

Targeted consultation on the Action Plan to conserve fisheries resources and protect marine ecosystems

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

1

Introduction

This consultation takes place in the context of the preparation of the **Action plan to conserve fisheries resources and marine ecosystems** announced in the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030. The Action Plan is linked to the implementation of reporting under the recently adopted [Technical Measures Regulation](#) and under the common fisheries policy (CFP) as a means to put forward concrete recommendations to Member States on actions they need to take with a view to the CFP contribution to the implementation of environmental legislation. The Action Plan also aims to support the delivery of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2030, including a more effective implementation of relevant EU environmental laws, notably the Birds, Habitats and Marine Strategy Framework Directives.

The EU has comprehensive policies and legislation to protect the marine environment. The common fisheries policy has among its key objectives to ensure that fishing is environmentally sustainable and to ensure that negative impacts of fishing activities on the marine ecosystem are minimised. As a result, the management measures that have been put in place over the last couple of decades have managed to reduce certain pressures. The strategies set up under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive established a framework for protecting the marine environment. Besides, the Maritime Spatial Planning Directive (MSPD) has been adopted in the EU as a framework by national governments to organise the marine space in an efficient, safe and sustainable way, whilst preventing conflicting activities. While it is up to Member States to decide which activities are included in their plans and where those activities will take place, the Commission will provide recommendations to make national maritime spatial plans adapted to the EU Green Deal, notably to the biodiversity and offshore renewable energy strategies' objectives.

As indicated in the [roadmap for the Action Plan](#), the overall objective of this initiative is to concretely exploit the synergies between the fisheries and environmental policies. It will directly contribute to one of the main objectives of the European Green Deal, to turn environmental and climate challenges into opportunities.

The Action Plan will in particular:

- Identify actions needed to increase selectivity^[1] and reduce and, where possible, eliminate bycatch of sensitive species, focusing on those threatened with extinction and in unfavourable conservation status;
- Explore ways and identify actions to:

- a) significantly improve the implementation of fisheries management measures necessary to achieve the objectives of the environmental legislation by making full use of the possibilities under the CFP;
- b) achieve, in particular in Natura 2000 sites and other marine protected areas, in accordance with the commitment in the Biodiversity Strategy that these measures should be established in all marine protected areas by 2030;
- Identify measures that will be introduced, where necessary, to limit the use of fishing gear most harmful to biodiversity, including on the seabed;
- Build on the legal requirement for Member States to determine and achieve good environmental status for seabed integrity under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, which includes the development of threshold values; identify avenues on how to achieve these values in a “fair and just way for all” while at the same time increasing the carbon storage capacity of marine sediments and contributing to reducing CO2 emissions;
- Explore ways to secure a more effective inter-play between the possibilities provided for under the common fisheries policy to effectively contribute to the environmental objectives, and Article 6 of the Birds and Habitats Directives and Article 15 of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive; notably, as regards to the latter, in the context of the review of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive;
- Strengthen the implementation of the relevant acquis;
- Improve the availability and quality of marine knowledge and information, notably through the environmental reporting obligations and fisheries data collection framework;
- Explore the possibilities under the EU funding instruments to support the objectives of the Action Plan (e.g. EMFAF, LIFE, ERDF, Horizon) and, where relevant, actively encourage Member States in their use to support the Biodiversity objectives.

Further to the [feedback already provided by stakeholders and general public on the roadmap](#), this stakeholder consultation aims at deepening the understanding of specific issues in view of the ongoing preparation of the Action Plan. It notably aims at collecting further scientific evidence or other “structured information” on the issues at stake. “Structured information”, in this questionnaire, means “information collected as part of a systematic reporting system, survey or study that is representative of the fishery and the resources, ecosystem or the habitat/species of concern”.

The Commission values the input of all stakeholders. In order to facilitate the contribution of all stakeholders, the questionnaire will be translated in all EU languages. The incoming translations will be added in the EU survey and will be available by 3 December 2021 at the latest.

All information collected via the survey will be stored and handled in a confidential manner and compliant with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). You are entitled to upload a document or position paper to your contribution (maximum size 5 MB), or to provide additional remarks and information at the end of the survey.

[1] ‘selectivity’ means a quantitative expression represented as a probability of capture of marine biological resources of a certain size and/or species (Article 6 of the Technical Measures Regulation).

