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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations
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Subject: Proposal for a COUNCIL REGULATION on fixing the fishing opportunities
for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks applicable in the
Mediterranean and Black Seas for 2025
• Consolidated version

Delegations will find attached the consolidated version of the above-mentioned proposal following the political agreement at the Agriculture and Fisheries Council on 10 December 2024. This text will be finalised by the lawyer-linguists for adoption in January 2025.

Any comments related to factual errors should be transmitted to the General Secretariat of the Council via the following e-mail address: life.fisheries@consilium.europa.eu **by 19 December 2024 cob.**

Please note that for technical reasons this is a clean version and changes are no longer marked.

Proposal for a

COUNCIL REGULATION

on fixing the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks applicable in the Mediterranean and Black Seas for 2025

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) The Council is to adopt measures on the fixing and allocation of fishing opportunities, including certain conditions functionally linked to those fishing opportunities, as appropriate. Under Article 16(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, fishing opportunities are to be fixed in accordance with the objectives of the common fisheries policy (CFP) set out in Article 2(2) of that Regulation. Under Article 16(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, fishing opportunities are to be allocated among the Member States so as to ensure the relative stability of fishing activities of each Member State for each fish stock or fishery.
- (2) The fishing opportunities should therefore be established in accordance with Article 3 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, on the basis of available scientific advice, taking into account biological and socio-economic aspects, while ensuring fair treatment between fishing sectors and in the light of opinions expressed during the consultation of stakeholders. Moreover, fishing opportunities are to be expressed as maximum allowable fishing effort for trawlers and longliners and fixed in accordance with the fishing effort regime laid down in Article 7 of Regulation (EU) 2019/1022, as well as maximum catch limits for blue and red shrimp (*Aristeus antennatus*) and giant red shrimp (*Aristaeomorpha foliacea*) in deep waters, in accordance with scientific advice and with Article 16(4) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013.

(3) Regulation (EU) 2019/1022 of the European Parliament and of the Council¹ established a multiannual plan for the fisheries exploiting demersal stocks in the western Mediterranean Sea. That plan sets out targets and measures for the long-term conservation and sustainable exploitation of stocks covered by it. This includes measures to reach and maintain the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) for target stocks, ensuring that exploitation of living marine biological resources restores and maintains populations of harvested species above levels which can produce the MSY.

(4) In accordance with Article 4(1) of Regulation (EU) 2019/1022, fishing opportunities for stocks listed in Article 1(2) of that Regulation (target stocks) are to be fixed to achieve fishing mortality at MSY on a progressive, incremental basis by 2020 where possible, and by 1 January 2025 at the latest.

(5) Fishing opportunities for stocks listed in Article 1(2) of that Regulation (target stocks) should be fixed in accordance with the range of fishing mortality values resulting in maximum sustainable yield (MSY) (ranges of F_{MSY}), or at a lower level, and in accordance with the safeguards provided for in that Regulation. The ranges of F_{MSY} are set out in the relevant STECF advice. Where no adequate scientific information is available, fishing opportunities for stocks referred to in Article 1(2) or Article 1(3) of that Regulation (by-catch stocks) should be fixed in accordance with the precautionary approach to fisheries management, in accordance with Article 4(6) of that Regulation.

(6) STECF advised² that, in order to attain the MSY targets in 2025 for all the western Mediterranean fish stocks, further significant reductions of fishing mortality are necessary for trawlers. In addition, STECF indicated³ differences in the status of the most vulnerable stock in each stock group and considered that the fishing mortality needs to be reduced differently between effort management units (EMU), namely EMU 1 (GSAs 1-2-5-6-7) and EMU 2 (8-9-10-11). STECF advised that for the most vulnerable stock (Hake in GSA 1, 2, 5, 6, 7 and Hake in GSA 8, 9, 10, 11) the fishing mortality reductions shall be 66% in EMU 1 and 38% in EMU 2 to reach F_{MSY} in 2025. Based on such advice, for 2025, the maximum allowable fishing effort of trawlers for each fishing effort group should therefore be reduced by 66% in EMU 1 and by 38% in EMU 2 taking into account the contributions of each Member State to the fishing mortality and deducted from the maximum allowable fishing effort established for 2024 by Council Regulation (EU) 2024/259.

(7) In 2024, STECF advised that longliners have an impact on hake spawners, in particular in GSAs 8-9-10-11. STECF also advised that the spawning stock biomass of hake in GSAs 1, 5, 6 and 7 and in GSAs 8, 9, 10 and 11 is still below the conservation limit reference point (B_{LIM}), within the meaning of Article 2(10) of Regulation (EU) 2019/1022 and that fishing mortality should be reduced by 66 % in GSAs 1, 2, 5, 6 and 7 and 38 % in GSAs 8, 9, 10 and 11, in order to reach F_{MSY} in 2025. In GSAs 1-2-5-6-7, it is therefore appropriate to maintain, for 2025, the maximum allowable fishing effort for longliners at the levels set for 2024 by Council Regulation (EU) 2024/259, on the basis of Article 7(5) of Regulation (EU) 2019/1022. In GSAs 8-9-10-11, it is appropriate to reduce, for 2025, the maximum allowable fishing effort for longliners by 13% in comparison with same levels set for 2024 by Regulation (EU) 2024/259, on the basis of Article 7(5) of Regulation (EU) 2019/1022.

