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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Commission proposal for a Council Regulation 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 • Commission services non-paper

Delegations will find attached the above-mentioned non-paper, as received from the European Commission services.

COMMISSION SERVICES NON-PAPER

27 NOVEMBER 2024

This document serves as a basis for discussion at the Working Party on Fisheries Policy.
It cannot in any circumstances be regarded as the official position of the Commission.
It is intended solely for those to whom it is addressed.

Updates to Commission proposal for a Council Regulation 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 [COM(2024) 506 final]

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1. AMENDMENTS IN RELATION TO ICCAT

EXPLANATORY NOTE

At its 2024 annual meeting, the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) adopted measures for stocks in the ICCAT Convention area, including the measures set out in the recitals below. It is proposed to implement those measures in EU law.

AMENDMENTS TO THE RECITALS

Recital (28) is replaced by the following:

“

(28) At its 2024 annual meeting, the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) maintained current measures for certain stocks in the ICCAT Convention area. In addition, the ICCAT increased the TACs for 2025 compared to 2024 for bigeye tuna (*Thunnus obesus*) and North Atlantic swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*). Moreover, ICCAT moved the closure for using fish aggregating devices (FAD) for fishing for tropical tunas to later in the year and shortened its length to 45 days. Those measures should be implemented in Union law.

”

The following recital (28a) is inserted:

“

(28a) The Union quotas for stocks in the ICCAT Convention area for 2025 were adjusted during the 2024 ICCAT annual meeting in accordance with several ICCAT recommendations under which the Union may, upon request, carry over a set percentage of its unused quota of fishing opportunities from 2023 to 2025. Pending such possible adjustments to Union quotas under Union law, quotas for individual Member States should be established on the basis of the total Union quota for 2025 as agreed by the ICCAT before any such carry-overs.

”

Recital (50) is deleted.

AMENDMENTS TO THE ARTICLES

In Chapter III, Section 3, the square brackets are deleted.

Article 28 is replaced by the following:

“

Article 28
FADs for tropical tunas

1. It shall be prohibited to use FADs in the ICCAT Convention area from 17 March 2025 to 30 April 2025.

2. From 2 March 2025 to 16 March 2025, Member States shall ensure that their fishing vessels do not deploy FADs.

”

In Article 60, point (e) is deleted.

AMENDMENTS TO THE ANNEXES

Annex ID is replaced by the following:

“

Table 1			
Species:	Sailfish *Istiophorus albicans*	Zone:	Atlantic Ocean, east of 45°W (SAI/AE45W)
TAC	1 271,00	Analytical TAC Article 3(2) and (3) of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply	

Table 2			
Species:	Sailfish *Istiophorus albicans*	Zone:	Atlantic Ocean, west of 45°W (SAI/AW45W)
TAC	1 030,00	Analytical TAC Article 3(2) and (3) of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply	

Table 3			
Species:	Blue marlin *Makaira nigricans*	Zone:	Atlantic Ocean (BUM/ATLANT)
Spain	22,77	Analytical TAC Article 3(2) and (3) of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply	
France	332,82		
Portugal	46,21		
Union	401,80		

TAC	1 670,00	

		Table	**4**	
Species:	Blue shark *Prionace glauca*		Zone:	Atlantic Ocean, north of 5°N (BSH/AN05N)
Ireland	0,72		Analytical TAC	
Spain	20 309,50		Article 3(2) and (3) of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply	
France	113,96		Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply	
Portugal	4 024,82			
Union	24 449,00	(1)		
TAC	30 000,00			
(1)	After transfer of 348,00 tonnes to Morocco.			

