



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 1 July 2025
(OR. en)

9741/25

Interinstitutional File:
2025/0128(NLE)

PECHE 150
UK 120
N 40

LEGISLATIVE ACTS AND OTHER INSTRUMENTS

Subject: COUNCIL REGULATION amending Regulation (EU) 2025/202 fixing for 2025 and 2026 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks, applicable in Union waters and, for Union fishing vessels, in certain non-Union waters

COUNCIL REGULATION (EU) 2025/...

of ...

amending Regulation (EU) 2025/202
fixing for 2025 and 2026 the fishing opportunities
for certain fish stocks, applicable in Union waters and,
for Union fishing vessels, in certain non-Union waters

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 43(3) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

Whereas:

- (1) Council Regulation (EU) 2025/202¹ fixes for 2025 and 2026 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks, applicable in Union waters and, for Union fishing vessels, in certain non-Union waters. Those fishing opportunities, including certain measures functionally linked thereto, should be amended to take into account the publication of scientific advice, as well as the outcomes of consultations with third countries and regional fisheries management organisations meetings.
- (2) Regulation (EU) 2025/202 provisionally set at zero the total allowable catches (TAC) for anchovy (*Engraulis encrasicolus*) in the western part of International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) subarea 9 and in subarea 10 for the period from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026, pending the publication by ICES of its scientific advice for anchovy in the western part of ICES division 9a for that period. To allow fishing to continue until the definitive TAC for that stock is set, a provisional TAC for the period from 1 July to 30 September 2025 should be set, at a level based on Member States' landings of that stock in the period from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024, taking into account the seasonality of the fishery.

¹ Council Regulation (EU) 2025/202 of 30 January 2025 fixing for 2025 and 2026 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks, applicable in Union waters and, for Union fishing vessels, in certain non-Union waters, and amending Regulation (EU) 2024/257 as regards fishing opportunities for 2025 (OJ L, 2025/202, 31.1.2025, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2025/202/oj>).

- (3) On 23 June 2025, the Union and Norway concluded consultations on: (i) the level of the overall fishing opportunities for Northern prawn (*Pandalus borealis*) in ICES divisions 3a and 4a east for the period from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026; (ii) the level of the TAC for Northern prawn in ICES division 3a; and (iii) additional technical measures for that stock. The outcome of those consultations was documented in an Agreed Record signed on 23 June 2025. The TAC for Northern prawn in ICES division 3a should therefore be set at the level agreed with Norway, and the additional technical measures agreed with Norway should be established. The functionally linked additional technical measures should only apply until the relevant delegated act becomes applicable. In addition, the Union and Norway considered during those consultations exchanges of Northern prawn in Norwegian waters of the North Sea south of 62°N from Norway to the Union. Since it was not possible for the Union and Norway to agree on additional transfers of Northern prawn in the North Sea, the unallocated fishing opportunities for Northern prawn in Greenland waters of ICES subareas 5 and 14 should be allocated to Member States. The Member States quotas for Northern prawn in Greenland waters of ICES subareas 5 and 14 should therefore be amended accordingly.

- (4) On 21 May 2025, the Union, the United Kingdom and Norway held consultations on:
- (i) the level of the overall fishing opportunities for sprat (*Sprattus sprattus*) in ICES subarea 4 and division 3a for the period from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026; and
 - (ii) the levels of the TACs for sprat in Union and United Kingdom waters of ICES subarea 4 and division 2a and in Union and Norwegian waters of ICES division 3a for that period.
- The Union participated in those consultations on the basis of the Union position endorsed by the Council on 12 May 2025. The outcome of those consultations was documented in an Agreed Record signed on 21 May 2025. The relevant TACs should therefore be set at the levels agreed with the United Kingdom and Norway.

- (5) On 12 May 2025, the Union and the United Kingdom conducted bilateral consultations pursuant to Article 498(2), (4) and (6) of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community, of the one part, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, of the other part², on the level of the TAC for sprat in ICES divisions 7d and 7e for the period from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026. The Union participated in those consultations on the basis of the Union position endorsed by the Council on 8 May 2025. The outcome of those consultations was documented in a Written Record signed on 22 May 2025. The TAC for sprat in ICES divisions 7d and 7e for the period from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 should therefore be set at the level agreed with the United Kingdom.
- (6) Regulation (EU) 2025/202 provisionally set the TAC for red seabream (*Pagellus bogaraveo*) in Union and international waters of ICES subarea 10 for the period from 1 January to 30 June 2025 at the level of 280 tonnes, pending the publication by ICES of its revised scientific advice for that stock for 2025. Following the publication of that revised ICES advice for 2025, which replaces the advice of 9 June 2023 for that stock for 2024 and 2025, a definitive TAC for red seabream in Union and international waters of ICES subarea 10 for 2025 should therefore be set based on that revised advice.