¹ Regulation (EU) 2019/1022 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 establishing a multiannual plan for the fisheries exploiting demersal stocks in the western Mediterranean Sea and amending Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 (OJ L 172, 26.6.2019, p. 1), ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2019/1022/oj>

² STECF 24-10 page 17

³ STECF 24-10 page 17

(8) In 2024, STECF⁴ advised that the fishing mortality of blue and red shrimps in GSAs 1, 2, 5, 6 and 7 remains far from sustainable levels and further management measures are thus required in addition to fishing effort reduction. In particular, STECF advised that, in order to reach F_{msy} in 2025, catches should be reduced on average by 50 %, and specifically by 25 % in GSAs 1 and 2, by 64 % in GSA 5 and by 62 % in GSAs 6 and 7. In continuation with the measures adopted in 2022, 2023 and 2024 and in accordance with Article 16(4) of the Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, it is therefore appropriate to complement the fishing effort regime with maximum catch limits. The maximum catch limits for blue and red shrimp in GSAs 1, 2, 5, 6 and 7 should be reduced by 10 % compared to the fishing opportunities set for 2024 by Council Regulation (EU) 2024/259.

(9) In 2024, STECF⁵ advised that further management measures for blue and red shrimp in GSAs 8, 9, 10 and 11 are required in addition to fishing effort reduction and advised decreasing the total catch by 18 %. It is therefore appropriate to complement the fishing effort regime with maximum catch limits, in continuation with the measures adopted in 2022, 2023 and 2024 and in accordance with Article 16(4) of the Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013. The maximum catch limits for blue and red shrimp in GSAs 8, 9, 10 and 11 should be reduced by 6 % compared to the fishing opportunities set for 2024 by Council Regulation (EU) 2024/259.

(10) In 2024, STECF⁶ advised that further management measures for giant red shrimp in GSAs 8, 9, 10 and 11 are required in addition to fishing effort reduction and advised decreasing the total catch by 29 %. It is therefore appropriate to complement the fishing effort regime with maximum catch limits, in continuation with the measures adopted in 2022, 2023 and 2024 and in accordance with Article 16(4) of the Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013. The maximum catch limits of giant red shrimp in GSAs 8, 9, 10 and 11 should be reduced by 6 % compared to the fishing opportunities set for 2024 by Council Regulation (EU) 2024/259.

(10a) In accordance with Article 6 of Regulation (EU) 2019/1022, where scientific advice⁷ shows that the spawning stock biomass of any of the stocks referred to in Article 1(2) of that Regulation is below the precautionary biomass reference point (B_{pa}), or is below the limit biomass reference point (B_{lim}), remedial measures are to be taken to ensure the rapid return of the stocks to levels above those capable of producing MSY.

(11) In order to promote the use of selective gears and to establish efficient closure areas to protect juveniles and spawners, Council Regulation (EU) 2022/110 established a compensation mechanism in relation to the effort regime for trawlers. As STECF⁸ continues to recommend in 2025 the further improvement of selectivity of fishing gear and of efficient closure areas to protect juvenile fish and spawners and these measures have a demonstrated impact on the fishing effort, Members States should be able to allocate additional fishing days to a vessel if the vessel complies with at least one of such measures. The Member State concerned shall not allocate additional fishing days that would result in exceeding the level of fishing effort set for the relevant fishing effort group by Council Regulation (EU) 2024/259.

⁴ STECF 24-10 page 18

⁵ STECF 24-10 page 18

⁶ STECF 24-10 page 19

⁷ STECF 24-10 page 39

⁸ STECF 24-12 and Annex II, STECF 21-01, STECF 24-10, STECF PLEN 24-02, STECF PLEN 22-02, STECF 22-01

(11a) At its 47th annual session in 2024, the GFCM adopted Recommendation GFCM/47/2024/1 which establishes long-term management measures for European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*) as foreseen by Recommendation GFCM/46/2023/16 on a long-term management plan for European eel (GFCM geographical subareas 1-27). That Recommendation maintains, for 2025, the six-month closure period for commercial fisheries and a ban on recreational fishing. Furthermore, that Recommendation limits the commercial fishing activities for glass eels to a period of two months and under certain conditions. Those measures are to apply to all marine waters of the Mediterranean Sea, to freshwaters and to brackish waters such as estuaries, coastal lagoons and transitional waters, in accordance with that Recommendation. Those measures should be implemented in Union law.

(11b) At its 47th annual meeting in 2024, the GFCM adopted Recommendation GFCM/47/2024/2 which establishes long-term measures for the sustainable exploitation of red coral as foreseen by Recommendation GFCM/43/2019/4 on a management plan for the sustainable exploitation of red coral (*Corallium rubrum*) in the Mediterranean Sea (GFCM geographical subareas 1 to 27). That recommendation maintains for 2025 the freezing of fishing effort expressed as a maximum number of fishing authorisations and harvest limits for red coral. Those measures should be implemented in Union law.

(12) At its 46th annual meeting in 2023, the GFCM adopted Recommendation GFCM/46/2023/14 on a multiannual management plan for the sustainable exploitation of common dolphinfish (*Coryphaena hippurus*) in the Mediterranean Sea (geographical subareas 1 to 27). That Recommendation introduced, consistent with the precautionary approach and for the transitional period of 2024 to 2026, a fleet capacity ceiling, a freeze of fish aggregating devices (FADs) capacity per vessel and a catch limit. For recreational fisheries, Recommendation GFCM/46/2023/14 further provided that a daily bag limit is to be observed. Those measures were implemented in Union law for 2024 by Council Regulation (EU) 2024/259⁹ and those measures should continue to be implemented in Union law for 2026. Those measures are without prejudice to the management measures that will be proposed by the Scientific Advisory Committee within GFCM for the long-term management plan for the period 2027–2031.

