

Recommendation n° 63

Evaluation of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 on the Common Fisheries Policy, regarding the waters of the Outermost Regions

Considering the European Commission's public consultation on the evaluation of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 on the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), and its instruments and measures over the past decade (2014–2024), with the overall objective of assessing the impact of the CFP Regulation on the conservation of marine biological resources and the management of fisheries and fishing fleets dependent on those resources — notably in Saint Martin, Guadeloupe, Martinique, French Guiana, the Azores, Madeira, the Canary Islands, Mayotte, and Réunion — the Advisory Council for the Outermost Regions (CCRUP) sets out the following views for each of the points:

1. Effectiveness of the Common Fisheries Policy Regulation

1.1. Impacts of the Common Fisheries Policy Regulation

Regarding the main impacts of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) Regulation on environmental sustainability and the conservation of marine resources, it is considered to have had positive effects, particularly through the strengthening of resource management — notably by setting Total Allowable Catches (TACs), quotas, and minimum conservation reference sizes. The regulation has also promoted greater cooperation among European Union (EU) Member States in scientific data collection and has encouraged the use of more selective fishing gear, contributing to the reduction of by-catches.

However, it is acknowledged that the implementation of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 still faces challenges. Although the regulation refers to and takes into account the specificities of the Outermost Regions (ORs), the measures provided are, in many cases, generic and insufficiently robust. The management model adopted continues to favour an approach more suited to the continental European context and is not adequately adapted to the ecological, socio-economic, and cultural characteristics specific to the ORs.

The CCRUP recommends the inclusion of a specific chapter dedicated to the Outermost Regions in the Common Fisheries Policy Regulation, considering their unique ecological, economic, and social characteristics, to ensure fair legal and political treatment in

relation to other European regions.

1.2. Criteria Relating to the Balance Between Fleet Capacity and Fishing Opportunities in the Outermost Regions

Within the framework of the obligations set out in *Article 22 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 on the Common Fisheries Policy*, the criteria currently used to assess the balance between fleet capacity and fishing opportunities are not adapted to the reality of the Outermost Regions (ORs). Although certain exceptions are provided for, the annual fleet capacity balance reports continue to rely on indicators developed for contexts of overcapacity and overfishing in continental European waters. This approach does not reflect the situation of fleets in the ORs, where, in general, overfishing or overcapacity is not observed.

In Martinique, traditional artisanal fishing is carried out using locally typical vessels, such as *yoles*, which are regionally built and deeply rooted in the maritime culture, and which are in urgent need of renewal.

We recommend that the Member States, with the support of regional organisations, carry out a study to assess the balance between fleet capacity and fishing opportunities in the Outermost Regions, with a view to adapting the assessment criteria so that the CFP Regulation can better reflect the specificities of artisanal fisheries practiced in our territories.

We further recommend that the European Commission adapt the criteria related to data collection and analysis, considering the actual limitations in infrastructure and scientific capacity that exist in some of our Regions.¹

1.3. Impacts of the Common Fisheries Policy Regulation on the Socioeconomic Conditions of Fishing Communities in the Outermost Regions

Regarding the impact of the CFP Regulation on the social conditions of people working in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors in the Outermost Regions, it is considered that, although the regulation has contributed to improvements in working conditions, many fishers still face low incomes and limited economic stability. **Therefore, the CCRUP recommends that Member States carry out in-depth studies on the socioeconomic realities of the fisheries**

¹ [Recommendation on Review of Criteria relating to the Fleet's State of Balance](#)

sector in the ORs, considering the significant role this activity plays in ensuring the economic and social sustainability of our communities².

2. Efficiency of the Common Fisheries Policy Regulation

2.1. Fishing Opportunities

Considering the perception that the allocation of fishing opportunities remains unequal in comparison with other sectors in Europe, it is important to ensure a clearer application of environmental, social, and economic criteria in the establishment of fishing opportunities, through the effective implementation of Article 17 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 on the Common Fisheries Policy. **We recommend that the European Commission define a set of allocation criteria and a classification system for their implementation**, incorporating positive discrimination for the Outermost Regions. **Furthermore, the Commission should encourage Member States to use quota allocation** to achieve their biodiversity restoration and climate change mitigation objectives, considering the types of fishing gear used and the socioeconomic context of fishing communities.

2.2. Regional Fisheries Management Organisations – International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) and Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC)

The sustainable management of fishery resources, particularly tuna stocks, is an international priority within the framework of the Common Fisheries Policy and the European Union's participation in Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs). Tuna species, as highly migratory and economically valuable resources, are subject to significant fishing pressure and require the effective implementation of management measures based on scientific criteria.

Harvest Strategies represent a recent and increasingly effective approach to fisheries management, which involves the prior establishment of management objectives, biological reference points, and Harvest Control Rules (HCRs). This methodology provides greater predictability for the sector, promotes the sustainability of fish stocks, and reduces the scope for politically driven decisions based on annual negotiations, thereby favouring a management framework grounded in scientific data.

² [Recommendation on Socio-economic impacts on fishing communities in the Outermost Regions](#)

We therefore recommend that the European Commission continue its efforts to implement Harvest Strategies, with a view to increasing the number of fish stocks managed through this tool, as it is a practice aligned with international scientific best practices and with the principles of the CFP in its external dimension (Article 28 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013).

3. Governance

3.1. Principles of Good Governance and Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements with Third Countries

Considering that the Common Fisheries Policy Regulation, through its Article 3, establishes appropriate stakeholder involvement — in particular that of the Advisory Councils — as a principle of good governance in all stages of the process, from the design to the implementation of measures, the CCRUP highlights its fundamental role in providing impartial and high-quality information to the European Commission and the Member States concerned within its areas of competence. For example, we underline that the ORs of Mayotte and French Guiana are involved in Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements with third countries.