² Trade and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community, of the one part, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, of the other part (OJ L 149, 30.4.2021, p. 10, ELI: [http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_international/2021/689\(1\)/oj](http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_international/2021/689(1)/oj)).

- (7) On 18 June 2025, Canada adopted a catch limit for its vessels fishing for cod (*Gadus morhua*) in Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO) divisions 2J, 3K and 3L for the period from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026. Subsequently, on 23 June 2025, NAFO adopted a TAC for that stock and that period, and an allocation to other NAFO Contracting Parties corresponding to 5 % of the TAC, including a Union quota, to be fished in the NAFO Regulatory Area. In addition, NAFO maintained the recovery measures for that stock for that period. Those measures should be implemented in Union law.
- (8) On 1 April 2025, and in accordance with the applicable International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) rules concerning transfers, Iceland agreed to transfer to the Union 200 tonnes of its quota for bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) in part of the ICCAT Convention area, in the Atlantic Ocean, east of 45°W, and the Mediterranean, for 2025. That transfer should be implemented in Union law and the Union quota for that stock should be amended accordingly.

- (9) At its 2025 annual meeting, the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC) established catch limits for chub mackerel (*Scomber japonicus*) available to all NPFC Contracting Parties for trawlers and purse seiners respectively for the period from 1 June 2025 to 31 May 2026. In addition, the NPFC established an additional amount of that stock for the Union for that same period. It also established associated effort limits. Moreover, the NPFC established measures functionally linked to those catch limits and to that additional amount, without which: (i) those catch limits for all NPFC Contracting Parties could not have been established; and (ii) the fishing opportunities for chub mackerel in the NPFC Convention area would have to be reduced to protect the non-target species. Those fishing opportunities and functionally linked measures should be implemented in Union law.

- (10) In order to reproduce, the European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) that is sexually mature (‘silver eel’) has to migrate from inland, brackish or marine Union waters to its spawning grounds in the Sargasso Sea (‘downstream migration’). Article 13(3) of Regulation (EU) 2025/202 protects such eels by obliging the Member States concerned to determine one or more closure periods of at least 6 months for commercial fishing activities of European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) in Union waters of ICES subareas 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9 (north-east Atlantic), subject to certain conditions. In order to uphold the conservation objective of the closure period or periods pursuant to Article 13 of Regulation (EU) 2025/202, the Member States concerned may assist migrating silver eels on their downstream migration before passing through non-Union brackish waters, where they risk being caught and landed. The Member States concerned should therefore have the possibility to allow fishing for silver eels of an overall length of 12 cm or more in Union waters upstream of non-Union brackish waters during the main migration period, provided that this is done for the exclusive purpose of transporting and promptly releasing such eels unharmed into nearby downstream Union marine waters at a designated place. Incidentally caught eels that are not sexually mature should be immediately released unharmed back into the water.
- (11) Regulation (EU) 2025/202 should therefore be amended accordingly.

- (12) Given that provisions should apply on a continuous basis, and in order to avoid legal uncertainty in the period between the end of application of the previously applicable provisions and the date of entry into force of this Regulation, the provisions of this Regulation should apply as from the end of the previously applicable provisions. Such retroactive application does not affect the principles of legal certainty and protection of legitimate expectations, as the fishing opportunities concerned are increased and, as regards eel, an additional derogation to the closure period or periods is established.
- (13) Regulation (EU) 2025/202 applies from 1 January 2025. In order to maintain the reporting period for the TAC for red seabream in EU and international waters of ICES subarea 10, the amended TACs should also apply from 1 January 2025. Such retroactive application does not affect the principles of legal certainty and protection of legitimate expectations, as the quotas are increased.
- (14) Given the urgency of avoiding interruptions to fishing activities, this Regulation should enter into force on the date of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*,

HAS ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

Article 1
Amendments of Regulation (EU) 2025/202

Regulation (EU) 2025/202 is amended as follows:

(1) Article 13 is amended as follows:

(a) the following paragraph is inserted:

‘4a. By way of further derogation from paragraph 3, point (d), the Member State concerned may allow fishing for European eel of an overall length of 12 cm or more when migrating from Union waters to their spawning grounds in the Sargasso Sea (“downstream migration”) for up to a total of 50 consecutive or non-consecutive days. That shall apply to all fishers concerned in the relevant fishing area, during the main migration period, under the following cumulative conditions:

- (a) such fishing activity shall only be allowed when the only access to marine waters necessarily passes through non-Union brackish waters;
- (b) the catches taken in ICES subdivisions 22-32 shall meet the minimum conservation reference size of 35 cm, in accordance with Annex VIII, Part A, to Regulation (EU) 2019/1241 of the European Parliament and of the Council*;

- (c) any eel that is sexually mature and is caught shall not be harmed, shall be transported without undue delay and shall be immediately released to nearby Union marine waters at a place designated by the Member State concerned, which would allow them to continue downstream migration;
- (d) any incidentally by-caught eel that is not sexually mature shall not be harmed and shall be immediately released back into the water; and
- (e) the fishing activity shall be undertaken with the involvement of a national scientific body.