		Table	**5**	
Species:	Blue shark *Prionace glauca*		Zone:	Atlantic Ocean, south of 5°N (BSH/AS05N)
Spain	12 498,27		Analytical TAC	
Portugal	4 906,73		Article 3(2) and (3) of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply	
Union	17 405,00		Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply	
TAC	27 711,00			

		Table	**6**	
Species:	White marlin *Tetrapturus albidus*		Zone:	Atlantic Ocean (WHM/ATLANT)
Spain	30,50		Analytical TAC	
Portugal	19,50		Article 3(2) and (3) of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply	
Union	50,00		Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply	
TAC	355,00			

		Table	**7**	
Species:	Northern Albacore *Thunnus alalunga*		Zone:	Atlantic Ocean, north of 5°N (ALB/AN05N)
Ireland	3 967,52		Analytical TAC	
Spain	22 362,40		Article 3(2) and (3) of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply	
France	7 033,33		Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply	
Portugal	2 452,65			
Union	35 815,90	(1)(2)		
TAC	47 251,00			
(1)	The number of Union fishing vessels fishing for Northern albacore as a target species shall be: 1 241.			
(2)	Special condition: Within the limit of this quota, no more than the following quantity may be taken in United Kingdom waters (ALB/*AN05N-UK): pm.			

	Table	**8**

Species:	Southern Albacore *Thunnus alalunga*		Zone:	Atlantic Ocean, south of 5°N (ALB/AS05N)
Spain	870,12		Analytical TAC	
France	285,95		Article 3(2) and (3) of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply	
Portugal	608,93		Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply	
Union	1 765,00			
TAC	28 000,00			

Table 9

Species:	Mediterranean Albacore *Thunnus alalunga*		Zone:	Mediterranean Sea (ALB/MED)
Greece	399,12		Analytical TAC	
Spain	103,03		Article 3(2) and (3) of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply	
France	14,97		Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply	
Croatia	6,98			
Italy	1 168,74			
Cyprus	430,99			
Malta	41,10			
Union	2 164,93	(4)		
TAC	2 500,00	(1)(2)(3)		

(1) In order to protect juvenile swordfish, a closure period shall also apply to longline vessels targeting Mediterranean albacore from 1 October to 30 November. In addition, Mediterranean albacore, either as a targeted species or as by-catch, shall not be caught, retained on board, transhipped or landed during the following periods:

- Greece, Croatia, Italy and Cyprus: 1 October to 30 November and 1 to 31 March;

- Spain, France and Malta: 1 January to 31 March.

(2) Each Member State shall limit the number of their fishing vessels authorised to fish for Mediterranean albacore to the number of fishing vessels authorised to fish this species in 2017. Member States may apply a tolerance of 10% to this capacity limit.

(3) Special condition: by-catches of albacore are to be counted against this quota, but shall be reported separately (ALB/MED-BC). Dead catches of albacore from sport and recreational fisheries are to be counted against this quota, but shall be reported separately (ALB/MED-SR).

(4) After transfer of 75,00 tonnes from Türkiye.

Table 10

Species:	Yellowfin tuna *Thunnus albacares*		Zone:	Atlantic Ocean (YFT/ATLANT)
TAC	110 000,00	(1)	Analytical TAC Article 3(2) and (3) of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply	

(1) Catches of yellowfin tuna by purse seiners (YFT/*ATLPS) and longliners with an overall length of 20 metres and above (YFT/*ATLLL) shall be reported separately.

Table 11

Species:	Bigeye tuna *Thunnus obesus*		Zone:	Atlantic Ocean (BET/ATLANT)
Spain	7 523,98	(1)	Analytical TAC	
France	3 195,86	(1)	Article 3(2) and (3) of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply	
Portugal	2 856,45	(1)	Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply	

Union	13 576,29	(1)
TAC	73 000,00	(1)

(1) Catches of bigeye tuna by purse seiners (BET/*ATLPS) and longliners with an overall length of 20 metres and above (BET/*ATLLL) shall be reported separately. As of June, when catches reach 80% of the quota, Member States are required to transmit the catches for these fishing vessels on a weekly basis.

