Basic information

2014/0274(NLE) NLE - Non-legislative enactments	Procedure completed
General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean: amended Agreement See also 1997/0059(AVC) **Subject** 3.15.01 Fish stocks, conservation of fishery resources 3.15.15 Fisheries agreements and cooperation **Geographical area** Mediterranean Sea area	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
PECH Fisheries	MATO Gabriel (PPE)	16/10/2014
	Shadow rapporteur BRIANO Renata (S&D) TOMAŠIĆ Ruža (ECR) BILBAO BARANDICA Izaskun (ALDE) HAZEKAMP Anja (GUE/NGL) AFFRONTE Marco (EFDD)	

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
Agriculture and Fisheries	3381	2015-04-20

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Maritime Affairs and Fisheries	VELLA Karmenu

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
		COM(2014)0580	Summary

23/09/2014	Preparatory document		
10/12/2014	Legislative proposal published	14993/2014	Summary
09/02/2015	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
24/02/2015	Vote in committee		
03/03/2015	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading	A8-0038/2015	Summary
11/03/2015	Decision by Parliament	T8-0058/2015	Summary
11/03/2015	Results of vote in Parliament		
20/04/2015	Act adopted by Council after consultation of Parliament		
20/04/2015	End of procedure in Parliament		
30/04/2015	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2014/0274(NLE)
Procedure type	NLE - Non-legislative enactments
Procedure subtype	Consent by Parliament
Amendments and repeals	See also 1997/0059(AVC)
Legal basis	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union TFEU 043 Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union TFEU 218-p6a
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	PECH/8/01311

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE544.139	09/12/2014	
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A8-0038/2015	03/03/2015	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T8-0058/2015	11/03/2015	Summary

Council of the EU

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Document attached to the procedure	15458/2014	08/12/2014	
Legislative proposal	14993/2014	10/12/2014	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary

Preparatory document	COM(2014)0580	23/09/2014	Summary

Additional information		
Source	**Document**	**Date**
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act	
Decision 2015/0674 OJ L 111 30.04.2015, p. 0001	Summary

General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean: amended Agreement

2014/0274(NLE) - 03/03/2015 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Fisheries adopted the report by Gabriel MATO (EPP, ES) on the draft Council decision on the acceptance, on behalf of the European Union, of the amended Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM).

The committee recommended that the European Parliament **give its consent** to the conclusion of the amended Agreement.

The GFCM is a so-called Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (RFMO), with the aim of promoting the development, conservation, rational management and best utilisation of living marine resources, as well as the sustainable development of aquaculture in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

An amendment of the GFCM Agreement was launched in 2013 following a performance review finalised in 2011. The Contracting Parties to the GFCM endorsed the amended Agreement at the GFCM 38 Annual Session on 19-24 May 2014.

The amended Agreement revises the structure and content of the current one, so as to bring it in line with modern RFMO instruments.

General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean: amended Agreement

2014/0274(NLE) - 23/09/2014 - Preparatory document

PURPOSE: to conclude an amended Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

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 Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), under the provisions of Article XIV of the FAO constitution, was approved by the FAO Conference in 1949 and entered into force in 1952. Amendments to this Agreement were approved in 1963, 1976 and 1997.

The European Community acceded to the GFCM on 16 June 1998 through Decision 98/416/EC.

Mediterranean and Black Sea EU Member States are also parties to this Agreement.

The GFCM is a so-called Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (RFMO), with the aim of promoting the development, conservation, rational management and best utilization of living marine resources, as well as the sustainable development of aquaculture in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

An amendment of the GFCM Agreement was launched in 2013 following a performance review finalised in 2011, which concluded that **the Agreement should be amended to clarify the objectives and functions of the GFCM, and strengthen its efficiency**.

The amended Agreement was negotiated with the GFCM Contracting Parties. The Council authorised the Commission to negotiate on behalf of the Union on matters falling within the Union's competence. The negotiations were carried out by Member States and the Commission as per their respective areas of competence in accordance to the terms of the mandate.

The Contracting Parties to the GFCM endorsed the "Amended Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean" at the GFCM 38 Annual Session on 19-24 May 2014.

It is now necessary to conclude the amended Agreement on behalf of the European Union.

CONTENT: the Commission invites the Council to adopt a decision to approve, on behalf of the European Union, the amended Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean.

The amended Agreement revises the structure and content of the current one, so as to bring it in line with modern RFMO instruments.

