Fisheries: controls, surveillance, and inspection

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Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2025/1766 laying down rules on the control of fisheries and on the surveillance and inspection of fishing activities, enforcement and compliance

What is changing and why?

The European Union (EU) has updated its rules for the monitoring of EU fishing vessels. Similar rules apply to non-EU fishing vessels operating in EU waters.

Monitoring of vessel position and fishing activities

To control fishing activities in EU waters, and for EU vessels operating outside these waters, fishing vessels must be able to send timely and accurate information about their location and fishing actions, even if their tracking systems fail.

- Non-EU fishing vessels must send their current location every 4 hours to the fisheries monitoring centre (FMC) of the EU country in whose waters they are fishing.
- If a non-EU vessel cannot send location data every 4 hours, it must leave EU waters until the communication issue is fixed.
- If the electronic reporting system fails, the fishing master must send information from fishing logbooks and other declarations (e.g. prior notifications, transhipment, and landing declarations) to the authorities of the EU country where they are fishing at least once every 24 hours, even if they have no fish on board.

Duties of operators and masters in case of inspections

- Fishing vessels in EU waters must ensure the safety and privacy of control observers on board, including in their personal sleeping areas.
  - Observers should have access to enough food, accommodation, and sanitation facilities.
  - They must be treated with respect, as they are officials.
  - Any incident that threatens an observer's safety, such as injury or disappearance, must be reported immediately to their home country's authorities.
- All operators must provide any required information and documents to fishery inspectors when asked, following common fisheries policy rules.
- It is against the rules to obstruct or threaten inspectors. Operators should provide a private space for observers to discuss matters with the fishery inspectors.

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Timeline

The Regulation applies from **10 January 2026**.

For more information see the full record on the AGRINFO website – where you can also view the latest AGRINFO Update newsletters and search the database.

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