* Regulation (EU) 2019/1241 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on the conservation of fisheries resources and the protection of marine ecosystems through technical measures, amending Council Regulations (EC) No 1967/2006, (EC) No 1224/2009 and Regulations (EU) No 1380/2013, (EU) 2016/1139, (EU) 2018/973, (EU) 2019/472 and (EU) 2019/1022 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Council Regulations (EC) No 894/97, (EC) No 850/98, (EC) No 2549/2000, (EC) No 254/2002, (EC) No 812/2004 and (EC) No 2187/2005 (OJ L 198, 25.7.2019, p. 105, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2019/1241/oj>).’;

(b) paragraph 8 is replaced by the following:

‘8. The Member States concerned, either individually or jointly, shall inform the Commission:

- (a) by 1 May 2025, of the closure period or periods determined in accordance with paragraphs 3 to 6, together with the supporting information justifying the chosen period or periods;
- (b) within 2 weeks of their adoption, of national measures relating to the closure period or periods that were determined in accordance with paragraphs 3 to 6;
- (c) within 8 weeks before the start of the closure period or periods determined in accordance with paragraphs 3 to 6, of the fishing activities held in accordance with paragraph 4a: (i) the place or places and date or dates of the fishing activities; (ii) the expected number and type of operators, and the national scientific body involved; and (iii) the designated place or places for release;
- (d) within a maximum of 8 weeks from the end of the fishing activities held in accordance with paragraph 4a: (i) the number and type of operators; (ii) the number of sexually mature eels caught during those fishing activities; (iii) the number of eels that are not sexually mature caught during those fishing activities; and (iv) the number of sexually mature eels that were tagged.’;

(2) the following Article is inserted:

‘Article 18a

Technical measures for Northern prawn in the Skagerrak

1. If the proportion of juveniles of Northern prawn (*Pandalus borealis*), as referred to in Article 5(2) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/2201*, is more than 30 % of the overall catch of that species, control authorities may recommend a real-time closure on the basis of one sample, as referred to in that Article.
2. Trawlers targeting Northern prawn with a size selective Nordmøre grid, as referred to in Article 6(2) of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/2201, shall be subject to the closed area, as referred to in that Article.
3. The closed area, as referred to in Article 7(b) of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/2201, shall not exceed 100 square nautical miles.
4. The area, as referred to in Article 8(2) of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/2201, shall be closed for 21 days after which it shall automatically cease to apply at midnight UTC.

5. Demersal trawls with a mesh size of at least 32 mm targeting Northern prawn, which are equipped with a Nordmøre sorting grid with a maximum bar spacing of 19 mm and without a fish retention device, as referred to in Article 11 of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/2201, shall be subject to the closed area, as referred to in Article 6(1) of that Regulation.

* Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/2201 of 1 October 2019 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2019/1241 of the European Parliament and of the Council with detailed rules for the implementation of real-time closures for Northern prawn fisheries in the Skagerrak (OJ L 332, 23.12.2019, p. 3, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2019/2201/oj).’;

- (3) in Article 63, the following point is inserted:

‘(da) Article 18a shall apply from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 or until the date on which a Commission Delegated Regulation amending Delegated Regulation (EU) 2019/2201 becomes applicable, whichever is earlier.’;

- (4) Annex IA, Parts A, B and F, and Annexes IB, IC, ID and IM are amended in accordance with the Annex to this Regulation.

Article 2

Entry into force and application

This Regulation shall enter into force on the date of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

It shall apply from 1 January 2025.

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States.

Done at ..., ...

For the Council

The President

ANNEX

Amendments to Annexes to Regulation (EU) 2025/202

- (1) Annex IA is amended as follows:
- (a) in Part A, Table 2(1) is replaced by the following:

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Table 2(1)			
Species:	Anchovy <i>Engraulis encrasicolus</i>	Zone:	9W ⁽¹⁾ and 10 (ANE/9WX10)
Spain	718	⁽²⁾	Analytical TAC
Portugal	6 464	⁽²⁾	
Union	7 182	⁽²⁾	
TAC	7 182	⁽²⁾	
⁽¹⁾	Part of subarea 9 west of the line connecting the following points:		
	Point	Latitude	Longitude
	1	36°00'00"N	11°00'00"W
	2	37°01'20"N	8°59'47"W
⁽²⁾	This quota may be fished only from 1 July 2025 to 30 September 2025.		