(13) At its 44th annual meeting in 2021, the GFCM adopted Recommendation GFCM/44/2021/20 on a multiannual management plan for the sustainable exploitation of small pelagic stocks in the Adriatic Sea (GFCM geographical subareas 17 and 18), which introduced from 2022 to 2029 a maximum level of catches and a related fleet capacity ceiling for purse seiners and pelagic trawlers targeting small pelagics. Those measures that relate to 2025 should be implemented in Union law.

(14) At its 47th annual session in 2024, the GFCM adopted Recommendation GFCM/47/2024/4 on a long-term fishing regime and the establishment of catch limits in 2025 for small pelagic stocks in the Adriatic Sea (GFCM geographical subareas 17 and 18), stemming from Recommendation GFCM/44/2021/20. That recommendation established for 2025 the separate level of catches for anchovy and sardines, stemming from the implementation of the new harvest control rules. The distribution between the Member States is based on the historical catches of each Member State. Those measures should be implemented in Union law.

⁹ Council Regulation (EU) 2024/259 of 10 January 2024 fixing for 2024 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks applicable in the Mediterranean and Black Seas (OJ L, 2024/259, 11.1.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/259/oj>).

(15) At its 43rd annual meeting in 2019, the GFCM adopted Recommendation GFCM/43/2019/5 on a multiannual management plan for sustainable demersal fisheries in the Adriatic Sea (GFCM geographical subareas 17 and 18), which introduced a fishing effort regime and a fleet capacity ceiling for certain demersal stocks. Those measures that relate to 2025 should be implemented in Union law.

(16) At its 47th annual session in 2024, the GFCM adopted Recommendation GFCM/47/2024/5 on the implementation of a fishing effort regime for key demersal stocks in the Adriatic Sea (GFCM geographical subareas 17 and 18) in 2025, stemming from Recommendation GFCM/43/2019/5. That recommendation provides for a global reduction of the fishing effort regime for otter-trawlers by 5,2 % and a roll-over of the 2024 effort levels for beam-trawlers. In order to implement those measures into Union law, 5,2% should therefore be deducted from the maximum allowable fishing effort for otter-trawlers set for 2024 by Council Regulation (EU) 2024/259 and the maximum allowable fishing effort for beam-trawlers should be kept at 2024 levels. Those measures should be implemented in Union law.

(17) Taking into account the particularities of the Slovenian fleet and its marginal impact on the stocks of small pelagic and demersal stocks, and in accordance with paragraph 33 of Recommendation GFCM/44/2021/20 and paragraph 13 of Recommendation GFCM/43/2019/5, it is appropriate to preserve existing fishing patterns and to ensure access by the Slovenian fleet to a minimum quantity of small pelagic species and a minimum effort allocation for demersal stocks.

(18) At its 45th annual meeting in 2022, the GFCM adopted Recommendation GFCM/45/2022/4 on a multiannual management plan for the sustainable exploitation of demersal stocks in the Strait of Sicily (geographical subareas 12 to 16), repealing Recommendations GFCM/44/2021/12 and GFCM/42/2018/5. Recommendation GFCM/45/2022/4 introduced an effort regime for hake (*Merluccius merluccius*) and catch limits for deep-water rose shrimps (*Parapenaeus longirostris*), as well as a fishing capacity freeze. For 2025, that Recommendation provides for a freeze in the fishing effort at the level of 2024 and a reduction of 3 % of the catch limits for deep-water rose shrimps. In order to implement those measures in Union law, 3 % should therefore be deducted from the maximum catch limits for deep-water rose shrimp fixed by Council Regulation (EU) 2024/259.

(19) At its 45th annual meeting in 2022, the GFCM adopted Recommendation GFCM/45/2022/5 on a multiannual management plan for the sustainable exploitation of giant red shrimp and blue and red shrimp stocks in the Strait of Sicily (geographical subareas 12 to 16), repealing Recommendations GFCM/44/2021/7 and GFCM/43/2019/6. Recommendation GFCM/45/2022/5 introduced a catch limit and a fishing capacity freeze. For 2025, that Recommendation provides for a reduction of 3 % of the catch limits for giant red shrimp and blue and red shrimp. In order to implement those measures in Union law, 3 % should therefore be deducted from the maximum catch limits for giant red shrimp and blue and red shrimp fixed by Regulation (EU) 2024/259.

(20) At its 45th annual meeting in 2022, the GFCM adopted Recommendation GFCM/45/2022/6 on a multiannual management plan for the sustainable exploitation of giant red shrimp and blue and red shrimp stocks in the Ionian Sea (geographical subareas 19 to 21), repealing Recommendations GFCM/44/2021/8 and GFCM/42/2018/4. Recommendation GFCM/45/2022/6 introduced a catch limit and a fishing capacity freeze. For 2025, that Recommendation provides for a reduction of 3 % of the catch limits for giant red shrimp and

blue and red shrimp. In order to implement those measures in Union law, 3 % should therefore be deducted from the maximum catch limits for giant red shrimp and blue and red shrimp fixed by Regulation (EU) 2024/259.