Amendment: main changes introduced are as follows:

- **A clearer explanation of the purpose of the GFCM Agreement**: the new Agreement sets a clear overall objective of **biological, social, economic and environmental sustainability of living marine resources**. It also introduces definitions of the terms that are necessary for the correct interpretation of the Agreement.

Better defined functions of the GFCM, which include the promotion of common fishery management through multiannual management plans, the establishment of fisheries restricted areas, and the collection and dissemination of data.

In this context, the new Agreement integrates core elements of the Common Fisheries Policy regarding:

- the objective of maximum sustainable yield,
- the ecosystem and precautionary approach,
- the reduction of discards,
- the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

- **Sanctions**: the amendment includes provisions for the establishment of measures/sanctions to address non-compliance by Members/non-Members.

- **Dispute settlements**: the establishment of a well-defined dispute settlement mechanism in case disputes arise between Contracting Parties.

It should be noted that the text of the amended Agreement will undergo a final legal check by the FAO, which should be finalised in October 2014. The text may therefore undergo changes, which are not expected to be of substance.

General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean: amended Agreement

2014/0274(NLE) - 10/12/2014 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, the amended Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: Council may adopt the act only if Parliament has given its consent to the act.

BACKGROUND: the Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), was established and approved at the Fifth Session of the FAO Conference in 1949 and entered into force on 20 February 1952.

The European Community became a contracting party to the GFCM through the adoption of Decision 98/416/EC by the Council.

On 15 November 2013, the Council authorised the Commission to negotiate, on behalf of the Union, amendments to the Agreement on matters falling within the Union's competence. Negotiations were successfully concluded at the GFCM meeting of 19 to 24 May 2014 and the contracting parties endorsed, by consensus, the text of an amended Agreement.

The amended Agreement is in line with the principles of the Union's Common Fisheries Policy. It is therefore in the Union's interest to approve it.

CONTENT: under this proposed Decision, the Council is requested to conclude the amended Agreement establishing the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean on behalf of the Union.

The text of the amended Agreement is attached to this Decision.

The purpose of the amendments to the Agreement is to modernise the GFCM and reinforce its role in the conservation of fisheries resources in its area of competence.

The objectives, general principles and functions of the GFCM have been reviewed and broadened to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of living marine resources and their environment.

For further details of the amended Agreement, please refer to the summary of the *Commission's initial legislative proposal dated 23/09/2014.*

General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean: amended Agreement

2014/0274(NLE) - 11/03/2015 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 642 votes to 27, with 37 abstentions, a legislative resolution of the European Parliament on the draft Council decision on the acceptance, on behalf of the European Union, of the amended Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM).

The European Parliament **gave its consent** to the conclusion of the amended Agreement.

The GFCM is a so-called Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (RFMO), with the aim of promoting the development, conservation, rational management and best utilisation of living marine resources, as well as the sustainable development of aquaculture in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

The amendment approved at the GFCM 38 Annual Session on 19-24 May 2014 revised the structure and content of the current one, so as to bring it in line with modern RFMO instruments.

Main changes introduced are as follows:

- the new Agreement sets a **clear overall objective** of biological, social, economic and environmental sustainability of living marine resources. It also introduces definitions of the terms that are necessary for the correct interpretation of the Agreement;
- **better defined functions of the GFCM**, which include the promotion of common fishery management through multiannual management plans, the establishment of fisheries restricted areas, and the collection and dissemination of data;
- the amendment includes provisions for the establishment of **measures/sanctions** to address non-compliance by Members/non-Members;
- the establishment of a **well-defined dispute settlement mechanism** in case disputes arise between Contracting Parties.

General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean: amended Agreement

2014/0274(NLE) - 23/09/2014

PURPOSE: to conclude an amended Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean.

PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

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 Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), under the provisions of Article XIV of the FAO constitution, was approved by the FAO Conference in 1949 and entered into force in 1952. Amendments to this Agreement were approved in 1963, 1976 and 1997.

The European Community acceded to the GFCM on 16 June 1998 through Decision 98/416/EC.

Mediterranean and Black Sea EU Member States are also parties to this Agreement.

The GFCM is a so-called Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (RFMO), with the aim of promoting the development, conservation, rational management and best utilization of living marine resources, as well as the sustainable development of aquaculture in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

An amendment of the GFCM Agreement was launched in 2013 following a performance review finalised in 2011, which concluded that **the Agreement should be amended to clarify the objectives and functions of the GFCM, and strengthen its efficiency**.