Table 12

Species:	Bluefin tuna *Thunnus thynnus*		Zone:	Atlantic Ocean, east of 45°W, and Mediterranean (BFT/AE45WM)
Cyprus	188,09	(4)	Analytical TAC	
Greece	349,61		Article 3(2) and (3) of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply	
Spain	6 783,67	(2)(4)	Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply	
France	6 693,70	(2)(3)(4)		
Croatia	1 057,97	(6)		
Italy	5 283,00	(4)(5)		
Malta	433,43	(4)		
Portugal	637,88			
Other Member States	75,65	(1)		
Union	21 503,00	(2)(3)(4)(5)		
TAC	40 570,00	(1)		

(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	1 027,76
France	477,45
Union	1 505,21

(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	135,67
France	133,87
Italy	105,66
Cyprus	3,76
Malta	8,67
Union	387,63

(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	105,66
Union	105,66

(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 for farming purposes (BFT/*8303F):

Croatia	952,17

	Union	952,17

Table 13			
Species:	Shortfin mako *Isurus oxyrinchus*		Zone: Atlantic Ocean, south of 5°N (SMA/AS05N)
Union	503,00	(1)	Analytical TAC Article 3(2) and (3) of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply
TAC	1 325,00	(1)(2)	Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply
(1)	Quota set for the purpose of implementing a Union retention allowance for this stock.		
(2)	Exclusively for by-catches.		

Table 14			
Species:	Swordfish *Xiphias gladius*		Zone: Atlantic Ocean, north of 5°N (SWO/AN05N)
Spain	6 097,29	(2)	Analytical TAC
Portugal	1 108,20	(2)	Article 3(2) and (3) of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply
Other Member States	162,84	(1)(2)	Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply
Union	7 368,33		
TAC	14 769,00		
(1)	Exclusively for by-catches. Catches to be counted against this shared quota shall be reported separately (SWO/AN05N_AMS).		
(2)	Special condition: up to 2,39% of this quantity may be fished in the Atlantic Ocean, south of 5°N (SWO/*AS05N). Catches to be counted against the special condition of the shared quota shall be reported separately (SWO/*AS05N_AMS).		

Table 15			
Species:	Swordfish *Xiphias gladius*		Zone: Atlantic Ocean, south of 5°N (SWO/AS05N)
Spain	4 525,88	(1)	Analytical TAC
Portugal	298,12	(1)	Article 3(2) and (3) of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply
Union	4 824,00		Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply
TAC	10 000,00		
(1)	Special condition: up to 3,51% of this quantity may be fished in the Atlantic Ocean, north of 5°N (SWO/*AN05N).		

Table 16			
Species:	Swordfish *Xiphias gladius*		Zone: Mediterranean Sea (SWO/MED)
Croatia	13,74	(1)(2)	Analytical TAC
Cyprus	50,67	(1)(2)	Article 3(2) and (3) of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply
Spain	1 565,04	(1)(2)	Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 847/96 shall not apply
France	109,08	(1)(2)	
Greece	1 036,02	(1)(2)	
Italy	3 208,46	(1)(2)	
Malta	380,64	(1)(2)	
Union	6 363,63	(1)(2)	

TAC	9 017,00	
(1)	This quota may be fished only from 1 April to 31 December.	
(2)	Special condition: by-catches of Mediterranean swordfish are to be counted against this quota, but shall be reported separately (SWO/MED-BC). Dead catches of Mediterranean swordfish from sport and recreational fisheries are to be counted against this quota, but shall be reported separately (SWO/MED-SR).	

”

Annex VI is replaced by the following:

“

ANNEX VI

1. Maximum number of Union baitboats and trolling boats authorised to fish actively for bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) between 8 kg/75 cm and 30 kg/115 cm in the eastern Atlantic

Spain	60
France	55
Union	115

2. Maximum number of Union coastal artisanal fishing vessels authorised to fish actively for bluefin tuna between 8 kg/75 cm and 30 kg/115 cm in the Mediterranean

Spain	364
France	140(1)
Italy	30
Cyprus	20(1)
Malta	54(1)
Union	684
(1) This number may increase if a purse seiner is replaced by up to 10 longline vessels in accordance with Table A in point 4 of this Annex.	

