number of measures adopted by the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) at its annual sessions of 2011, 2012 and 2013.

PROPOSED ACT: Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: the European Parliament decides in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and on an equal footing with the Council.

BACKGROUND: the GFCM Agreement provides an appropriate framework for multilateral cooperation to promote the development, conservation, rational management and best utilisation of living marine resources in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea at levels which are considered sustainable and at low risk of collapse. The European Union, as well as Bulgaria, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Malta, Romania and Slovenia are contracting parties to the GFCM Agreement.

At its Annual Sessions in 2011 and 2012, the GFCM adopted measures for the sustainable exploitation of red coral in its area of competence to be implemented in Union law.

The GFCM adopted other recommendations laying down:

- measures for the mitigation of incidental catches of seabirds, sea turtles, monk seals and cetaceans in fishing activities in the GFCM Agreement area to be implemented in Union law;
- measures aiming to ensure in its area of competence a high level of protection from fishing activities to sharks and rays, and in particular to the shark and ray species listed as endangered or threatened under Annex II of the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean to the Barcelona Convention;
- measures for fisheries exploiting small pelagic stocks in the Adriatic Sea which should be implemented in Union law.

[Regulation \(EU\) No 1343/2011](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council lays down certain provisions for fishing in the GFCM Agreement area. It is proposed to amend this Regulation to include the measures contained in the GFCM recommendations.

CONTENT: the proposal contains technical measures for the sustainable exploitation of red coral, the mitigation of incidental captures of seabirds, sea turtles and cetaceans and the conservation of monk seals, sharks and rays in the GFCM Agreement area.

Such measures go beyond the protection already ensured to these species at EU level by the Habitats Directive and other Union acts and include specific recording and reporting obligations for both operators and Member States.

The proposal also implements in Union law certain measures for fisheries for small pelagic stocks in the Adriatic Sea.

DELEGATED ACTS: the proposal contains provisions empowering the Commission to adopt delegated acts in accordance with Article 290 of the treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.