’;

(b) in Part B, Table 77 is replaced by the following:

Table 77			
Species:	Northern prawn <i>Pandalus borealis</i>	Zone:	3a (PRA/03A.)
Denmark	974	(1)	Analytical TAC
Sweden	525	(1)	Article 3(2) and (3) of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply
Union	1 499	(1)	Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply
TAC	2 807	(1)	
(1) This quota may only be fished from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026.			

(c) in Part B, Tables 113, 114 and 115 are replaced by the following:

Table 113			
Species:	Sprat and associated by-catches <i>Sprattus sprattus</i>	Zone:	3a (SPR/03A.)
Denmark	28 953	(1)(2)(3)	Analytical TAC
Germany	60	(1)(2)(3)	
Sweden	10 955	(1)(2)(3)	
Union	39 968	(1)(2)(3)	
TAC	43 209	(2)	
(1)	Up to 5 % of the quota may consist of by-catches of whiting and haddock (OTH/*03A.). By-catches of whiting and haddock counted against the quota pursuant to this provision and by-catches of species counted against the quota pursuant to Article 15(8) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 shall, together, not exceed 9 % of the quota.		
(2)	This quota shall apply from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026.		
(3)	Transfers of this quota may be effected to United Kingdom and Union waters of 2a and 4. However, such transfers shall be notified in advance to the Commission and to the United Kingdom.		

Table 114

Species:	Sprat and associated by-catches	Zone:	United Kingdom and Union waters of 4; United Kingdom waters of 2a
	<i>Sprattus sprattus</i>		(SPR/2AC4-C)
Belgium	2 095	(1)(2)	Analytical TAC
Denmark	165 826	(1)(2)	
Germany	2 095	(1)(2)	
France	2 095	(1)(2)	
Netherlands	2 095	(1)(2)	
Sweden	1 330	(1)(2)(3)	
Union	175 536	(1)(2)	
Norway	10 000	(1)	
Faroe Islands	0	(1)(4)	
United Kingdom	7 369	(1)	
TAC	192 905	(1)	
(1)	The quota shall apply from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026.		
(2)	Up to 2 % of the quota may consist of by-catches of whiting (OTH/*2AC4C). By-catches of whiting counted against the quota pursuant to this provision and by-catches of species counted against the quota pursuant to Article 15(8) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 shall, together, not exceed 9 % of the quota.		
(3)	Including sandeels.		
(4)	May contain up to 4 % of by-catch of herring.		

Table 115			
Species:	Sprat	Zone:	7d and 7e
	<i>Sprattus sprattus</i>		(SPR/7DE.)
Belgium	10	(1)	Analytical TAC
Denmark	631	(1)	
Germany	10	(1)	
France	136	(1)	
Netherlands	136	(1)	
Union	923	(1)	
United Kingdom	4 846	(1)	
TAC	5 769	(1)	
(1) The quota shall apply from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026.			

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(d) in Part F, Table 7 is replaced by the following:

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Table 7			
Species:	Red seabream	Zone:	Union and international waters of 10
	<i>Pagellus bogaraveo</i>		(SBR/10-)
Spain	3		Analytical TAC
Portugal	389		
Union	392		
United Kingdom	3		
TAC	95		

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(2) In Annex IB, Table 13 is replaced by the following:

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Table 13			
Species:	Northern prawn <i>Pandalus borealis</i>	Zone:	Greenland waters of 5 and 14 (PRA/514GRN)
Denmark	1 225	Analytical TAC	
France	1 225	Article 3(2) and (3) of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply	
Union	2 450	Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply	
Norway	1 700		
Faroe Islands	0		
TAC	Not relevant		

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(3) In Annex IC, Table 1 is replaced by the following:

Table 1			
Species:	Cod	Zone:	NAFO 2J3KL
	<i>Gadus morhua</i>		(COD/N2J3KL)
Bulgaria	0,003	(1)(2)	Analytical TAC
Germany	342,791	(1)(2)	Article 3(2) and (3) of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply
Estonia	61,101	(1)(2)	Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply
Spain	316,941	(1)(2)	
France	49,333	(1)(2)	
Latvia	61,101	(1)(2)	
Lithuania	61,101	(1)(2)	
Poland	160,161	(1)(2)	
Portugal	494,898	(1)(2)	
Romania	4,570	(1)(2)	
Union	1 552	(1)(2)	
TAC	40 000	(1)(2)	
(1)	This quota shall apply from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026.		
(2)	No directed fisheries are permitted under this quota between 00:00 UTC 15 April 2026 and 23:59 UTC 30 June 2026. During this period, this species shall only be taken as by-catch within the following limits: a maximum of 1 250 kg or 5 %, whichever is greater.		