2 About you

Language of my contribution

- Bulgarian
- Croatian
- Czech
- Danish
- Dutch
- English
- Estonian
- Finnish
- French
- German
- Greek
- Hungarian
- Irish
- Italian
- Latvian
- Lithuanian
- Maltese
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Romanian
- Slovak
- Slovenian
- Spanish
- Swedish

* I am giving my contribution as

- Academic/research institution
- Business association
- Company/business organisation
- Consumer organisation
- EU citizen
- Environmental organisation
- Non-EU citizen
- Non-governmental organisation (NGO)

- Public authority
- Trade union
- Other

* First name

Marzia

* Surname

Piron

* Email (this won't be published)

segreteria@med-ac.eu

* Organisation name

255 character(s) maximum

Mediterranean Advisory Council

* Organisation size

- Micro (1 to 9 employees)
- Small (10 to 49 employees)
- Medium (50 to 249 employees)
- Large (250 or more)

Transparency register number

255 character(s) maximum

Check if your organisation is on the [transparency register](#). It's a voluntary database for organisations seeking to influence EU decision-making.

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* Country of origin

Please add your country of origin, or that of your organisation.

- | | | | |
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| <input type="radio"/> Afghanistan | <input type="radio"/> Djibouti | <input type="radio"/> Libya | <input type="radio"/> Saint Martin |
| <input type="radio"/> Åland Islands | <input type="radio"/> Dominica | <input type="radio"/> Liechtenstein | <input type="radio"/> Saint Pierre and Miquelon |
| <input type="radio"/> Albania | <input type="radio"/> Dominican Republic | <input type="radio"/> Lithuania | <input type="radio"/> |

- Algeria
- American Samoa
- Andorra
- Angola
- Anguilla
- Antarctica
- Antigua and Barbuda
- Argentina
- Armenia
- Aruba
- Australia
- Austria
- Azerbaijan
- Bahamas
- Bahrain
- Bangladesh
- Barbados
- Belarus
- Belgium
- Belize
- Benin
- Bermuda
- Bhutan
- Bolivia
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- Ecuador
- Egypt
- El Salvador
- Equatorial Guinea
- Eritrea
- Estonia
- Eswatini
- Ethiopia
- Falkland Islands
- Faroe Islands
- Fiji
- Finland
- France
- French Guiana
- French Polynesia
- French Southern and Antarctic Lands
- Gabon
- Georgia
- Germany
- Ghana
- Gibraltar
- Greece
- Greenland
- Grenada
- Guadeloupe
- Luxembourg
- Macau
- Madagascar
- Malawi
- Malaysia
- Maldives
- Mali
- Malta
- Marshall Islands
- Martinique
- Mauritania
- Mauritius
- Mayotte
- Mexico
- Micronesia
- Moldova
- Monaco
- Mongolia
- Montenegro
- Montserrat
- Morocco
- Mozambique
- Myanmar/Burma
- Namibia
- Nauru
- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
- Samoa
- San Marino
- São Tomé and Príncipe
- Saudi Arabia
- Senegal
- Serbia
- Seychelles
- Sierra Leone
- Singapore
- Sint Maarten
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Solomon Islands
- Somalia
- South Africa
- South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands
- South Korea
- South Sudan
- Spain
- Sri Lanka
- Sudan
- Suriname
- Svalbard and Jan Mayen
- Sweden
- Switzerland

Bonaire Saint
Eustatius and
Saba

- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Botswana
- Bouvet Island
- Brazil
- British Indian Ocean Territory
- British Virgin Islands
- Brunei
- Bulgaria
- Burkina Faso
- Burundi
- Cambodia
- Cameroon
- Canada
- Cape Verde
- Cayman Islands
- Central African Republic
- Chad
- Chile
- China
- Christmas Island
- Clipperton
- Cocos (Keeling) Islands
- Guam
- Guatemala
- Guernsey
- Guinea
- Guinea-Bissau
- Guyana
- Haiti
- Heard Island and McDonald Islands
- Honduras
- Hong Kong
- Hungary
- Iceland
- India
- Indonesia
- Iran
- Iraq
- Ireland
- Isle of Man
- Israel
- Italy
- Jamaica
- Japan
- Nepal
- Netherlands
- New Caledonia
- New Zealand
- Nicaragua
- Niger
- Nigeria
- Niue
- Norfolk Island
- Northern Mariana Islands
- North Korea
- North Macedonia
- Norway
- Oman
- Pakistan
- Palau
- Palestine
- Panama
- Papua New Guinea
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Philippines
- Syria
- Taiwan
- Tajikistan
- Tanzania
- Thailand
- The Gambia
- Timor-Leste
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- Tokelau
- Tonga
- Trinidad and Tobago
- Tunisia
- Turkey
- Turkmenistan
- Turks and Caicos Islands
- Tuvalu
- Uganda
- Ukraine
- United Arab Emirates
- United Kingdom
- United States

