



Att. Charlina Vitcheva
Director General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
European Commission
Rue Joseph II 99 - Office 01/007
B-1049 BRUSSELS

Date: 10th of April 2025

Subject: Implementation of the new EU Fisheries Control Systems Regulation (EU) 2023/2842 and implementing and delegated acts - Questions on application of provisions for EU external fleet

Dear Director-General of Fisheries, Ms. Vitcheva,

We would like to thank the MARE services, and in particular Unit D4, for their availability to organize a dedicated coordination meeting with relevant ACs on 5 February, in Brussels, to provide an update on the state of play of the implementation of the new Fisheries Control System as well as future calendar of meetings and next legislative steps. We found the explanations provided extremely useful and hope this becomes a recurrent practice, and we can meet all ACs interested on this topic, at least once every 6 months.

As discussed with your services during the meeting, this letter includes questions particularly relevant to the LDAC which could not be addressed or responded during at the time. It should be understood as a complement to the list of horizontal questions submitted earlier this month by our colleagues from the NWWAC-NSAC-BSAC-PELAC, which we also support and endorse.

Definition of “EU fishing vessels other than catching vessels” (recitals 16, 20 and arts 7a and 20)

The new Fisheries Control Regulation created a new vessel category called “*fishing vessels other than catching vessels*”. Whereas the concept of fishing vessels is clearly defined, no definition of “*fishing vessel other than catching*” is provided.

It is also worthwhile to note that the FAO PSMA and Council Decision 2011/443/EU, do not define types of vessels but simply “vessel”, in general, as “*any vessel, ship of another type or boat used for, equipped to be used for, or intended to be used for, fishing or fishing related activities*”; and differentiate “fishing” from “fishing related activities”.

- Could the Commission provide a clear and unambiguous definition of “*fishing vessel other than catching vessel*”?
- Could the Commission specify the number of these “*non-catching vessels*” and if they will be listed in the SMEFF database similarly to the EU long-distance catching ones?

Contact details for correspondence:

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Prior notification of landings in third country ports (art 19a)

- Could you explain if the content of prior notifications has changed substantially with respect to the previous Fisheries Control Regulation (e.g., timing, etc.)?
- How is the EU collaborating with relevant control authorities/bodies in RFMOs where there are Control Joint Deployment Plans run by EFCA (e.g., IOTC)?
- Could the EU revised Fisheries Control Regulation requirements be eventually extrapolated to non-EU countries via, for example, negotiations within the RFMOs to promote a level playing field vis a vis non-EU operators operating in the same fishing grounds?
- What role will play those coastal third countries where SFPAs are in force? Will their protocols be amended/updated accordingly to cater for prior notification?

Control of transshipments – list of authorised ports in non-EU countries (arts 4-5)

The implementing Regulation (EU)2024/1474 was adopted in June 2024, but so far, there is not a published list of either EU ports (arts 2-3) or non-EU authorized ports (arts 4-5).

- What is the timeframe expected for publishing the list of authorised non-EU ports?
- What will happen if third countries cannot provide independent weighers as they only have private operators? Will the EU provide funding through SFPAs to overcome the shortcomings encountered by the candidate ports to meet these requirements and obtain ISO 17020 certification?
- Does the Commission plan to propose a delegated act to exempt certain demersal stock catches from the separate stowage requirement, which is very important for the EU external fishing fleet?

Inspection of Forced labour linked to fishing activities (art 90)

- What would the competence be from EU and Member States control inspectors on forced labour?
- Mindful of the mandate of other Directorate-Generals, is MARE entitled to produce forced labour-related indicators, and how will this be done in line with the provisions of the EU Forced Labour Regulation in force?

Definition and implementation of risk assessment for REM/CCTVs (art 13)

- How are the risk assessment criteria going to be defined, and by whom (MARE, EFCA, or both)?
- How these criteria will be applied to identify high-risk fleet segments per fishing area?
- What is the state of play of technical specifications of CCTV for such purposes for EU vessels?

We hope you find this input helpful and look forward to your replies in writing.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alexandre Rodriguez', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Alexandre Rodriguez
LDAC Executive Secretary

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