EU measures against unsustainable fishing by non-EU countries

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Revised EU tools to address unsustainable fishing by non-EU countries

Regulation (EU) 2025/2077 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 8 October 2025 amending Regulation (EU) No 1026/2012 on certain measures for the purpose of the conservation of fish stocks in relation to countries allowing non-sustainable fishing.

Update

The European Union (EU) has amended Regulation 1026/2012 to clarify the conditions used to identify and sanction countries that allow non-sustainable fishing practices on fish stocks of common interest.

Impacted products

Fishery products (capture)

What is changing?

Under Regulation 1026/2012, the EU can take measures against exporting countries that do not take adequate action to conserve fish stocks. This includes quantitative restrictions on fish imports from countries that are not sustainably conserving fish stocks.

The EU has clarified how it identifies countries that allow unsustainable fishing on fish stocks of common interest. A ‘stock of common interest’ means a stock that is fished by both the EU and certain non-EU countries. The management of these stocks requires bilateral or multilateral cooperation between those countries and the EU.

A non-EU country that does not implement fishery management and control measures, necessary to ensure the effective conservation and management of stocks of common interest, may be considered as allowing non-sustainable fishing if:

- it fails to cooperate in the management of a stock of common interest in full compliance with international agreements or rule of international law such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA)

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- it fails to adopt necessary fishery management measures
- it fails to engage in meaningful consultations, in good faith, in which both (or all) parties make substantial efforts to reach agreement on the adoption of necessary fishery management measures.

The EU notifies a country in advance if it intends to identify it as allowing non-sustainable fishing. This Regulation (2025/2077) specifies a 90-day period within which the country can respond to the notification and remedy the situation. It also introduces a definition of 'failure to cooperate', and provides examples.

Why?

These clearer guidelines aim to ensure that non-EU countries are aware of the specific conditions under which their fishing practices may lead to EU restrictive measures and sanctions, which can include import bans.

Timeline

The Regulation applies from **3 November 2025**.

What are the major implications for exporting countries?

The EU can impose restrictions on imports containing fish and fishery products from a country that allows non-sustainable fishing. This also applies to any part of a stock of common interest caught under the control of that country (Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries 2024).

Background

Regulation 1380/2013 on the Common Fisheries Policy, Part VI (External Policy), provides for the EU to conduct its external fisheries in accordance with its international obligations and to base its fishing activities on regional fisheries cooperation.

Regulation 1026/2012 allows the European Commission to adopt restrictive measures against non-EU countries allowing non-sustainable fishing that jeopardises the long-term conservation of fish stocks of common interest to the European Union and non-EU countries.

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Resources

Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 on the Common Fisheries Policy.

Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (2024) Commission proposes a revision of EU tools to address unsustainable fishing practices by non-EU countries on fish stocks of common interest, News Announcement, 13 September.

Sources

Regulation (EU) 2025/2077 on certain measures for the purpose of the conservation of fish stocks in relation to countries allowing non-sustainable fishing.

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