

# European Fisheries Control Agency: cooperation

2015/0308(COD) - 15/12/2015 - Legislative proposal

**PURPOSE:** to amend Council Regulation (EC) No 768/2005 establishing a Community Fisheries Control Agency in order to reinforce the EU's Coast Guards capacity to response to threats and risks in the maritime domain by inter alia improving co-operation between all relevant civilian and military actors.

**PROPOSED ACT:** Regulation of the European Parliament and of the council.

**ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT:** the European Parliament decides in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure and on an equal footing with the Council.

**BACKGROUND:** national authorities carrying out coastguard functions are responsible for a wide range of missions, including but not limited to maritime safety, security, search and rescue, border control, fisheries control, customs control, general law enforcement and environmental protection. The underlying problem is **that coastguard functions are currently carried out by more than 300 authorities in Member States**, which are not always well coordinated even at national level.

The European Border and Coast Guard Agency established, the European Fisheries Control Agency and the European Maritime Safety Agency established by Regulation (EC) No 1406/2002 of the European Parliament and the European Council support the national authorities in the exercise of most of these functions. They should therefore strengthen their cooperation with each other and with those national authorities carrying out coastguard functions in order to increase the maritime situational awareness and to support coherent and cost-efficient action.

**CONTENT:** the purpose of this legislative proposal is to **improve co-operation and co-ordination** between the relevant Member States' authorities, EU agencies and other bodies performing coastguard functions with a view to moving towards a European Coastguard Capacity/System. It forms part of a set of measures proposed by the Commission to reinforce the **protection of Europe's external borders**, including European cooperation on coastguard function, which also includes a [proposal to amend Council Regulation \(EC\) No 1406/2002](#) establishing a European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) and a [proposal for a Council Regulation](#) establishing a European Border and Coast Guard Agency. The substantive amendments in this proposal are identical to the proposed amendments to the Regulation establishing EMSA and the proposed provisions on European coastguard cooperation in the proposal for a Regulation establishing European Border and Coast Guard Agency.

The proposed Regulation covers:

- **sharing information** generated by fusing and analysing data available in ship reporting systems and other information systems hosted by or accessible to the Agencies. It will foster intelligence sharing amongst the Agencies;
- providing **surveillance and communication services** based on state-of-the-art technology, including space-based and ground infrastructure and sensors mounted on any kind of platform;
- **capacity building at national and Union level** by elaborating guidelines, recommendations and best practices as well as by supporting the training and exchange of staff, with a view to enhance the exchange of information and cooperation on coastguard functions. Thanks to its international mandate, the EFCA has, so far, developed robust expertise in implementing common inspection platforms and maintains privileged network with EU and third countries such as Albania, Turkey, Lebanon, Israel, Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco;

- **capacity sharing**, including the planning and implementation of multipurpose operations and the sharing of assets and other capabilities across sectors and borders. It will permit the EFCA to increase its control and inspection activities and conduct new type of operations aiming at detecting criminal activities, disrupt trafficking routes and ensure the enforcement of EU and national legislations.

The Commission may adopt, in the form of a recommendation, a **practical handbook** on European cooperation on coastguard functions, containing guidelines, recommendations and best practices for the exchange of information and cooperation at national, Union and international level.

**BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS:** this initiative will imply an increase in the EU contribution to the EFCA of around **EUR 7.5 million per year** (that is EUR 30.148 million for the 2017 to 2020 period) and the recruitment of 13 TA staff.