Common fisheries policy (CFP): restrictions to the access to Union waters

2021/0176(COD) - 22/11/2022 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 608 votes to 13, with 9 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013, as regards restrictions to the access to Union waters.

The European Parliament adopted its position at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure.

As a reminder, Member States are authorised to restrict fishing to fishing vessels that traditionally fish in those waters from ports on the adjacent coast in waters up to 12 nautical miles from their baselines. Member States are also authorised to restrict access to waters up to 100 nautical miles from the baselines of the Union outermost regions to vessels registered in the ports of those regions.

Existing rules restricting access to resources within the 12 nautical mile zones of Member States have benefitted conservation by restricting fishing effort in the most sensitive part of Union waters. Those rules have also preserved traditional fishing activities on which the social and economic development of certain coastal communities is highly dependent.

Existing rules restricting access to marine biological resources around the Union outermost regions have contributed to the preservation of the local economy of those regions, having regard to their structural, social and economic situation.

The purpose of this Regulation is to **extend beyond 31 December 2022** the existing derogations concerning restrictions to access to Union water for a **further period of ten years** beyond that date, in order to ensure continuity of the current protection measures and to avoid disrupting the balance that has been achieved since the introduction of this special regime. Those derogations are an integral part of the Common Framework Policy (CFP) and the duration and scope of that extension may be revised in the framework of any review of the CFP.

The Regulation also amends Annex I to Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 following the withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the European Union and following a joint request by Italy and Greece concerning access of Italian fishing vessels to the 6-12 nautical mile zone of Greek territorial waters in the Ionian Sea and a proposal by Greece concerning access of Italian fishing vessels to the 6-12 nautical mile zone of the Greek Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

In a **joint statement** annexed to the legislative resolution, the Commission and the European Parliament took note of the fisheries situation in the Channel and the concerns raised by local and regional fisheries stakeholders, including fishers, regarding the use of demersal seines by numerous vessels. The Commission and the European Parliament encourage close cooperation between those stakeholders and initiatives from them and invite Member States to follow up, where relevant, with the submission of joint recommendations. The Commission will follow up with measures, where appropriate, including technical measures, based on consultations of stakeholders and an assessment by the relevant scientific bodies.

In the event that the Commission considers a review of the CFP Regulation, it will conduct an impact assessment, along the lines of the Better Regulation principles. The Commission will make available to the co-legislators the impact assessment at the moment it publishes such proposal. Alternatively, it will consider reporting on the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy at the latest by 2032.