



Brussels,
MARE/D3/ER (2021)

Subject: Reply to recommendation #13 Control in recreational fishing

Dear Mr Pavon,

Thank you for your recommendation on recreational fishing, more specifically the recommendation #13 regarding improvements in the control processes and in research and data collection on recreational fishing. More specifically, the recommendations are mainly coupled to the multiannual EU programme for data collection¹, in line with the EU Data Collection Framework². This EU multiannual programme establishes the data requirements to be collected, the list of mandatory surveys in each sea basin and the thresholds to collect data. The Data Collection Framework recognises that *“it is important to “collect biological data on recreational fisheries where there is a potentially significant impact on the state of the stock, in order to enable ecosystem-based management and conservation as necessary for the operation of the common fisheries policy, as well as to improve stock assessment.”*

In your recommendation, reference is made to link certain control provisions with the collection of recreational data. I would like to emphasise that currently, fisheries data is collected under the national work plans in which the Member States indicate which data is collected and what sampling schemes are in place. The Member States must report annually on the implementation of their national work plans, and the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) evaluates these annual reports.

¹ As of 1 January 2022, set out in Commission Delegated Decision (EU) 2021/1167 of 27 April 2021 establishing the multiannual Union programme for the collection and management of biological, environmental, technical and socioeconomic data in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors from 2022, and Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2021/1168 of 27 April 2021 establishing the list of mandatory research surveys at sea and thresholds as part of the multiannual Union programme for the collection and management of data in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors from 2022.

² Regulation (EU) 2017/1004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 May 2017 on the establishment of a Union framework for the collection, management and use of data in the fisheries sector and support for scientific advice regarding the common fisheries policy and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 199/2008

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Reliable and uniform data collection remains vital for the Commission to assess the impact of recreational fishing on specific stocks and to set appropriate measures. The International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) Working Group on Recreational Fisheries Survey³ plays a role to summarise and ensure the quality of data collected on recreational fishery in the EU countries, facilitating the ICES advisory process. WGRFS supplies recreational fishery data and estimates for ICES stock assessment and advisory processes, operating within its quality assurance framework and responding to the requirements of the EU Data Collection Framework and other drivers. As such, the group is a forum for the planning and coordination of recreational fisheries data collection and analysis.

The Commission recognises the importance of improving control and monitoring of recreational fisheries. The Commission's proposal for the revision of the Control Regulation⁴ contains a licensing system for recreational anglers and compulsory reporting, to improve control and monitoring. Support of the Council and the European Parliament is of importance in this matter, as well as other stakeholders such as the Advisory Councils. At the request of the European Parliament, DG MARE launched in November 2019 a pilot project to develop and test a "control scheme for recreational catches of sea bass" (MARE 2019/006). An external contractor has developed an integrated IT tool to allow recreational fishers to inform quickly about their daily catches by registering those catches in the app "Fishfriender" and a web-based platform – RecFishing.eu. This pilot project shows that it is possible to have an integrated EU catch reporting system for recreational fisheries.

I am looking forward to our continued fruitful cooperation. Should you have any further questions on this reply, please contact Ms Pascale COLSON, coordinator of the Advisory Councils (Pascale.COLSON@ec.europa.eu; +32.2.295.62.73), who will forward it to relevant colleagues.

Yours sincerely,

Charlina VITCHEVA

Enclosure: [List the enclosure\(s\) here. Use Shift+Return to add lines.](#)

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³ See latest WGRFS 2020 report <https://doi.org/10.17895/ices.pub.7563>

⁴ Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009, and amending Council Regulations (EC) No 768/2005, (EC) No 1967/2006, (EC) No 1005/2008, and Regulation (EU) No 2016/1139 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards fisheries control, COM/2018/368 final