

Implementation into Union law of measures adopted by regional fisheries management organisations

2025/0106(COD) - 15/09/2026 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 559 votes to 48, with 62 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending (i) Regulation (EU) 2017/2107 laying down management, conservation and control measures applicable in the Convention Area of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), (ii) Regulation (EU) 2018/975 laying down management, conservation and control measures applicable in the Convention Area of the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPFRMO), (iii) Regulation (EU) 2019/833 laying down conservation and enforcement measures applicable in the Regulatory Area of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation, (iv) Regulation (EU) 2021/56 laying down management, conservation and control measures applicable in the Convention Area of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission, (v) Regulation (EU) 2022/2056 establishing conservation and management measures applicable in the area of the Fisheries Commission Convention for the Western and Central Pacific, (vi) Regulation (EU) 2022/2343 establishing management, conservation and control measures applicable in the area of competence of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) and (vii) Regulation (EU) 2023/2053 establishing a multiannual management plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean.

The European Parliament adopted its position at first reading on the proposal to **transpose into Union law** certain measures adopted by the following Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs): the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization (SPFRMO), the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO), the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) and the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC).

Measures adopted by the RFMOs

- At its 28th Regular Meeting in 2023, and at its 24th Special Meeting in 2024, **ICCAT** also adopted control measures for the conservation of fishery resources under its purview relating to the exchange of quotas between Joint Fishing Operations, prior notification of landings, monitoring of bluefin tuna transfer operations by video camera, caging operations, and control activities in the farms after caging.

- At its 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 annual meetings, the **SPFRMO Commission** adopted further measures for the conservation of fishery resources under its purview relating to bottom fishing, transshipment, gillnets, observer programmes and data, and vessel monitoring systems, as well as new measures such as a new protocol for high seas boarding and inspections, including procedures for alleged infringements, and measures on marine pollution and on the marking and identification of fishing vessels.

- At its 2023 and 2024 annual meetings, **NAFO** adopted further measures for the conservation of fishery resources under its purview regarding cod in Divisions 2J3KL including closure, bycatch and retention on board, observers, surveillance, and the relevant additional procedure for serious infringements.

- At its 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 annual meetings, the **IATTC** adopted measures for the conservation of fishery resources under its purview relating to fish aggregating devices (FADs), the

activation of buoys, the reduction of FADs entanglement and the use of biodegradable materials, the reporting of catches on Pacific bluefin tuna, minimum vessel data requirements, changes in vessel monitoring systems, the introduction of electronic monitoring systems, including the collection of fisheries data, the protection of silky sharks, the safe release of sharks, the collection of data on shark species, and updates to compliance reports.

- At its 2022, 2023 and 2024 annual meetings, the **WCPFC** adopted measures relating to bunkering services, the protection of sharks and the use of branch lines, wire leaders and shark lines by Union longline vessels with the prohibition of shark retention and a duty to release, as well as to surrender or discard, unintentionally caught oceanic whitetip and silky sharks, or cetacean specimens.

- At its 2022, 2023 and 2024 annual meetings and 6th special session, the **IOTC** subsequently adopted, measures for the conservation of fishery resources under its purview as regards the management of anchored and drifting fish aggregating devices, voluntary fishery closure, transshipments, conservation measures for cetaceans and seabirds, regional observer schemes, vessel monitoring plans, electronic monitoring standards and port inspections. IOTC resolution 24/06 implemented a ban on discards of bigeye tuna, skipjack tuna, yellowfin tuna, and non-targeted species caught by vessels listed in the IOTC record of authorisation that operate in the IOTC area of competence. Union fishing vessels using gear types other than those used by purse seine vessels were encouraged to retain on board and then land all fish fit for human consumption, and to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safe release of non-targeted species taken alive, to the extent possible, while taking into consideration the safety of the crew.

Full transposition

The amended text specifies that care must be taken to ensure that the recommendations adopted by the various regional fisheries management organisations (RFMOs) are fully implemented into Union law in a timely manner, thereby enabling the Union to fulfil its international obligations as a reliable international partner.

Sustainability and international agreements

Furthermore, the text stressed that it is imperative for the Union to carefully assess the need to balance the three pillars of sustainability when negotiating international agreements, such as the conservation and management measures adopted by RFMOs. These measures must be based on the best available scientific advice.

Data protection

Data processed under the amended regulations must comply with the data protection and confidentiality rules referred to in Articles 112 and 113 of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009. Personal data should be stored for up to a maximum of ten years. In the event that the personal data in question are needed in order to follow up an infringement, inspections or judicial or administrative procedures, it should be possible for those data to be stored for a period exceeding 10 years, but no longer than 20 years.