

Fisheries control

2018/0193(COD) - 30/05/2018 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to revise the fisheries control system.

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: an **effective control system** is essential to ensure that EU fisheries are managed in a sustainable manner, which in turn ensures the long-term viability of the EU fisheries sector and protects the livelihoods of EU fishermen.

The measures establishing a Union Fisheries Control System (FCS) for ensuring compliance with rules of the CFP are provided for in four different legal acts: 1) the Fisheries Control [Regulation](#); 2) the [Regulation](#) establishing a European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA); 3) the [Regulation](#) establishing a system to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU Regulation); and 4) the [Regulation](#) on the sustainable management of the external fishing fleets (SMEF).

With the exception of the SMEF regulation, which was recently revised, the current Union Fisheries Control System (FCS) was designed prior to the reformed Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and as such it is not fully coherent with it. In addition, the system reflects control strategies, methodologies and challenges of more than 10 years ago, and it is not equipped to effectively address current and future needs in terms of fisheries data and fleet control, to match the constant evolution of fishing practices and techniques and to take advantage of modern and more cost-effective control technologies and data exchange systems. The current system also does not reflect new and modern Union policies recently adopted, such as the plastic strategy, the digital single market strategy, and the international ocean governance.

Several discussions and exchanges of view have taken place in the Council, in the Parliament, in the Administrative Board of the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) with Member States and with stakeholders since the publication of all these documents. Those discussions confirmed that there is unanimous agreement among the European Institutions and among direct stakeholders that **the Fisheries Control System is not effective and efficient and that, as such, it is not entirely fit for purpose to sustain the achievements of the CFP objectives.**

IMPACT ASSESSMENT: the option selected is **targeted changes to the fisheries control system** (in particular regulations on fisheries control, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and the European Fisheries Control Agency).

Positive environmental impacts of the preferred option would encompass: reduction of overfishing, elimination of discards at sea, healthier fish stocks and proper control of marine protected areas. Main socio-economic benefits include: increased wages and competitiveness of fishing industry, especially for the small fleet; promotion of job creation (especially in ICT); improved compliance with the CFP and equal treatment of fishers.

CONTENT: the specific objectives of the **proposed revision** of the fisheries control regime are to:

- bridge the gaps with the CFP and with other EU policies;

- simplify the legislative framework and reduce unnecessary administrative burden;
- improve availability, reliability and completeness of fisheries data and information, in particular of catch data, and allow exchange and sharing of information;
- remove obstacles that hinder the development of a culture of compliance and the equitable treatment of operators within and across Member States.

The proposal contains, *inter alia*, the following measures:

- **clarification of the inspection process**, inspectors' duties, and masters' and operators' duties during inspections. Digitisation of inspection reports through the mandatory use of an Electronic Inspection Report System which will allow a better use and exchange of data between relevant authorities and Member States;
- a **new list of infringements** of the CFP rules, which should be qualified as serious by nature, new detailed and exhaustive list of criteria to qualify as serious certain other infringements of the CFP rules;
- a **more reliable and complete fisheries data system** providing for the full digitisation of transshipment and landing declarations, applicable to all EU fishing vessels (including those less than 12 metres in length), an electronic traceability system for all vessels, new weighing procedures for fishery products and strengthened rules for recording recreational catches;
- **better traceability of EU and imported fishery and aquaculture products**: traceability information is clarified so that it allows linking a specific lot of fishery products to a particular landing by an EU fishing vessel. Information is recorded electronically so that controls in the supply chain within the internal market are more effective and efficient;
- **the use of remote electronic monitoring tools**, in particular CCTVs, for the control of the landing obligation. Certain vessels with active fishing gears shall be fitted with a device that monitors and records engine power;
- **improving the reporting of lost fishing gear** through the use of (electronic) logbooks for all categories of vessels, the deletion of the current derogation for vessels under 12 metres to take on board the equipment necessary to recover lost gear and laying down conditions to establish EU provisions for the marking and control of fishing gear for recreational fisheries;
- **the revision of the mandate of the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA)** to fully align its objectives with the Common Fisheries Policy and extend its inspection powers.