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COVER NOTE

From: Secretary-General of the European Commission, signed by Ms Martine DEPREZ, Director

date of receipt: 4 March 2026

To: Ms Thérèse BLANCHET, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union

No. Cion doc.: C(2026) 1313 final

Subject: COMMISSION DELEGATED REGULATION (EU) .../... amending Regulation (EU) 2023/2053 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the management of bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and in the Mediterranean

Delegations will find attached document C(2026) 1313 final.

Encl.: C(2026) 1313 final



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COMMISSION DELEGATED REGULATION (EU) .../...

of 4.3.2026

amending Regulation (EU) 2023/2053 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the management of bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and in the Mediterranean

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

1. CONTEXT OF THE DELEGATED ACT

The purpose of the delegated regulation is to amend and update Regulation (EU) 2023/2053 of the European Parliament and of the Council¹ in order to implement changes as set out in ICCAT Recommendation 25-04 establishing a multiannual management plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean², adopted at the 29th annual meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) in November 2025.

Regulation (EU) 2023/2053 was most recently amended by Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/837 of 7 February 2025³.

2. CONSULTATIONS PRIOR TO THE ADOPTION OF THE ACT

In accordance with Article 67(4) of Regulation 2023/2053, the Commission consulted the Expert Group on Fisheries and Aquaculture on the draft regulation.

In line with the principles laid down in the Interinstitutional Agreement on Better Law-Making⁴, the delegated regulation was presented to the co-legislators (the European Parliament and the Council) for consultation at expert level.

3. LEGAL ELEMENTS OF THE DELEGATED ACT

The delegated regulation amends Regulation (EU) 2023/2053 by:

- increasing from 5% to 20% the amount of unused annual bluefin quota that can be carried over from one year to the next;
- bringing forward by one week the start of the fishing season for purse seine vessels in the Mediterranean and establishing the duration of the purse seine fishing season for farming purposes in the waters of the Cantabrian Sea and the Canary Islands, the latter within the framework of a pilot project approved by ICCAT;
- reducing the period within which changes to the type of fishing vessel, other than catching vessels, must be communicated to ICCAT;

¹ Regulation (EU) 2023/2053 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 September 2023 establishing a multiannual management plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean, amending Regulations (EC) No 1936/2001, (EU) 2017/2107, and (EU) 2019/833 and repealing Regulation (EU) 2016/1627 (OJ L 238, 27.9.2023, p. 1), ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/2053/oj>.

² Recommendation 25-04 by ICCAT replacing Recommendation 24-05 establishing a multiannual management plan for bluefin tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean, <https://www.iccat.int/Documents/Recs/compendiopdf-e/2025-04-e.pdf>.

³ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/837 of 7 February 2025 amending Regulation (EU) 2023/2053 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the management of bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and in the Mediterranean (OJ L, 2025/837, 2.5.2025), ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2025/837/oj.

⁴ Interinstitutional Agreement between the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission on Better Law-Making, Interinstitutional Agreement of 13 April 2016 on Better Law-Making (OJ L 123, 12.5.2016, p. 1).

- amending Annex IX to Regulation (EU) 2023/2053, by adding a table with information to be provided on the actions taken in response to the findings of inspections carried out under the Scheme of Joint International Inspection;
- updating the minimum standards for video recording procedures in Annex X to Regulation (EU) 2023/2053;
- in the annexes, replacing the word ‘validate’ with ‘verify and, where appropriate, sign’ in relation to observer tasks.