(4) In Annex ID, Table 12 is replaced by the following:

Table 12			
Species:	Bluefin tuna <i>Thunnus thynnus</i>		Zone: Atlantic Ocean, east of 45°W, and Mediterranean (BFT/AE45WM)
Cyprus	195,17	(4)	Analytical TAC
Greece	350,95		Article 3(2) and (3) of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply
Spain	7 161,64	(2)(4)	Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply
France	7 132,06	(2)(3)(4)	
Croatia	1 127,25	(6)	
Italy	5 628,97	(4)(5)	
Malta	450,68	(4)	
Portugal	650,83		
Other Member States	80,60	(1)	
Union	22 778,15	(2)(3)(4)(5)(6)(7)	
TAC	40 570,00		
(1)	Except Cyprus, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Malta and Portugal, and exclusively as by-catch. Catches to be counted against this shared quota shall be reported separately (BFT/AE45WM_AMS).		
(2)	Special condition: within this TAC, the following catch limits and allocation between Member States shall apply to catches of bluefin tuna between 8 kg/75 cm and 30 kg/115 cm by the vessels referred to in point 1 of Annex VI (BFT/*8301):		
	Spain	1 088,70	
	France	505,77	
	Union	1 594,47	
(3)	Special condition: within this TAC, the following catch limits and allocation between Member States shall apply to catches of bluefin tuna weighing no less than 6,4 kg or measuring no less than 70 cm by the vessels referred to in point 1 of Annex VI (BFT/*641):		
	France	100,00	
	Union	100,00	

- (4) Special condition: within this TAC, the following catch limits and allocations between Member States shall apply to catches of bluefin tuna between 8 kg/75 cm and 30 kg/115 cm by the vessels referred to in point 2 of Annex VI (BFT/*8302):

Spain	143,23
France	142,64
Italy	112,58
Cyprus	3,90
Malta	9,01
Union	411,36

- (5) Special condition: within this TAC, the following catch limits and allocations between Member States shall apply to catches of bluefin tuna between 8 kg/75 cm and 30 kg/115 cm by the vessels referred to in point 3 of Annex VI (BFT/*643):

Italy	112,58
Union	112,58

- (6) Special condition: within this TAC, the following catch limits and allocations between Member States shall apply to catches of bluefin tuna between 8 kg/75 cm and 30 kg/115 cm by the vessels referred to in point 3 of Annex VI for farming purposes (BFT/*8303F):

Croatia	1 014,53
Union	1 014,53

- (7) After transfer of 200 tonnes from Iceland to the Union.

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(5) Annex IM is replaced by the following:

‘ANNEX IM
NPFC CONVENTION AREA

Table 1			
Species:	Chub mackerel <i>Scomber japonicus</i>		Zone: NPFC Convention area
Union	6 000	(1)(3)(4)(5)(6)	Precautionary TAC
NPFC Contracting Parties, including Union	66 740	(1)(2)(3)(4)	Article 3 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply
TAC	Not relevant		
(1)	May only be fished from 1 June 2025 to 31 May 2026.		
(2)	Special condition: under this catch limit no more than the quantities given below may be taken by the following vessels:		
	Trawlers* (MAS/NPFC-TR)		Purse seiners* (MAS/NPFC-PS)
	7 940		58 800
*	The fisheries under those catch limits will be closed by NPFC Contracting Parties, including for the Union by the Commission, within two days from the issue date of the notice of the NPFC Executive Secretary that the utilisation of those catch limits has reached 95 %.		
(3)	Only one trawler flying the flag of a Member State shall be authorised to fish for chub mackerel at any time. That applies without prejudice to any allocation of future fishing opportunities by the Union in the NPFC Convention area, in particular to the Member State authorised to fish in the period from 1 June 2025 to 31 May 2026.		
(4)	Union fishing vessels over 10 000 gross tonnage shall not be authorised to fish for chub mackerel.		
(5)	Catches under this quota shall be reported separately (MAS/NPFC-EU).		
(6)	After carry-over of 1 740 tonnes from the preceding fishing season, i.e. 1 June 2024 to 31 May 2025, in accordance with NPFC rules.		