

General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM): fishing in the GFCM Agreement area. Recast

2021/0248(COD) - 30/07/2021 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to transpose into EU law the fisheries conservation and management measures adopted in 2018 and 2019 by the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM).

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 EU and ten of its Member States (Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Romania, Slovenia and Spain) are contracting parties to the GFCM agreement.

The recommendations adopted by the GFCM are binding on its contracting parties. As a contracting party to the GFCM Agreement, the EU is bound by these recommendations. The transposition of the relevant GFCM provisions is necessary to ensure that they are applied uniformly and effectively throughout the European Union.

Regulation (EU) No 1343/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council has been substantially amended several times. Since further amendments are to be made, that Regulation should be recast in the interests of clarity.

CONTENT: the recast proposal aims to **implement existing GFCM measures** that are binding on the contracting parties. It will thus ensure that EU law is in line with the international obligations adopted by the GFCM, to which the EU is a contracting party.

The proposal applies to commercial fishing and aquaculture, as well as recreational fishing, carried out by EU fishing vessels and nationals of Member States in the GFCM Agreement area.

The proposal deals with **fisheries management, conservation and control measures for certain species**. It includes chapters on European eel, giant red shrimp, blue and red shrimp, red coral, demersal fisheries, small pelagic fisheries, blackspot seabream, dolphin fish, turbot and piked dogfish.

The proposal also contains **common provisions** including:

- technical and conservation measures, aiming in particular to reduce the impact of fishing activities on certain marine species (including sharks and rays) and incidental catches, to establish fishing restricted areas and temporal closures, and to regulate what fishing gear may be used;

- control measures, including on the register of authorised vessels, port state measures and vessels presumed to have engaged in illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing
- measures on cooperation, information sharing and reporting;
- the establishment of regional research programmes on blue crab in the Mediterranean and rapana whelk in the Black Sea.

This proposal grants delegated powers to the Commission to ensure that the Union continues to fulfil its obligations under the GFCM Agreement.