

# EU strategy on fisheries external action

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EU Common Fisheries Policy external strategy: Review and call for evidence

Call for evidence: A Strategy on EU Fisheries External Action

## Update

The European Union (EU) has launched a call for evidence towards a report outlining its strategy for fisheries external action beyond 2030. This will set general policy principles and objectives, and identify possible needs for future legislation. The report will cover existing fisheries management instruments and frameworks such as those concerning shared fish stocks; international organisations; the fight against illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing; and the revised EU control regulations, among others. It aims to identify how a new generation of Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements with partner countries can better support their development and food security.

The call for evidence is open until **15 September 2025**.

## Impacted products

Fish and fishery products

## What is changing?

The EU is evaluating its Common Fisheries Policy during 2025, with a view to shaping international and EU agendas for 2030, with a focus on SDG14 (Life Below Water), one of the least advanced SDGs globally. This call for evidence relates to a report setting out a strategic approach to the EU's external fisheries policy, expected to be published in the third quarter of 2026.

The main aim is to identify how the EU's fisheries external action can strengthen the environmental, economic, and social dimensions of sustainability – and promote enhanced global and regional governance – while maintaining EU competitiveness.

The strategy will cover fisheries management instruments and frameworks such as those concerning shared fish stocks; sustainable fisheries partnership agreements (SFPAs) and

international organisations (including [regional fisheries management organisations](#), RFMOs); the fight against [illegal, unreported, and unregulated \(IUU\) fishing](#); the revised EU [control regulation](#) and its application externally; and the legislation that regulates the [EU external fleet](#) and protects [vulnerable marine ecosystems](#) in the high seas.

A new generation of SFPAs will develop a regional vision in terms of fisheries access, ocean governance (including science-based decision-making), and blue economy in cooperation with partner countries to support their development and food security.

## Why?

The EU's high dependency on fish caught in waters shared with non-EU countries, and on fish imports from these countries, calls for more effective action on external fisheries. To achieve this, the EU is aiming at wide public consultations involving citizens, businesses, and other stakeholders within and outside the EU.

## Timeline

The call for evidence is open until **15 September 2025**.

## What are the major implications for exporting countries?

The key pillars of the CFP – shared stocks, RFMOs, SFPAs, and the fight against IUU fishing – will remain core areas of the EU's fisheries external action. The report will explore how legislation can be improved to deliver on the EU's international commitments in cooperation with its partner countries.

## Recommended Actions

Countries exporting fishery products to the EU can contribute to the call for evidence via the EU's [Have Your Say](#) webpage until **15 September 2025**.

## Background

The review of the EU's strategy for fisheries external action is one element of a broader package. Some instruments are either being revised ([proposal](#) regarding countries allowing non-sustainable fishing), due for revision (autonomous EU tariff quotas; [Council of the EU 2023](#)), under consideration (impact assessment on trade in shark fins: [European Commission 2024a](#)), being followed up (report on consumer information; [European Commission 2023a](#)), or due for implementation, such as the new traceability obligations under the revised fisheries control regulation ([European Commission 2024b](#)), and the prohibition of products made with forced labour on the EU market (Regulation [2024/3015](#)).

The analysis of the SFPAs ([European Commission 2023b](#)), and the Regulations on sustainable management of the external fleet ([European Commission 2025](#)) and the [evaluation](#) of Regulation [734/2008](#) on protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems in the high seas have already completed. See also the Commission communication on the CFP ([European Commission 2023c](#)).

Reviews relating to external fisheries, markets, and trade that concern other legal instruments include:

- a 12-month study on feed for aquaculture (including fishmeal and fish oil) began in January 2025
- a 2025 impact assessment on better protecting sharks through trade (European Commission 2024a)
- an impact assessment on the regulation of autonomous tariff quotas
- a study on labelling and consumer information (also covering imports) expected in the third quarter of 2025 (European Commission 2023a)
- a feasibility study on traceability of prepared and preserved products, including imported products, to be launched in 2025
- a baseline study on implementation of the International Maritime Organization Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel in 2025
- a study on flags of convenience expected in the third quarter of 2025 (European Commission 2023d).

## Resources

Council of the EU (2023) [Import of fishery products: Council adopts autonomous EU tariff quotas for 2024 to 2026](#). Press release, 27 November.

European Commission (2023a) [Report \[...\] on the common organisation of the markets in fishery and aquaculture products](#)

European Commission (2023b) [Evaluation and analysis of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements \(SFPAs\) between the EU and third countries](#) – Final report.

European Commission (2023c) Oceans and fisheries: [Common fisheries policy \(CFP\)](#)

European Commission (2023d) [New EMFAF call for tender for study on the practice of open registers for vessels](#). News Article, 5 July.

European Commission (2024a) [The Commission improves shark trade monitoring, as part of the follow-up on European Citizens' Initiative](#). News Announcement, 16 December.

European Commission (2024b) Oceans and fisheries: [Control Regulation](#)

European Commission (2025) [Scientific and technical knowledge of the EU-fisheries, exploited stocks and sensitive marine habitats in the high seas and third countries waters](#). European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency.

[Proposal](#) for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council 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

## Sources

[Call for evidence](#): A Strategy on EU Fisheries External Action

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