- (21) At its 45th annual meeting in 2022, the GFCM adopted Recommendation GFCM/45/2022/7 on a multiannual management plan for the sustainable exploitation of giant red shrimp and blue and red shrimp stocks in the Levant Sea (geographical subareas 24 to 27), repealing Recommendations GFCM/44/2021/8 and GFCM/42/2018/4. Recommendation GFCM/45/2022/7 introduced a catch limit and a fishing capacity freeze. For 2025, that Recommendation provides for a reduction of 3 % of the catch limits for giant red shrimp and blue and red shrimp. In order to implement those measures in Union law, 3 % should therefore be deducted from the maximum catch limits for giant red shrimp and blue and red shrimp fixed by Regulation (EU) 2024/259.
- (22) At its 45th annual meeting in 2022, the GFCM adopted Recommendation GFCM/45/2022/3 on a multiannual management plan for the sustainable exploitation of blackspot seabream (*Pagellus bogaraveo*) in the Alboran Sea (geographical subareas 1 to 3), repealing Recommendations GFCM/44/2021/4, GFCM/43/2019/2 and GFCM/41/2017/2. Those measures should be implemented in Union law.
- (23) At its 47th annual session in 2024, the GFCM adopted Recommendation GFCM/47/2024/3 on the adoption of additional remedial measures for blackspot seabream in the Alboran Sea (GFCM geographical subareas 1–3), amending Recommendation GFCM/45/2022/3. This recommendation introduced a reduction of 30% of the catch limits for 2025. The 30% should therefore be deducted from the maximum level of catches set for 2024 by Council Regulation (EU) 2024/259. Those measures should be implemented in Union law.
- (24) At its 43rd annual meeting in 2019, the GFCM adopted Recommendation GFCM/43/2019/3 amending Recommendation GFCM/41/2017/4 on a multiannual management plan for turbot (*Scophthalmus maximus*) fisheries in the Black Sea (GFCM geographical subarea 29). Recommendation GFCM/43/2019/3 introduced an updated regional total allowable catch (TAC) and a quota allocation scheme for turbot, as well as further conservation measures, in particular a two-month closure period and a limitation of fishing days to 180 days per year. In accordance with Recommendation GFCM/43/2019/3, those further conservation measures are functionally linked to the fishing opportunities, as, without those measures in place, the TAC level for turbot would have to be reduced to ensure its recovery. Those measures should be implemented in Union law.
- (25) At its 47th annual meeting in 2024, the GFCM adopted Recommendation GFCM/47/2024/8 on a multiannual management plan for turbot fisheries in the Black Sea (GFCM geographical subarea 29), amending Recommendations GFCM/43/2019/3 and GFCM/41/2017/4. This recommendation established the TAC for turbot for the period 2025–2028. Those measures should be implemented in Union law.
- (26) At its 47th annual meeting in 2024, the GFCM approved a carry-over of the unused Union quota for turbot in 2023, in view of the exceptional situation created by the regional context in the Black Sea. That measure should be implemented in Union law. The distribution of the fishing opportunities arising from that under-utilisation should be carried out on the basis of the respective contribution of each Member State towards the under-utilisation, without modifying the distribution key established by Council Regulation (EU) 2024/259 concerning the annual allocation of TACs.

(27) Based on the scientific advice provided by the GFCM Working Group for the Black Sea, the current level of fishing mortality of sprat (*Sprattus sprattus*) should be maintained to ensure the sustainability of sprat stocks in the Black Sea. It is therefore appropriate to continue setting an autonomous quota for this stock.

(28) The use of fishing opportunities available to Union fishing vessels set out in this Regulation is subject to Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009¹⁰, and in particular to Articles 33 and 34 thereof concerning the recording of catches and fishing effort and the notification of data on the exhaustion of fishing opportunities. It is therefore necessary to specify the codes to be used by Member States when sending the Commission data on landings of stocks subject to this Regulation.

(29) Articles 3 and 4 of Council Regulation (EC) No 847/96¹¹ provides for additional conditions for the year-to-year management for TACs and quotas for both precautionary and analytical stocks. Under Article 2 of that Regulation, when establishing TACs, the Council is to decide which stocks Articles 3 and 4 of that Regulation are not to apply, in particular on the basis of the biological status of stocks. Moreover, Article 15(9) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 provides for further year-to-year flexibility for all stocks that are subject to the landing obligation. In order to avoid excessive flexibility that would undermine the achievement of the objectives of the CFP, and cause the biological status of stocks to deteriorate, year-to-year flexibility for quotas pursuant to Articles 3 and 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 and Article 15(9) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 should not apply cumulatively. Finally, year-to-year flexibility under Article 15(9) of the Basic Regulation should, where relevant, be excluded on the basis of the biological status of stocks.

(30) In order to avoid the interruption of fishing activities and to ensure the livelihood of Union fishers, this Regulation should apply from 1 January 2025. For reasons of urgency, this Regulation should enter into force on the day following that of its publication,

HAS ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

TITLE I

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1

Scope

1. This Regulation applies to Union fishing vessels operating in the Mediterranean and Black Seas and exploiting the following fish stocks:
 - (a) European eel (*Anguilla anguilla*), red coral (*Corallium rubrum*) and common dolphinfish (*Coryphaena hippurus*) in the Mediterranean Sea;

¹⁰ Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 of 20 November 2009 establishing a Community control system for ensuring compliance with the rules of the common fisheries policy, amending Regulations (EC) No 847/96, (EC) No 2371/2002, (EC) No 811/2004, (EC) No 768/2005, (EC) No 2115/2005, (EC) No 2166/2005, (EC) No 388/2006, (EC) No 509/2007, (EC) No 676/2007, (EC) No 1098/2007, (EC) No 1300/2008, (EC) No 1342/2008 and repealing Regulations (EEC) No 2847/93, (EC) No 1627/94 and (EC) No 1966/2006 (OJ L 343, 22.12.2009, p. 1).

¹¹ Council Regulation (EC) No 847/96 of 6 May 1996 introducing additional conditions for year-to-year management of TACs and quotas (OJ L 115, 9.5.1996, p. 3).