- Colombia
- Comoros
- Congo
- Cook Islands
- Costa Rica
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Croatia
- Cuba
- Curaçao
- Cyprus
- Czechia
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Denmark
- Jersey
- Jordan
- Kazakhstan
- Kenya
- Kiribati
- Kosovo
- Kuwait
- Kyrgyzstan
- Laos
- Latvia
- Lebanon
- Lesotho
- Liberia
- Pitcairn Islands
- Poland
- Portugal
- Puerto Rico
- Qatar
- Réunion
- Romania
- Russia
- Rwanda
- Saint Barthélemy
- Saint Helena
- Ascension and Tristan da Cunha
- Saint Kitts and Nevis
- Saint Lucia
- United States
- Minor Outlying Islands
- Uruguay
- US Virgin Islands
- Uzbekistan
- Vanuatu
- Vatican City
- Venezuela
- Vietnam
- Wallis and Futuna
- Western Sahara
- Yemen
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

The Commission will publish all contributions to this public consultation. You can choose whether you would prefer to have your details published or to remain anonymous when your contribution is published. **For the purpose of transparency, the type of respondent (for example, 'business association', 'consumer association', 'EU citizen') country of origin, organisation name and size, and its transparency register number, are always published. Your e-mail address will never be published.** Opt in to select the privacy option that best suits you. Privacy options default based on the type of respondent selected

* Contribution publication privacy settings

The Commission will publish the responses to this public consultation. You can choose whether you would like your details to be made public or to remain anonymous.

Anonymous

Only organisation details are published: The type of respondent that you responded to this consultation as, the name of the organisation on whose behalf you reply as well as its transparency number, its size, its country of origin and your contribution will be published as received. Your name will not

be published. Please do not include any personal data in the contribution itself if you want to remain anonymous.

Public

Organisation details and respondent details are published: The type of respondent that you responded to this consultation as, the name of the organisation on whose behalf you reply as well as its transparency number, its size, its country of origin and your contribution will be published. Your name will also be published.

I agree with the [personal data protection provisions](#)

* Are you familiar with EU legislation linked with this initiative (Common Fisheries Policy, Birds & Habitats Directive, Marine Strategy Framework Directive, Maritime Spatial Planning)?

- Yes
- Partly
- No

3 General Questions

* **Q1:** Did you already provide feedback on the roadmap for the Action Plan?

- Yes
- No

Q2: Which of these statements would you agree with?

at least 1 answered row(s)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No opinion
Further improvements in size-selectivity are still needed for a better conservation of fisheries resources (avoiding catches of small fish)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Further improvements in species -selectivity are still needed for a better conservation of fisheries resources (avoiding catches of sensitive species)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is necessary to better protect marine ecosystems in view of their functions of climate regulation and provision of ecosystem services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Better protection of marine habitats from human activities, including fishing pressure, is necessary, in particular in marine protected areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Better protection of sensitive marine species from human activities, including fishing pressure, is necessary, in particular in marine protected areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Better protection of the marine environment should go hand in hand with the protection of fishers' livelihoods, as well as of the livelihoods of people working onshore in fishing-related jobs and in fisheries-dependent communities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please elaborate in the text box below, or by uploading a document

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4 Conserving fisheries resources - selectivity

This part of the consultation focuses on how, where, when and with which fishing gear the fishing can be pursued. Other types of fisheries resources management, such as catch limits, are addressed through other policy developments and are therefore not within the scope of this consultation.

Most bony fish release far higher numbers of eggs than the numbers of fish the sea can support to adulthood. Most juveniles die in the very early stages of life. Fishing gear that catches too many juveniles is inefficient from both an ecological and economic point of view because the juveniles are caught before they reproduce, and the harvest is not optimised. So is fishing gear that catches only the largest fish. In mixed fisheries where fish of different body size are caught together, compromises have to be made.