3. Maximum number of Union fishing vessels authorised to fish actively for bluefin tuna between 8 kg/75 cm and 30 kg/115 cm in the Adriatic Sea for farming purposes

Croatia	18
Italy	12

Union	28

4. Maximum number of fishing vessels of each Member State that may be authorised to fish for, retain on board, tranship, transport or land bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean

Table A

	Number of fishing vessels[1][2]							
	Greece[3]	Spain	France	Croatia	Italy	Cyprus[4]	Malta[5]	Portugal
Purse seiners[6]	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Longliners	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Baitboats	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Handline	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trawlers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Small-scale	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other artisanal[7]	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

(1) The numbers in this table will be established following the approval of the Union fishing, farming and capacity management plan by ICCAT, in accordance with the applicable ICCAT recommendations and Union rules.

(2) The numbers in this table may be further increased, provided that the Union's international obligations are complied with.

(3) One medium-size purse seiner has been replaced by no more than 10 longline vessels, or by one small purse seiner and three other artisanal vessels.0

(4) One medium-size purse seiner may be replaced by no more than 10 longline vessels, or by one small purse seiner and no more than three longline vessels.

(5) One medium-size purse seiner may be replaced by no more than 10 longline vessels.

(6) The individual numbers of purse seiners in this table are the result of transfers between Member States and do not constitute historical rights for the future.

(7) Polyvalent vessels, using multi-gear equipment (longline, handline, trolling line).

5. Maximum number of traps engaged in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna fishery authorised by each Member State

Maximum number of traps[(1)]	
Member State	Number of traps
Spain	5
Italy	6
Portugal	2
[(1)] The numbers in this table will be adapted following the approval of the Union fishing, farming and capacity management plan by ICCAT, in accordance with the applicable ICCAT recommendations and Union rules.	

6. Maximum bluefin tuna farming capacity and fattening capacity for each Member State and maximum input of wild-caught bluefin tuna that each Member State may allocate to its farms in the Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean

Table A

Maximum tuna farming capacity and fattening capacity[(1)]		
	Number of farms	Capacity (in tonnes)
Greece	2	2 100
Spain	10	11 852
Croatia	4	7 880
Italy	13	12 600
Cyprus	3	3 000
Malta	6	12 300
Portugal	2	500
[(1)] The numbers in this table will be adapted following the approval of the Union fishing, farming and capacity management plan by ICCAT, in accordance with the applicable ICCAT recommendations and Union rules.		

7. Maximum number of Union fishing vessels authorised to fish for northern albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*) as a target species, in accordance with Article 17 of Regulation (EU) No 2017/2107.

Member State	Maximum number of vessels

Ireland	50
Spain	730
France	151
Portugal	310

8. Maximum number of Union fishing vessels of at least 20 meters length that fish for bigeye tuna (*Thunnus obesus*) in the ICCAT Convention area

Member State	Maximum number of vessels with purse seines	Maximum number of vessels with longlines
Spain	23	190
France	11	0
Portugal	0	79
Union	34	269

”

2. AMENDMENTS IN RELATION TO FISHING OPPORTUNITIES FOR VENEZUELAN VESSELS FISHING IN EU WATERS OF FRENCH GUIANA

EXPLANATORY NOTE

In accordance with the Union's Declaration addressed to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on the granting of fishing opportunities in EU waters to fishing vessels flying the flag of Venezuela in the exclusive economic zone off the coast of French Guiana[1], it is necessary to fix the fishing opportunities for snappers available to Venezuelan vessels in those EU waters.

In May 2024, the Scientific Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) reviewed[2] the latest scientific information for snappers, in particular red snapper (*Lutjanus purpureu*), in French Guiana waters as provided by the French National Institute for Ocean Science (IFREMER) from 2024[3]. In the report summarising the results of that review, the STECF noted that *'the recent estimated decline in biomass and the historical reduction in average size of catches provides already information that the red snapper stock status is deteriorating'* and concluded that *'that there is evidence that the red snapper stock and its fishery are under significant pressure and need remedial management measures'* (page 83).