- (b) blue and red shrimp (*Aristeus antennatus*), deep-water rose shrimp (*Parapenaeus longirostris*), giant red shrimp (*Aristaeomorpha foliacea*), European hake (*Merluccius merluccius*), Norway lobster (*Nephrops norvegicus*) and red mullet (*Mullus barbatus*) in the western Mediterranean Sea;
- (c) anchovy (*Engraulis encrasicolus*) and sardine (*Sardina pilchardus*) in the Adriatic Sea;
- (d) European hake (*Merluccius merluccius*), Norway lobster (*Nephrops norvegicus*), common sole (*Solea solea*), deep-water rose shrimp (*Parapenaeus longirostris*) and red mullet (*Mullus barbatus*) in the Adriatic Sea;
- (e) European hake (*Merluccius merluccius*) and deep-water rose shrimp (*Parapenaeus longirostris*) in the Strait of Sicily;
- (f) giant red shrimp (*Aristaeomorpha foliacea*) and blue and red shrimp (*Aristeus antennatus*) in the Strait of Sicily, in the Ionian Sea and in the Levant Sea;
- (g) blackspot seabream (*Pagellus bogaraveo*) in the Alboran Sea;
- (h) sprat (*Sprattus sprattus*) and turbot (*Scophthalmus maximus*) in the Black Sea.

2. This Regulation also applies to other Union fishing activities, including recreational fisheries, where they are expressly referred to in the relevant provisions.

Article 2 *Definitions*

For the purposes of this Regulation, the definitions laid down in Article 4(1) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 apply. In addition, the following definitions apply:

- (i) ‘international waters’ means waters falling outside the sovereignty or jurisdiction of any State;
- (j) ‘recreational fisheries’ means non-commercial fishing activities exploiting marine living aquatic resources for recreation, tourism or sport;
- (k) ‘total allowable catch’ (TAC) means:
 - (a) in fisheries subject to the exemption of the landing obligation referred to in Article 15(4) to (7) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, the quantity of fish that can be landed from each stock each year;
 - (b) in all other fisheries, the quantity of fish that can be caught from each stock over the period of a year;
- (l) ‘quota’ means a proportion of the TAC allocated to the Union or a Member State;
- (m) ‘Union autonomous quota’ means a catch limit autonomously allocated to Union fishing vessels in the absence of an agreed TAC;
- (n) ‘analytical quota’ means a Union autonomous quota for which an analytical assessment is available;

- (o) ‘analytical assessment’ means a quantitative evaluation of trends in a given stock, based on data about the stock’s biology and exploitation, which scientific review has indicated to be of sufficient quality to provide scientific advice on options for future catches;
- (p) ‘fish aggregating device’ (FAD) means any anchored equipment floating on the sea surface with the objective of attracting fish.

Article 3
Fishing zones

For the purposes of this Regulation, the following fishing zone definitions apply:

- (a) ‘GFCM geographical subareas’ mean the areas specified in Annex I to Regulation (EU) 2023/2124 of the European Parliament and of the Council¹²;
- (b) ‘Mediterranean Sea’ means the waters in GFCM geographical subareas 1 to 27 specified in Annex I to Regulation (EU) 2023/2124;
- (c) ‘western Mediterranean Sea’ means the waters in GFCM geographical subareas 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 specified in Annex I to Regulation (EU) 2023/2124;
- (d) ‘Adriatic Sea’ means the waters in GFCM geographical subareas 17 and 18 specified in Annex I to Regulation (EU) 2023/2124;
- (e) ‘Strait of Sicily’ means the waters in GFCM geographical subareas 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 specified in Annex I to Regulation (EU) 2023/2124;
- (f) ‘Ionian Sea’ means the waters in GFCM geographical subareas 19, 20 and 21 specified in Annex I to Regulation (EU) 2023/2124;
- (g) ‘Levant Sea’ means the waters in GFCM geographical subareas 24, 25, 26 and 27 specified in Annex I to Regulation (EU) 2023/2124;
- (h) ‘Alboran Sea’ means the waters in GFCM geographical subareas 1, 2 and 3 specified in Annex I to Regulation (EU) 2023/2124;
- (i) ‘Black Sea’ means the waters in GFCM geographical subarea 29 specified in Annex I to Regulation (EU) 2023/2124.

TITLE II
FISHING OPPORTUNITIES FOR UNION FISHING VESSELS

CHAPTER I
Mediterranean Sea

¹² Regulation (EU) 2023/2124 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 October 2023 on certain provisions for fishing in the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM) Agreement area (recast) (OJ L, 2023/2124, 12.10.2023, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/2124/oj>).

Article 4
European eel

1. This Article applies to the GFCM geographical subareas 1 to 27, to brackish waters and to freshwaters. Brackish waters include estuaries, coastal lagoons and transitional waters.
2. It shall be prohibited to engage in commercial fishing activities for European eel, either as a targeted species or as incidental by-catch, for European eel of an overall length of more than 12 cm for a period of at least six months. To that effect, each Member State concerned shall determine one or more closure periods subject to the following:
 - a. where appropriate, the closure period or periods may differ within one Member State from one fishing area to another in order to take account of the geographical and temporal migration pattern of eel at its different life stages;
 - b. the closure period or periods shall last either at least six consecutive months, or a total of six months in accordance with the conditions set out in paragraph 3; and
 - c. the closure period or periods shall be consistent with the conservation objectives set out in Council Regulation (EC) No 1100/2007, with national management plans in place and with the temporal migration patterns of European eel at the respective life stage in the Member State concerned.
3. The closure period shall be from 1 January to 31 March 2025, and an additional closure period of three months shall be established by each Member State concerned to take place between 1 April and 30 November 2025.
4. Commercial fishing activities for European eel of an overall length of less than 12 cm shall be authorized annually for a period of two months, and the fishery should be monitored by an agreed scientific institution which would oversee data collection and analysis.
5. The maximum number of fishing authorizations and the maximum number of passive gears authorized to target European eel of an overall length of less than 12 cm for commercial purposes shall not exceed the levels set out in Annex 0.
6. Recreational fisheries of European eel at all life stages shall be prohibited.
7. Each Member State concerned shall inform the Commission of:
 - a. the closure period or closure periods that it has determined in accordance with paragraphs 2 and 3 by 1 March 2025;
 - b. the national measures relating to the closure period or closure periods that it has determined in accordance with paragraphs 2 and 3, within two weeks after their adoption; and
 - c. the period authorised to fish for European eel of an overall length of less than 12 cm in accordance with paragraph 4, by 1 March 2025.