Innovation in fisheries gear and fishing techniques plays a key role, in particular to address this challenge selectivity potential of fishing gear and techniques. The Commission encourages efforts in this direction through funding research and innovation that help in the protection of juveniles, notably in the context of the implementation of the landing obligation as well as in the minimisation of the impact on sensitive[1] species (including marine birds, mammals, turtles and non-commercial fish[2] that are adversely affected by pressures arising from human activities, including fishing activities), hereafter referred to as sensitive species, and on habitats). Selectivity depends on a number of factors, including fishery technology, fishing methods, size of the mesh, target species, season, weather, fishing area and the fisherman's own behaviour (choice of fishing area, for example). As highlighted in the CFP Annual Communication COM (2021)279, the uptake, supported by the European Maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF), of more selective gears or additional mitigation measures to protect sensitive species, while on the rise, remains however slow and the move from trialling selective gears to actual adoption and inclusion in legislation remains a lengthy process. Further developments could for instance build upon the advice provided by ICES in 2020 [3], and on the results of Horizon 2020 projects. A similar conclusion is presented in the above-mentioned report on the implementation of the Technical Measures Regulation. The variety of joint recommendations already put forward demonstrates that regionalisation, i.e. the proposal of joint recommendations by regional groups of Member States, is effective and most suitable to provide targeted and tailor-made technical measures. Member States have demonstrated that the regional cooperation can be swift and efficient. However, improvements need to be made in terms of the level of speed and ambition when it comes to developing and agreeing joint recommendations on measures aimed at improving selectivity or restricting fisheries with a view to contributing to EU environmental legislation, and the Commission will

continue to provide all the necessary support and guidance to ensure that environmental objectives are appropriately addressed in joint recommendations.

[1] As defined in Article 6 of the [Technical Measures Regulation](#)

[2] Non-commercially-exploited species, as referred to in Decision 2017/848/EU and including species whose targeting, capture, retention, sale, landing or transshipment are prohibited. This includes but is not limited to prohibited fish and shellfish species listed in Annex I of Regulation 1241/2019, in Annex IV to Directive 92/43/EEC except where derogations are granted under Article 16 of that Directive, marine mammals and reptiles listed Annexes II and IV to that Directive, and species of seabirds covered by Directive 2009/147/EC

[3] ICES advice on innovative gear, ICES 2021. <https://www.ices.dk/news-and-events/news-archive/news/Pages/InnovativeFishingGear.aspx>

* **Q3:** Do you have any factual/scientific evidence or other structured information indicating that in specific areas and/or for specific species, too many juveniles or too many sexually mature fishes may be caught, thus preventing the optimal yield from being achieved in a sustainable manner?

- Yes
- No
- Partly

* Please provide such evidence or other structured information, indicating the area(s) and/or species concerned, and specific reference (with a web link where available, or by uploading a document).

3000 character(s) maximum

See STECF REPORTS.

Please upload your file(s)

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Q4: Beyond the ones identified in the ICES advice on innovative gear[1], and projects like “[Discardless](#)” and “[Minouw](#)”, are you aware of innovative fishing techniques and/or gears that allow juveniles of particular species to escape and survive without other negative environmental impacts, e.g. on sensitive species or habitats?

[1] ICES advice on innovative gear, ICES 2021. <https://www.ices.dk/news-and-events/news-archive/news/Pages/InnovativeFishingGear.aspx>

- Yes, innovations that are under development or under testing/piloting

- Yes, innovations that are available on the market but not sufficiently used yet
- Yes, innovations that are starting to be used by industry, and could be advertised as success stories? (either on a voluntary basis or by means of legislation)
- No

Please provide further details on the "*innovations that are under development or under testing/piloting*" in the box, or by uploading a document below.

3000 character(s) maximum

GFCM pilot actions in Strait of Sicily.
Selectivity projects on trawlers engaged by Member States under the WEST MED management plan.

Please upload your file(s)

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Q5: Do you have any factual/scientific evidence or other structured information indicating that fishers encounter significant challenges when adopting the innovative gears or fishing techniques/operations mentioned in question Q4? [Tick as appropriate. Multiple answers allowed]

- No significant challenges are encountered
- Making the switch is/would be too costly
- Making the switch requires/would require too much effort and training
- Other [please specify]

Please specify "other"

3000 character(s) maximum

French Fishery Sector: Selon l'engin de pêche, il peut y avoir un temps important d'entretien/maintenance pour le pêcheur.

