



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

*Brussels, 26.11.2019
C(2019) 8205 final*

Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Senat for its Opinion on the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the State of Play of the Common Fisheries Policy and Consultation on the Fishing Opportunities for 2020 {COM(2019)274}.

The Commission agrees with the Senat on the need for enhanced cooperation, at regional level, between the Black Sea riparian States towards sustainability of Black Sea fisheries. The General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean is a key pillar for an effective multilateral cooperation in the Black Sea and further for achieving a level playing field at regional level.

In addition, the 2018 Sofia Ministerial Declaration on Black Sea Fisheries and Aquaculture, signed up by Bulgaria, Romania, Georgia, Moldova, Turkey and the European Commission on behalf of the EU, reflects the commitments undertaken towards sustainability of fisheries through a comprehensive 10-year roadmap. The Sofia Declaration lays the ground for a capacity plan ensuring an adequate balance between resources and the fleet capacity in the Black Sea riparian States (paragraph 45).

Furthermore, the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean multiannual management plan for turbot fisheries in the Black Sea has been adopted in 2017 and is being implemented from 2018 onwards (Recommendation GFCM/41/2017/4). This Recommendation includes among a set of management, technical, control and monitoring measures, the provision of ‘maintaining the fishing fleet capacity or fishing effort at the levels authorized and applied in recent years for the exploitation of turbot in the Black Sea’.

A recent Commission staff working document {SWD(2019)311 final} presented the evaluation of the Entry/Exit scheme in accordance with Article 23(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Common Fisheries Policy. This evaluation confirms the necessity to continue the Entry/Exit scheme and the

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capacity ceilings as instruments to prevent nominal fishing capacity from increasing. The evaluation shows that this is in particular the case in situations where conservation and management measures are not effective enough to regulate the use of fishing capacity.

Moreover, a recent study on engine power verification systems in 15 Member States¹ carried out for the Commission has shown that most Member States have implemented an ineffective verification system or no verification system at all.

In the light of the above, the Commission does not envisage proposing a revision of fishing capacity ceilings set out in Annex II to Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013.

The Commission hopes that these clarifications address the issue raised by the Senat and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*

*Karmenu Vella
Member of the Commission*

¹ <https://publications.europa.eu/s/m7IG>