Article 5
Red coral

1. This Article applies to all activities by Union fishing vessels and other Union fishing activities harvesting red coral (*Corallium rubrum*), in the Mediterranean Sea.
2. For targeted fisheries, the maximum number of fishing authorisations and the maximum quantities of red coral stocks harvested by Union fishing vessels and Union harvesting activities shall not exceed the levels set out in Annex I.

Article 6
Common dolphinfish

1. This Article applies to all commercial pelagic fishing activities by Union fishing vessels targeting common dolphinfish (*Coryphaena hippurus*) by using FADs in the Mediterranean Sea. It also applies to recreational fisheries of common dolphinfish in the Mediterranean Sea.
2. The maximum fleet capacity, expressed in number of vessels, kW and gross tonnage (GT), of Union fishing vessels authorised to fish for common dolphinfish shall be limited as set out in Annex II, point (a).
3. The maximum number of FADs per vessel authorised to fish for common dolphinfish shall be limited as set out in Annex II, point (b).
4. The maximum level of catches of common dolphinfish shall not exceed the levels set out in Annex II, point (c).
5. For recreational fisheries, the maximum number of catches shall be limited to 10 kg or five fish of any size per person per day.

CHAPTER II
Western Mediterranean Sea

Article 7
Demersal stocks

1. This Article applies to all fishing activities by Union fishing vessels and other Union fishing activities catching demersal stocks referred to in Article 1(2) of Regulation (EU) 2019/1022 in the western Mediterranean Sea.
2. The maximum allowable fishing effort for trawlers and longliners shall be limited as set out in Annex III, point 1. Member States shall manage the maximum allowable fishing effort in accordance with Article 9 of Regulation (EU) 2019/1022 and Articles 26 to 34 of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009.
3. The maximum catch limits for deep-water shrimps in the Alboran Sea, Balearic Islands, Northern Spain and Gulf of Lion shall be limited as set out in Annex III, point 2(a).
4. The maximum catch limits for deep-waters shrimps in Corsica Island, Ligurian Sea, Tyrrhenian Sea and Sardinia Island shall be limited as set out in Annex III, point 2(b).
5. The allocation of fishing opportunities among Member States as set out in Annex III shall be without prejudice to:
 - (a) exchanges made pursuant to Article 16(8) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013;
 - (b) deductions and reallocations made pursuant to Article 37 of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009;

- (c) additional landings allowed under Article 3 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 or under Article 15(9) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013;
- (d) quantities withheld in accordance with Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 or transferred under Article 15(9) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013;
- (e) deductions made pursuant to Articles 105, 106 and 107 of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009.

Article 8
Compensation mechanism

1. For the fleet segment concerned and the list of eligible vessels concerned, a Member State may grant in 2025 to vessels flying its flag, an additional allocation of fishing days calculated in accordance with paragraph 4 and 5, provided that the vessel receiving the additional allocation fulfils one or more of the following conditions set at Member State level:
 - a. If the vessel removes the otter-twin trawl gears (OTT), a Member State may increase the allocation of fishing days by 24%. If the vessel is implementing this measure before 1 May 2025, the allocation of fishing days may be increased by 35%. If the total of vessels represents more than 40% of the fleet of the Member State concerned, the Member State may increase the allocation of fishing days by 40%;
 - b. If the vessel uses a trawl net with 45 mm square mesh in codend, a Member State may increase the allocation of fishing days by 9.3%. If the vessel is implementing this measure before 1 May 2025, the allocation of fishing days may be increased by 18.6%. If the total of vessels represents more than 40% of the fleet of the Member State concerned, the Member State may increase the allocation of fishing days by 25%. If the measure applies to all vessels of the Member State concerned, the Member State may increase the allocation of the fishing days by 30%;
 - c. If the vessel uses a trawl net with 50 mm square mesh in codend, a Member State may increase the allocation of fishing days by 15.4%. If the vessel is implementing this measure before 1 May 2025, the allocation of fishing days may be increased by 30.8%. If the total of vessels represents more than 40% of the fleet of the Member State concerned, the Member State may increase the allocation of fishing days by 40%. If the measure applies to all vessels of the Member State concerned, the Member State may increase the allocation of the fishing days by 50%;
 - d. If the vessel is concerned by a closure period prohibiting fishing activities for trawlers between depths 100 m to 500m for at least six continuous weeks between May and September, a Member State may increase the allocation of fishing days by 10%;
 - d.bis. If the vessel is concerned by a closure period prohibiting fishing activity for trawlers in GSAs 8-9-10-11 for at least four continuous weeks between May and October, a Member State may increase the allocation of fishing days by 15%;
 - d.ter. If the vessel is concerned by a closure period prohibiting fishing activity for trawlers in GSAs 1-2-5-6-7 for at least four continuous weeks between May and October, a Member State may increase the allocation of fishing days by 15%;
 - e. If the vessel is concerned by a national closure area covering at least 5% of their fishing grounds between depths 100m and 500m, a Member State may increase the allocation of fishing days by 4%;

