

Common fisheries policy (CFP)

2011/0195(COD) - 25/07/2019 - Follow-up document

This Commission staff working document concerns the executive summary of the evaluation of the Entry/Exit scheme in accordance with Article 23(3) of Regulation (EU) 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Common Fisheries Policy (CPF).

This staff working document looks at the implementation of the Entry/Exit scheme set up under the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) as a means to align the capacity of the Union fishing fleet with available resources.

EU fishing fleet

On 1st January 2018, the Union fishing fleet included 78 379 vessels of which 85% measure less than 12m Length Overall. In terms of capacity, the total tonnage was 1 486 109 gross tonnage (GT) of which only 11% were contained in the fleet of vessels of less than 12m length class and of 5 752 075 kW with 38% comprised in the fleet of vessels of less than 12m.

National rules for the implementation of the Entry/Exit scheme

Member States determine themselves the implementing modalities of the Entry/Exit scheme, but all of them have transposed into their national framework the general principle that operators wishing to enter new capacities without public aid must submit evidence of prior withdrawal of equivalent fishing capacity without public aid.

State of play

All Member States currently comply with the capacity ceilings set out in the Annex II of the CFP Regulation. In total, the difference between Member States fleet capacity and capacity ceilings is equivalent to 380 823 GT and 923 972 kW, representing 25.6% of the total EU mainland fleet capacity in GT and 16.1% in kW on 1st January 2018. The difference between current fishing fleet capacity and capacity ceilings represents some latent fishing capacity (i.e. a fishing capacity that could be reactivated through entries into the fleet in compliance with the Entry/Exit scheme depending on Member States rules). However, account should be taken of the fact that the actual capacity limitation in each country went down in comparison to the ceiling set in the CFP Regulation due to scrapping of vessels with public aid. In that latter case, the scrapped vessels could not be replaced which led de facto to a lowering of the latent fishing capacity.

Main findings

The evaluation found that the Entry/Exit scheme has been relevant to complement the in-depth reforms of fishing fleet capacity management. However, the still significant number of unbalanced fleet segments in EU waters shows that overall Member States have not yet fully reached their long-term objective of achieving a stable and enduring balance between their fishing fleet capacity and fishing opportunities available to them. The need remains for an instrument to ensure that EU fishing fleet capacity cannot increase.

The EU added-value may be assessed as positive since the EES is an effective safeguard mechanism to cap and reduce nominal fishing fleet capacity levels deployed on EU stocks in particular where applicable EU and national conservation and management measures are not effective enough to limit the use of available fishing capacity through a series of input and output measures.

Overall conclusion

The evaluation concluded that provided that Member States ensure an accurate measurement, verification and reporting of the capacity indicators GT and kW, the EES is fit for purpose as an instrument to prevent nominal fishing capacity from increasing. This is in particular the case in situations where conservation and management measures are not effective enough to regulate the use of fishing capacity.