The amended Agreement was negotiated with the GFCM Contracting Parties. The Council authorised the Commission to negotiate on behalf of the Union on matters falling within the Union's competence. The negotiations were carried out by Member States and the Commission as per their respective areas of competence in accordance to the terms of the mandate.

The Contracting Parties to the GFCM endorsed the "Amended Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean" at the GFCM 38 Annual Session on 19-24 May 2014.

It is now necessary to conclude the amended Agreement on behalf of the European Union.

CONTENT: the Commission invites the Council to adopt a decision to approve, on behalf of the European Union, the amended Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean.

The amended Agreement revises the structure and content of the current one, so as to bring it in line with modern RFMO instruments.

Amendment: main changes introduced are as follows:

- **A clearer explanation of the purpose of the GFCM Agreement**: the new Agreement sets a clear overall objective of **biological, social, economic and environmental sustainability of living marine resources**. It also introduces definitions of the terms that are necessary for the correct interpretation of the Agreement.

Better defined functions of the GFCM, which include the promotion of common fishery management through multiannual management plans, the establishment of fisheries restricted areas, and the collection and dissemination of data.

In this context, the new Agreement integrates core elements of the Common Fisheries Policy regarding:

- the objective of maximum sustainable yield,
- the ecosystem and precautionary approach,
- the reduction of discards,
- the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

- **Sanctions**: the amendment includes provisions for the establishment of measures/sanctions to address non-compliance by Members/non-Members.

- **Dispute settlements**: the establishment of a well-defined dispute settlement mechanism in case disputes arise between Contracting Parties.

It should be noted that the text of the amended Agreement will undergo a final legal check by the FAO, which should be finalised in October 2014. The text may therefore undergo changes, which are not expected to be of substance.

General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean: amended Agreement

2014/0274(NLE) - 20/04/2015 - Final act

PURPOSE: to conclude an amended Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean.

NON-LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Decision (EU) 2015/674 on the acceptance, on behalf of the European Union, of the amended Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean.

BACKGROUND: the Agreement for the establishment of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), was established and approved at the Fifth Session of the FAO Conference in 1949 and entered into force on 20 February 1952.

The European Community acceded to the GFCM on 16 June 1998 through Decision 98/416/EC.

On 15 November 2013, the Council authorised the Commission to negotiate, on behalf of the Union, amendments to the Agreement on matters falling within the Union's competence. The Member States and the Commission conducted negotiations as per their respective areas of competence in accordance with the mandate and in close cooperation.

Negotiations were successfully concluded at the GFCM meeting of 19 to 24 May 2014. At that meeting, the GFCM endorsed the text of the amended Agreement.

The purpose of the amendments to the Agreement is to modernise the GFCM and reinforce its role in the conservation of fisheries resources in its area of competence.

The objectives, **general principles and functions of the GFCM have been reviewed and broadened** to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of living marine resources and their environment.

Given that the amended Agreement is in line with the principles of the Union's Common Fisheries Policy, it is therefore in the Union's interest to accept the amended Agreement.

It is now necessary to conclude the amended Agreement on behalf of the European Union.

CONTENT: under this Decision, the amended Agreement establishing the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean is hereby approved on behalf of the Union.

The amended Agreement revises the structure and content of the current one, so as to bring it in line with modern RFMO instruments.

Amendment: main changes introduced are as follows:

- A clearer explanation of the purpose of the GFCM Agreement: the new Agreement sets a clear overall objective of **biological, social, economic and environmental sustainability of living marine resources**. It also introduces definitions of the terms that are necessary for the correct interpretation of the Agreement.

Better defined functions of the GFCM, which include the promotion of common fishery management through multiannual management plans, the establishment of fisheries restricted areas, and the collection and dissemination of data.

In this context, the new Agreement integrates core elements of the Common Fisheries Policy regarding:

- the objective of maximum sustainable yield,
- the ecosystem and precautionary approach,
- the reduction of discards,
- the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

- **Sanctions**: the amendment includes provisions for the establishment of measures/sanctions to address non-compliance by Members/non-Members.

- **Dispute settlements**: the establishment of a well-defined dispute settlement mechanism in case disputes arise between Contracting Parties.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: the date of entry into force of the amended Agreement will be published in the Official Journal of the European Union by the General Secretariat of the Council.