- f. If the vessel is concerned by a temporary closure area allowing for the reduction of at least 20% catches of spawners of hake, a Member State may increase the allocation of fishing days by 13%.
- g. If the vessel is concerned by a temporary closure area allowing for the reduction of at least 25% catches of juveniles of all demersal species or by at least 20% catches of spawners of all demersal species, a Member State may increase the allocation of fishing days by 3% ;
- h. If the vessel is concerned by a permanent closure for fishing activity with trawlers at a depth below 800m, a Member State may increase the allocation of fishing days by 3%;
- i. If the vessel uses a trawl with flying, mid-waters doors, low-contact otter boards or other doors which reduce the contact of the doors and the gear with the seabed, to preserve the essential fish habitats of the demersal species a Member State may increase the allocation of fishing days by 3%;
- j. If the vessel uses a regulated highly selective gear, the technical specifications of which results in, according to a study by STECF, a reduction of at least 25% of catches of juveniles of all demersal species or at least 20% of spawners of all demersal species compared to 2020, such as a sorting grid with 20mm spacing, a Member State may increase the allocation of fishing days by 3%;

2. The Member State concerned shall submit to the Commission, when notifying additional allocation of fishing days, the list of fishing vessels concerned by each of the selected criteria for compensation, as well as the related number of additional fishing days.

3. By 15 October at the latest, the Member State concerned shall submit to the Commission its notification of additional allocation of fishing days and provide to the Commission, as soon as possible, the relevant information related to the implementation of the conditions.

4. The additional allocation of fishing days shall be calculated from the maximum effort allowed by Council Regulation (EU) 2024/259 proportionally to the relevant number of eligible vessels concerned by the conditions listed in paragraph 1.

5. The Member State concerned shall not allocate additional fishing days that would result in exceeding the level of fishing effort set for the relevant fishing effort group by Council Regulation (EU) 2024/259.

6. The Member State concerned shall also separately notify every month to the Commission the effort deployed to be counted against the additional allocation referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2 by using the specific reporting codes for that allocation.

Article 8a

Remedial measures for hake in GSAs 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, Norway lobster in GSA 6 and blue and red shrimp in GSAs 5, 6, and 7

1. This Article applies to fishing activities by Union vessels catching hake in GSAs 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, Norway lobster in GSA 6, and blue and red shrimp in GSAs 5, 6, and 7.
2. The maximum catch limit of hake for Union fishing vessels using gillnets and trammel nets (GNS, GTR, GND) in Union waters of the Western Mediterranean Sea is set out in Annex III.
3. Member States shall adopt a minimum conservation reference size for blue and red shrimp (*Aristeus antennatus*) and for giant red shrimp (*Aristaeomorpha foliacea*) of at least 25 mm CL.

4. Member States shall adopt a minimum conservation reference size for Norway lobster (*Nephrops norvegicus*) of at least 25 mm CL.
5. This Article shall not apply to fishing operations conducted for the exclusive purpose of scientific investigations, provided that those investigations are carried out in compliance with Article 25 of Regulation (EU) 2019/1241.

Article 8b
Remedial measures for hake in GSAs 8-9-10-11

1. This Article applies to fishing activities by Union vessels catching hake in GSAs 8-9-10-11.
2. The maximum catch limit of hake for Union fishing vessels using gillnets and trammel nets (GNS, GTR, GND) in Union waters of the Western Mediterranean Sea is set out in Annex III.
3. This Article shall not apply to fishing operations conducted for the exclusive purpose of scientific investigations, provided that those investigations are carried out in compliance with Article 25 of Regulation (EU) 2019/1241.

Article 9
Data recording and transmission

1. Member States shall record and transmit the fishing effort data to the Commission in accordance with Articles 33 and 34 of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 and Articles 146c, 146d and 146e of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 404/2011.¹³
2. When Member States submit to the Commission data relating to fishing effort pursuant to Articles 33 and 34 of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009, they shall use the fishing effort group codes set out in Annex III.

CHAPTER III

Adriatic Sea

Article 10
Small pelagic stocks

1. This Article applies to all fishing activities by Union fishing vessels and other Union fishing activities catching sardine (*Sardina pilchardus*) and anchovy (*Engraulis encrasicolus*) in the Adriatic Sea.
2. The maximum level of catches of sardine and anchovy shall not exceed the levels set out in Annex IV, point 1(a).
3. The maximum fleet capacity, expressed in kW, GT and number, of Union fishing vessels authorised to fish small pelagic stocks shall be limited as set out in Annex IV, point 1(b).

¹³ Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 404/2011 of 8 April 2011 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 establishing a Community control system for ensuring compliance with the rules of the Common Fisheries Policy (OJ L 112 30.4.2011, p. 1), ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2011/404/oj.

4. Articles 3 and 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply where a Member State uses the year-to-year flexibility provided for in Article 15(9) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013.

Article 11
Demersal stocks

1. This Article applies to all fishing activities by Union fishing vessels and other Union fishing activities catching European hake (*Merluccius merluccius*), Norway lobster (*Nephrops norvegicus*), common sole (*Solea solea*), deep-water rose shrimp (*Parapenaeus longirostris*) and red mullet (*Mullus barbatus*) in the Adriatic Sea.
2. The maximum allowable fishing effort for those demersal stocks and the maximum fleet capacity within the scope of this Article shall be limited as set out in Annex IV, point 2(a) and (b).
3. Member States shall manage the maximum allowable effort in accordance with Articles 26 to 35 of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009.