Please provide further information by providing a link in the textbox below, or by uploading a document

3000 character(s) maximum

MEDAC contribution on EMFAF Strategies Ref.:295/2021
http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2021/12/295_medac_contribution_emfaf_priorities_level.pdf

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Q6: What priority would you give to the following actions to address the challenges you listed in Q5?

	(1) Not important	(2) Less important	(3) Neither important nor unimportant	(4) Important	(5) Very important	Don't know
Further data collection on the state of fishery resources and the marine environment, for instance through strengthening the scientific capacity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Further research on innovative gears and/or fishing techniques	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Better accessibility of the data collected / the results of research projects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Further testing/piloting of innovative gears and/or fishing techniques	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Awareness raising / training on innovative gears and/or fishing techniques	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Financial support for the development and market uptake of more innovative gears and fishing techniques	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Legislative measures at national, regional or EU level e.g. to limit the use of certain harmful gears, to close certain areas or seasons to fishing, or to ensure the use of technical or operational solutions to reduce by-catches of sensitive species	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
More effective enforcement of existing legislation	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please provide underlying factual/scientific evidence or other structured information indicating to support your answer, either in the text box below or by uploading a document.

3000 character(s) maximum

MEDAC OPINION Towards more sustainable fishing in the EU: state of play and orientations for 2021
http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2020/08/200_medac_advice_fishing_opportunities_2021.pdf

Please upload your file(s)

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Q7: Do you have factual / scientific evidence providing socio-economic information on the practical implementation of any of the actions listed under Q6?

- Further data collection on the state of fishery resources and the marine environment, for instance through strengthening the scientific capacity
- Further research on innovative gears and/or fishing techniques
- Better accessibility of the data collected / the results of research projects
- Further testing/piloting of innovative gears and/or fishing techniques
- Awareness raising / training on innovative gears and/or fishing techniques
- Financial support for the development and market uptake of more innovative gears and fishing techniques
- Legislative measures at national, regional or EU level e.g. to limit the use of certain harmful gears, to close certain areas or seasons to fishing, or to ensure the use of technical or operational solutions to reduce by-catches of non-commercial species
- Further enforcement of existing legislation
- Other

Please provide a detailed reference to the evidence on the socio-economic impacts of "*Further data collection on the state of fishery resources and the marine environment, for instance through strengthening the scientific capacity*", or insert the information directly in the text box or by uploading a document below

3000 character(s) maximum

MEDAC OPINION Towards more sustainable fishing in the EU: state of play and orientations for 2021
http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2020/08/200_medac_advice_fishing_opportunities_2021.pdf

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Please provide a detailed reference to the evidence on the socio-economic impacts of "*Further research on innovative gears and/or fishing techniques*"; or insert the information directly in the text box or by uploading a document below

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MEDAC opinion on the contribution to the GFCM Working Group on Fishing technologies (WGFiT)
http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2020/03/79_medac_opinion_wgfit.pdf and
MEDAC contribution on EMFAF Strategies Ref.:295/2021
http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2021/12/295_medac_contribution_emfaf_priorities_level.pdf

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Please provide a detailed reference to the evidence on the socio-economic impacts of "*Better accessibility of the data collected / the results of research projects*"; or insert the information directly in the text box or by uploading a document below.

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MEDAC OPINION Towards more sustainable fishing in the EU: state of play and orientations for 2021
http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2020/08/200_medac_advice_fishing_opportunities_2021.pdf and MEDAC contribution on EMFAF Strategies Ref.:295/2021
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Please provide a detailed reference to the evidence on the socio-economic impacts of "*Further testing/piloting of innovative gears and/or fishing techniques*"; or insert the information directly in the text box or by uploading a document below.