COMMISSION DELEGATED REGULATION (EU) .../...

of 4.3.2026

amending Regulation (EU) 2023/2053 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the management of bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and in the Mediterranean

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EU) 2023/2053 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 September 2023 establishing a multiannual management plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean, amending Regulations (EC) No 1936/2001, (EU) 2017/2107, and (EU) 2019/833 and repealing Regulation (EU) 2016/1627⁵, and in particular Article 66, paragraph 1, points (a) to (c) and (k), thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) The Union is party to the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), having approved the ICCAT Convention pursuant to Council Decision 86/238/EEC⁶.
- (2) ICCAT adopts measures to ensure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of the fishery resources in the ICCAT Convention area and to safeguard the marine ecosystems in which these resources occur. Such measures may become binding upon the Union.
- (3) Since the last amendment to Regulation (EU) 2023/2053⁷, ICCAT has adopted, at its 2025 annual meeting, Recommendation 25-04 in relation to the management of bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and in the Mediterranean⁸. ICCAT Recommendation 25-04 includes provisions on a revision of the amount of unused bluefin tuna quota that can be carried over from one year to the next, the purse seine fishing season and the procedures for communicating information in the event of

⁵ Regulation (EU) 2023/2053 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 September 2023 establishing a multiannual management plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean, amending Regulations (EC) No 1936/2001, (EU) 2017/2107, and (EU) 2019/833 and repealing Regulation (EU) 2016/1627 (OJ L 238, 27.9.2023, p. 1), ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/2053/oj>.

⁶ Council Decision 86/238/EEC of 9 June 1986 on the accession of the Community to the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, as amended by the Protocol annexed to the Final Act of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries of the States Parties to the Convention signed in Paris on 10 July 1984 (OJ L 162, 18.6.1986, p. 33, <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/1986/238/oj>).

⁷ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/837 of 7 February 2025 amending Regulation (EU) 2023/2053 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the management of bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and in the Mediterranean (OJ L, 2025/837, 2.5.2025), ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2025/837/oj.

⁸ Recommendation 25-04 by ICCAT replacing Recommendation 24-05 establishing a multiannual management plan for bluefin tuna in the Eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean, <https://iccat.int/Documents/Recs/compendiopdf-e/2025-04-e.pdf>.

infringements within the framework of the Joint Inspection Scheme. Those measures should be implemented into Union law.

- (4) Moreover, a number of amendments need to be made to Regulation (EU) 2023/2053 to update the entirety of the minimum standards for video recording procedures in Annex X.
- (5) As the provisions provided for in this Regulation have a direct impact on the planning of the fishing season of Union vessels and on related economic activities, this Regulation should enter into force as soon as possible,

HAS ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

Article 1

Regulation (EU) 2023/2053 is amended as follows:

- (1) In Article 8, paragraph 2 is replaced by the following:

2. A Member State may request to transfer a maximum percentage of 20% of its annual quota from one year to the following year. The Member State concerned shall include that request in its annual fishing and capacity management plans to be included in the Union fishing and capacity management plan for endorsement by ICCAT.’

- (2) Article 17 is amended as follows:

- (a) paragraph 1 is replaced by the following:

“1. Purse seine fishing for bluefin tuna shall be permitted in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean from 19 May until 1 July of each year.”

- (b) paragraph 4a is replaced by the following:

“4a. By way of derogation from paragraph 1, the purse seine fishing season in the Cantabrian Sea (ICES fishing areas 27.8.b and 27.8.c) for farming purposes shall be from 26 May to 31 August.”

- (c) the following paragraph 4b is inserted:

“ 4b. By way of derogation from paragraph 1, Spain may request in its annual fishing plan for 2026, as referred to in Article 11, that purse seine vessels involved in the pilot project for farming bluefin tuna in the Canary Islands be allowed to fish for bluefin tuna from 15 March to 30 May in FAO zone 34”.’

- (3) In Article 26, paragraph 1, the following subparagraph is added after point (b) of the first subparagraph:

‘The period for submission of the vessel lists may be less than one month for the list of vessels in point (b) where the submission is due to changes in modality.’

- (4) Annexes VIII, IX, X, XII and XVb are amended in accordance with the Annex to this Regulation.

Article 2

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

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

Done at Brussels, 4.3.2026

For the Commission
The President
Ursula VON DER LEYEN