Article 12
Data transmission

When Member States submit to the Commission data relating to landings and fishing effort pursuant to Articles 33 and 34 of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009, they shall use the stock codes and fishing effort group codes set out in Annex IV.

CHAPTER IV
Strait of Sicily

Article 13
European hake and deep-water rose shrimp

1. This Article applies to all activities by Union fishing vessels and other Union fishing activities catching European hake (*Merluccius merluccius*) and deep-water rose shrimp (*Parapenaeus longirostris*) in the Strait of Sicily.
2. The maximum fleet capacity, expressed in number of vessels, kW and GT, of bottom trawl vessels authorised to fish for demersal stocks within the scope of this Article shall be limited as set out in Annex V, point 1(a).
3. The maximum allowable fishing effort for European hake (in number of fishing days), for bottom otter-trawl vessels (OTB) targeting European hake shall be limited as set out in Annex V, point 1(b).
4. The maximum level of catches of deep-water rose shrimp shall not exceed the levels set out in Annex V, point 1(c).
5. Member States shall manage the maximum allowable fishing effort in accordance with Articles 26 to 35 of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009.

Article 14
Deep-water shrimps

1. This Article applies to all fishing activities by Union fishing vessels and other Union fishing activities catching giant red shrimp (*Aristaeomorpha foliacea*) and blue and red shrimp (*Aristeus antennatus*) in the Strait of Sicily.
2. The maximum fleet capacity, expressed in number of vessels, kW and GT, of bottom trawl vessels authorised to fish the demersal stocks within the scope of this Article shall be limited as set out in Annex V, point 2(a).
3. The maximum level of catches of deep-water shrimps shall not exceed the levels set out in Annex V, point 2(b) and (c).

Article 15
Data transmission

When Member States submit to the Commission data relating to landings of quantities of stocks caught pursuant to Articles 33 and 34 of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009, they shall use the stock codes set out in Annex V.

CHAPTER V
Ionian Sea and Levant Sea

Article 16
Deep-water shrimps

1. This Article applies to all fishing activities by Union fishing vessels and other Union fishing activities catching giant red shrimp (*Aristaeomorpha foliacea*) and blue and red shrimp (*Aristeus antennatus*) in the Ionian Sea and in the Levant Sea.
2. The maximum fleet capacity, expressed in number of vessels, kW and GT, of bottom trawl vessels authorised to fish for deep water shrimp stock referred to in this Article shall be limited as set out in Annex VI, point 1(a) and 2(a).
3. The maximum level of catches of deep-water shrimps referred to in this Article shall not exceed the levels set out in Annex VI, point 1(b) and (c) and point 2(b) and (c).

CHAPTER VI
Alboran Sea

Article 17
Blackspot seabream

1. This Article applies to all commercial and recreational fishing activities catching blackspot seabream (*Pagellus bogaraveo*) with longlines and handlines by Union fishing vessels in the Alboran Sea.

2. The maximum level of catches shall not exceed the levels set out in Annex VII, point (a).
3. The maximum number of longliners and handlines authorised to fish for blackspot seabream shall be limited as set out in Annex VII, point (b).
- 3a. A temporal closure shall be established with a view to protecting the key stock during spawning for periods of no less than 60 continuous days. Such closure shall cover the key areas of distribution of blackspot seabream in the Alboran Sea (GSA 1-3) for at least two months and take place from January to March 2025.
4. For recreational fishing activities, the maximum number of catches shall be limited to one fish per fisher per day. The minimum conservation reference size of 40 cm for blackspot seabream shall apply to recreational fisheries in the Alboran Sea. Recreational fishing for that species shall be prohibited during the closure period of commercial fisheries set at national level.

CHAPTER VII

Black Sea

Article 18

Sprat

1. This Article applies to all activities by Union fishing vessels and other Union fishing activities catching sprat (*Sprattus sprattus*) in the Black Sea.
2. The Union autonomous quota for sprat shall not exceed the levels set out in Annex VIII.
3. Articles 3 and 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply where a Member State uses the year-to-year flexibility provided for in Article 15(9) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013.

Article 19

Turbot

1. This Article applies to all activities by Union fishing vessels and other Union fishing activities catching turbot (*Scophthalmus maximus*) in the Black Sea.
2. The TAC for turbot applicable in Union waters in the Black Sea, the allocation of such TAC among Member States and the conditions functionally linked thereto, where appropriate, are set out in Annex VIII.
3. Articles 3 and 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply where a Member State uses the year-to-year flexibility provided for in Article 15(9) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013.

Article 20

Management of fishing effort for turbot

Union fishing vessels authorised to fish for turbot within the scope of Article 19, irrespective of the vessels' length overall, shall not exceed 180 fishing days per year.

Article 21
Closure period for turbot

It shall be prohibited for Union fishing vessels to carry out any fishing activity, including transhipment, retaining on board, landing and first sale of turbot in Union waters in the Black Sea from 15 April to 15 June.

Article 22
Special provisions on allocations of fishing opportunities in the Black Sea

The allocation of fishing opportunities among Member States as set out in Annex VIII shall be without prejudice to:

- (a) exchanges made pursuant to Article 16(8) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013;
- (b) deductions and reallocations made pursuant to Article 37 of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009;
- (c) deductions made pursuant to Articles 105 and 107 of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009.

Article 23
Data transmission

When Member States submit to the Commission data relating to landings of quantities of stocks of sprat and turbot caught in Union waters in the Black Sea pursuant to Articles 33 and 34 of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009, they shall use the stock codes set out in Annex VIII of this Regulation.

TITLE III
FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 24
Entry into force and application

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

It shall apply from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025.

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

Done at Brussels,

For the Council
The President