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MEDAC opinion on the contribution to the GFCM Working Group on Fishing technologies (WGFiT)
http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2020/03/79_medac_opinion_wgfit.pdf and and

MEDAC contribution on EMFAF Strategies Ref.:295/2021
http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2021/12/295_medac_contribution_emfaf_priorities_level.pdf

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Please provide a detailed reference to the evidence on the socio-economic impacts of "*Awareness raising / training on innovative gears and/or fishing techniques*", or insert the information directly in the text box or by uploading a document below

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MEDAC opinion on the contribution to the GFCM Working Group on Fishing technologies (WGFiT)
http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2020/03/79_medac_opinion_wgfit.pdf

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Please provide a detailed reference to the evidence on the socio-economic impacts of "*Financial support for the development and market uptake of more innovative gears and fishing techniques*", or insert the information directly in the text box or by uploading a document below

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MEDAC opinion on the contribution to the GFCM Working Group on Fishing technologies (WGFiT)
http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2020/03/79_medac_opinion_wgfit.pdf and
MEDAC contribution on EMFAF Strategies Ref.:295/2021
http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2021/12/295_medac_contribution_emfaf_priorities_level.pdf

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5 Protecting marine ecosystems – sensitive habitats

5.1 Transversal questions on protecting marine ecosystems

Marine ecosystems remain under threat by various pressures such as from human activities and climate change. More than 65% of seabed habitats protected under the Habitats Directive are in unfavourable

conservation status[1]. Certain fishing activities have a negative impact on the marine environment, for example due to the disturbance of seabed habitats, including through the use of specific fishing gears such as bottom contacting fishing gear, which is now the most damaging activity to the seabed[2]. For example, the southern North Sea once had extensive oyster beds but these disappeared since trawling became a widely-used fishing method. There is concern about the loss of seagrass beds and of fragile ecosystems structured around corals, sponges and sea-pens. This calls for action to halt the degradation of marine habitats.

EU legislation already provides protection to certain marine habitats, including seabed habitats, such as for example in the “Technical Measures” and “Deep Sea Access” Regulations (Annex II of Regulation 2019 /1241 and Regulation (EU) 2016/2336[3]) or the Mediterranean Regulation (EU Regulation 1967/2006). Science indicates that many areas of the EU seabed are trawled frequently (in some cases, more than ten times a year) and these marine habitats are subject to extensive damage.

Member States have also established a number of marine protected areas, including Natura 2000 sites as required under the Birds and Habitats Directives, in order to bring the degraded habitats to a healthy state. However, their management is not effective and the necessary management measures, including fisheries ones, still need to be established or improved in most of these areas. The Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, as endorsed by Member States, will require further MPA designations and the improvement of their management and coherence.

The Marine Strategy Framework Directive moreover requires that marine habitats are in Good Environmental Status. This will require that certain parts of the seabed should be allowed to recover to good health, including from disturbance by human activities including by bottom contacting fishing gears (Commission Decision (EU) 2017/848), if those activities are not compatible with achieving Good Environmental Status.

As further detailed in the previous section, innovation in fisheries gear and fishing techniques may play a role in addressing this challenge.

[1] <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/soer-2020>

[2] ICES Advice (eu.2021.08) shows that about 85% of the seabed between 0-800m depth in the Atlantic (North Sea, Celtic Seas and Bay of Biscay and Iberian Coast regions) and southern Baltic Sea is affected by bottom fishing.

[3] Regulation (EU) 2016/2336 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2016 establishing specific conditions for fishing for deep-sea stocks in the north-east Atlantic and provisions for fishing in international waters of the north-east Atlantic and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 2347 /2002. OJ L 354, 23.12.2016, p. 1–19

Q8: Do you have factual/scientific evidence or other structured information indicating that there is a need for any specific improvement in the implementation of existing management measures to protect seabed habitats in specific Natura 2000 sites and other marine protected areas?

- Yes
- No

Q9: Do you have factual/scientific evidence or other structured information indicating that there is a need for any specific additional management measures to

protect seabed habitats in specific Natura 2000 sites and other marine protected areas?

- Yes
- No

Q10: Do you have factual/scientific evidence or other structured information indicating that there is a need for any specific additional management measures to protect seabed habitats outside marine protected areas?

- Yes
- No

Please provide such evidence or other structured information, specifying the possible additional measures, the area(s) concerned, and insert a reference in the text box below or by uploading a document

3000 character(s) maximum

http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2021/07/142_medac_advice_msy_fish_opportunities_gfcm_decisions.pdf

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Q11: Do you have suggestions on what actions should be taken to improve and accelerate the adoption and implementation of fisheries conservation measures in MPAs, including Natura 2000 sites and those for MSFD purposes, established under the rules of the common fisheries policy? [Tick as appropriate. Multiple answers allowed]

- Improving the Commission's guidance on the application of the environmental and fisheries legislation
- Better enforcement of the relevant environmental and fisheries legislation at national and EU level
- