



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

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) No 2017/2107, and (EU) 2019/833 and repealing Regulation (EU) 2016/1627 ⁽¹⁾, and in particular Article 66, paragraph 1, points (c), (e) and (k), thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) The Union is party to the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), having approved the accession to the ICCAT Convention pursuant to Council Decision 86/238/EEC ⁽²⁾.
- (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 are binding upon the Union.
- (3) Since the adoption of Regulation (EU) 2023/2053, ICCAT has adopted, at its 2024 annual meeting, recommendation 24-05 ⁽³⁾ in relation to the management of bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and in the Mediterranean. ICCAT recommendation 24-05 includes provisions on the increase of bluefin tuna fleets through the conversion of existing fishing capacity.
- (4) Furthermore, recommendation 24-05 establishes a derogation allowing for an increase of small-scale coastal vessels licensed to operate in the Gulf of Lion of the Mediterranean Sea, including an increase of quota allocation to this small-scale fleet.
- (5) At its 2024 annual meeting, ICCAT also adopted recommendation 24-06 ⁽⁴⁾, which extends, until 30 September 2025, the framework for a bluefin tuna farming pilot project in the Cantabrian Sea as established in ICCAT recommendation 23-08 ⁽⁵⁾. Due to administrative delays, this project could not be implemented in 2024, and the Union therefore sought the endorsement of the ICCAT Commission to extend the project through to 2025.
- (6) Moreover, the European Fisheries Control Agency should be designated as the authority to handle inspection reports, in order to improve reporting efficiency. Annex IX of Regulation (EU) 2023/2053 should therefore be amended accordingly.

⁽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) No 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⁾ 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>).

⁽³⁾ Recommendation 24-05 by ICCAT amending the Recommendation 22-08 establishing a multi-annual management plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean, <https://www.iccat.int/Documents/Recs/compendiopdf-e/2024-05-e.pdf>.

⁽⁴⁾ Recommendation 24-06 by ICCAT amending Recommendation 23-08 for a pilot project for farming bluefin tuna (*thunnus thynnus*) in the Cantabrian Sea <https://www.iccat.int/Documents/Recs/compendiopdf-e/2024-06-e.pdf>.

⁽⁵⁾ <https://www.iccat.int/Documents/Recs/compendiopdf-e/2023-08-e.pdf>.

- (7) Those measures should be implemented into Union law. Therefore, Regulation (EU) 2023/2053 should be amended accordingly.
- (8) 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) Article 13 is replaced by the following:

'Article 13

Annual fishing capacity management plans

1. Each Member State with a bluefin tuna quota shall establish an annual fishing capacity management plan. In that plan, the Member State shall adjust the number of catching vessels and traps in a way that ensures that the fishing capacity is commensurate with the fishing opportunities allocated to catching vessels and traps for the relevant quota period.
2. Each Member State concerned shall adjust the fishing capacity using the parameters provided for in the applicable Union act (*) for the allocation of fishing opportunities. The adjustment of Union fishing capacity for purse seine vessels shall be limited to a maximum variation of 20 % compared to the baseline fishing capacity as declared to ICCAT in 2018.
3. By way of derogation from paragraph 1, Member States may increase the number of purse seine vessels, provided that this increase results from a conversion from other bluefin tuna fleets pertaining to the Member State requesting this derogation, the fishing capacity remains commensurate with available fishing opportunities, and that, overall, the final Union fishing capacity, between purse seiners and the fleet from which the conversion is made, does not represent a capacity increase with respect to the precedent year.
4. Member States requesting the derogation provided for in paragraph 3 shall include the relevant details of the requested fleet conversion in their annual fishing capacity plans.
5. For the purposes of the derogation provided for in paragraph 3, the ratio for converting fleets shall be based on the 2009 catch rates provided by the SCRS.

(*) For 2025, 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) 2023/194 (OJ L, 2025/202, 31.1.2025, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2025/202/oj>).';

- (2) in Article 17, paragraph 4a is replaced by the following:

'4a. By way of derogation from paragraph 1, Spain may request in its annual fishing plan for 2025, as referred to in Article 11, that purse seine vessels involved in the pilot project for farming bluefin tuna in the Cantabrian Sea be allowed to fish for bluefin tuna in the Cantabrian Sea (ICES fishing area 27.8.b and 27.8.c) from 26 May 2025 until 30 September 2025.';

- (3) Annex I and IX 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, 7 February 2025.

For the Commission
The President
Ursula VON DER LEYEN

ANNEX

Annexes I and IX to Regulation (EU) 2023/2053 are amended as follows:

(1) in Annex I, points 1 and 2 are replaced by the following:

- ‘1. Each Member State shall ensure that the following capacity limitations are respected:
 - (a) the maximum number of its baitboats and trolling boats authorised to fish actively bluefin tuna to the number of the vessels participating in directed fishery for bluefin tuna in 2006;
 - (b) the maximum number of its artisanal fleet authorised to fish actively bluefin tuna in the Mediterranean to the number of the vessels participating in the fishery for bluefin tuna in 2008, with the exception of small-scale coastal vessels operating in the Gulf of Lion, whose number may increase by up to 10 % compared to the number of vessels recorded in 2008;
 - (c) the maximum number of its catching vessels authorised to fish actively bluefin tuna in the Adriatic Sea to the number of the vessel participating in the fishery for bluefin tuna in 2008.

Each Member State shall allocate individual quotas to vessels concerned.

2. Each Member State may allocate:
 - (a) no more than 7 % of its quota for bluefin tuna among its baitboats and trolling boats;
 - (b) no more than 2 % of its quota for bluefin tuna among its coastal artisanal fishery for fresh fish in the Mediterranean; however, in the Gulf of Lion, that percentage may go up to 4 %;
 - (c) no more than 90 % of its quota for bluefin tuna among its catching vessels in the Adriatic Sea for farming purposes.’;

(2) in Annex I, the following point is added:

- ‘3. By way of derogation from point 2(a), for France, a maximum of 100 tonnes of bluefin tuna weighing no less than 6,4 kg or 70 cm fork length may be caught by vessels flying the flag of France of a length overall of less than 17 metres operating in the Bay of Biscay.’;

(3) in Annex IX, the following part is added:

‘The European Fisheries Control Agency shall be the body designated to:

- (a) receive, from the authorities of the flag Member State of the inspection vessel, the report and any information related to detected infringements;
- (b) send a copy of the reports with detected infringements to the flag State of the inspected fishing vessel and to the ICCAT Secretariat, with copy to the Commission.’.