Therefore, the CCRUP recommends that the European Commission and the relevant Member States consult us whenever they intend to adopt legislation that may affect the waters or fishing/aquaculture communities of the Outermost Regions.

4. Relevance of the Common Fisheries Policy Regulation

4.1. Funding of the Advisory Councils and the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries

Through Article 43 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, the European Commission must continue to recognise the fundamental role of the Advisory Councils (ACs) as bodies acting in the public interest, providing technical knowledge and practical experience to EU policymakers. With broad and diverse representation, the ACs are essential for consultation and for gathering information directly from the sector, serving as key pillars in the effective implementation of the CFP Regulation. By bringing together all relevant stakeholders — including fishers, aquaculture producers, and Other Interest Groups — the ACs ensure legitimacy, relevance, and stronger adherence to national and EU policies. They are particularly important in the regionalisation

process, contributing proposals tailored to the specific realities within the remit of each AC³.

To ensure that the Advisory Councils (ACs) can continue to provide high-quality advice to policymakers, it is essential that they receive adequate, stable, and predictable funding, as should the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE), to strengthen both their human resources (such as technical staff and interpreters) and institutional capacities. Moreover, DG MARE should be equipped with the financial means to travel to specific territories — particularly during our meetings — to foster direct contact with local realities and communities. This would facilitate the exchange of experiences and information and is in line with the mission letter sent by President Ursula von der Leyen to Mr Costas Kadis upon his appointment as Commissioner for Fisheries and Oceans, in which she emphasised the importance of maintaining an active presence on the ground and engaging directly with local communities and stakeholders.

Regarding the scope of each Advisory Council and considering the overlap of mandates observed since the establishment of the CCRUP, notably:

- South Western Waters Advisory Council (SWWAC) – *ICES zones VIII, IX, and X (waters around the Azores) and CECAF zones 34.1.1, 34.1.2, and 34.2.0 (waters around Madeira and the Canary Islands)*, covering the areas of the Azores, Madeira, and the Canary Islands;
- Aquaculture Advisory Council (AAC), whose geographical area of competence is not clearly defined, and where there is thematic overlap, given that the European Commission requests the CCRUP to work on this matter on an annual basis;
- Pelagic Advisory Council (PELAC) – *as it operates across all geographical areas except the Baltic Sea and the Mediterranean Sea*, resulting in geographical overlap.

³ [Multi-AC letter on the future of the Multiannual Financial Framework \(MFF\)](#)

ANNEX III

ADVISORY COUNCILS

1. Name and area of competence of Advisory Councils

Name	Areas of competence
Baltic Sea	ICES zones IIIb, IIIc and IIId
Black Sea	GFCM geographical sub-area as defined in Resolution GFCM/33/2009/2
Mediterranean Sea	Maritime Waters of the Mediterranean of the East of line 5°36' West
North Sea	ICES zones IV and IIIa
North Western waters	ICES zones V (excluding Va and only Union waters of Vb), VI and VII
South Western waters	ICES zones VIII, IX and X (waters around Azores), and CECAF zones 34.1.1, 34.1.2 and 34.2.0 (waters around Madeira and the Canary Islands)
Outermost regions	Union waters around the outermost regions as referred to in the first paragraph of Article 349 of the Treaty divided into three sea basins: West Atlantic, East Atlantic, Indian Ocean
Pelagic stocks (blue whiting, mackerel, horse mackerel, herring, boarfish)	All geographical areas excluding the Baltic Sea and the Mediterranean Sea
High seas/long distance fleet	All non Union-waters
Aquaculture	Aquaculture, as defined in Article 4
Markets	All market areas

We recommend that the European Commission revise point 1 of Annex III to Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 (as reproduced above), which defines the composition and remit of the Advisory Councils. This revision should ensure a clearer geographical and thematic delineation between the different ACs, to avoid overlaps or gaps in competence. Clarifying the respective areas of responsibility will help to strengthen coordination among the ACs.

5. Coherence of the Common Fisheries Policy Regulation

5.1. Integration of the Common Fisheries Policy Regulation with Other European Policies

We consider that the Common Fisheries Policy Regulation could be better integrated with other European policies (e.g. the Biodiversity Strategy, environmental directives, and the Common Agricultural Policy). One example highlighting this need is the impact of excessive nitrogen from agricultural fertiliser use, which is one of the main causes of water pollution in the European Union. The high concentration of nutrients in aquatic systems promotes the excessive growth of algae (eutrophication), with negative effects on aquatic ecosystems, resulting in biodiversity loss, marine habitat degradation, and adverse impacts on fisheries and recreational

activities⁴.

The CCRUP recommends that the European Commission ensure greater integration between the Common Fisheries Policy Regulation and other European policies, so that all policies work synergistically to protect aquatic and marine ecosystems.

Sciaena's Opinion:

Sciaena opposes the following recommendation: “*The CCRUP recommends the inclusion of a specific chapter dedicated to the Outermost Regions in the Common Fisheries Policy Regulation, considering their unique ecological, economic, and social characteristics, to ensure fair legal and political treatment in relation to other European regions*” as it considers that this would entail reopening the CFP, which could lead to its weakening. Furthermore, Sciaena believes that the CFP already contains sufficient measures to support low-impact fishers in the Outermost Regions; the issue lies in the fact that the CFP is not fully implemented.

⁴ [Recommendation on Protection of waters in the Outermost Regions against pollution of an agricultural origin](#)