It is proposed to roll over the fishing opportunities available to Venezuelan vessels in waters of French Guiana, i.e. the maximum number of fishing authorisations for Venezuelan vessels fishing for snappers in those waters. In addition, considering that the status of that stock is deteriorating, it is proposed to close the fishery from 1 January to 15 February 2025 and from 15 December to 31 December 2025, which overlaps with the possible spawning peak for adjacent red snapper stocks of September to February. Without that closure the fishing opportunities for that stock would have to be decreased to protect that stock.

AMENDMENTS TO THE ANNEXES

Annex V, Part B, is replaced by the following:

1 Council Decision (EU) 2015/1565 of 14 September 2015 on the approval, on behalf of the European Union, of the Declaration on the granting of fishing opportunities in EU waters to fishing vessels flying the flag of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in the exclusive economic zone off the coast of French Guiana (OJ L 244, 19.9.2015, p. 55).

2 https://stecf.ec.europa.eu/document/download/ac779683-6e18-4d6c-9a0c-c789d6f5eeb8_en

3 https://archimer.ifremer.fr/doc/00887/99870/

“

PART B

MAXIMUM NUMBER OF FISHING AUTHORISATIONS

FOR THIRD-COUNTRY VESSELS FISHING IN UNION WATERS

Flag State	Fishery	Number of fishing authorisations	Maximum number of vessels present at any time
Venezuela[(1)(2)(3)]	Snappers (French Guiana waters)	45	45

(1) To issue those fishing authorisations, proof must be produced that a valid contract exists between the fishing vessel owner applying for the fishing authorisation and a processing undertaking situated in the Department of French Guiana, and that it includes an obligation to land at least 75 % of all snapper catches from the fishing vessel concerned in that department so that they may be processed in that undertaking’s premises. Such a contract must be endorsed by the French authorities, which shall ensure that it is consistent both with the actual capacity of the contracting processing undertaking and with the objectives for the development of the Guianese economy. A copy of the endorsed contract shall be appended to the fishing authorisation application. Where such an endorsement is refused, the French authorities shall notify that refusal, and state the reasons therefor, to the parties concerned and to the Commission.

(2) Fishing activities are authorised on an annual calendar basis. However, a fishing vessel can continue its fishing activities up to three months after expiry of its fishing authorisation, provided that the operator:

– initiated the process to renew its fishing authorisation,

– fulfilled all its contractual and information communication obligations.

This extension expires upon the entry into force of the Commission decision for a new fishing authorisation or notification of the refusal of the new fishing authorisation.

(3) Fishing activities by fishing vessels holding those fishing authorisations may only occur in the period from 16 February 2025 to 14 December 2025.

”

3. OTHER AMENDMENTS

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Due to an error, the second Commission services non-paper[4] did not include the TAC table for Greenland halibut (*Reinhardtius hippoglossoides*) in International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) subareas 1 and 2 (north-east Arctic) for 2025, but only the following recital:

“

(26b) The NEAFC did not adopt a recommendation for Greenland halibut (*Reinhardtius hippoglossoides*) in ICES subareas 1 and 2 for 2025. The Union quota for Greenland halibut in international waters of ICES subareas 1 and 2 for 2025 should be set at the level of 1 711 tonnes. The level of the Union quota corresponds to 9,25% of the level of the ICES advice for 2023 of 18 494 tonnes. The ICES advice is the last best available scientific advice for Greenland halibut in ICES subareas 1 and 2.

”

Therefore, that TAC table should now be inserted in the Commission proposal.

AMENDMENTS TO THE ANNEXES

In Annex IA, Part B, Table 19 is replaced by the following:

“

Table 19			
Species:	Greenland halibut *Reinhardtius hippoglossoides*	Zone:	International waters of 1 and 2 (GHL/1/2INT)
Union	1 711 (1)	Precautionary TAC	
TAC	Not relevant		
(1)	Exclusively for by-catches. No directed fisheries are permitted under this quota.		

”

4 https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/document/download/30040849-b9fb-452e-bfcd-4e1c62bd1fba_en?filename=2024-11-23-non-paper-Atlantic-FOs-2025-regulation_en.pdf