Fishing authorisations for Union fishing vessels in United Kingdom waters and fishing operations of United Kingdom fishing vessels in Union waters

2020/0366(COD) - 10/12/2020 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to establish provisional measures concerning fishing authorisations for Union fishing vessels in UK waters and fishing operations by UK fishing vessels in Union waters after the end of the transitional period referred to in the UK withdrawal agreement.

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: this proposal is part of a package of targeted contingency measures to prepare for a possible scenario of no agreement between the EU and the United Kingdom after the end of the transitional period.

In accordance with Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 (the basic Regulation of the Common Fisheries Policy), Union fishing vessels enjoy equal access to EU waters and resources subject to the rules of the Common Fisheries Policy.

From the end of the transitional period, the Common Fisheries Policy would no longer apply to the United Kingdom. The UK waters (territorial sea and adjacent exclusive economic zone) will then no longer be part of EU waters. To ensure sustainable fisheries and given the importance of fishing for the economic livelihood of many communities, it is necessary to facilitate the authorisation procedures for fishing vessels.

CONTENT: the proposal would amend EU Regulation (EU) 2017/2403 in order to create the appropriate legal framework valid until 31 December 2021, or until the date of conclusion of a fisheries agreement with the United Kingdom - whichever is earlier - on the continued reciprocal access of EU and UK vessels to each other's waters after 31 December 2020.

The specific rules provided for in this proposal should apply from the day following the end of the transition period. The granting of authorisations is subject to the principle of "reciprocity", i.e. on condition that the United Kingdom extends access rights for EU vessels to conduct fishing activities in United Kingdom waters on a basis satisfactory to the Union.

Consequently, authorisations would only be granted if and to the extent that the United Kingdom provides authorisations for Union vessels to make use of fishing opportunities allocated to them.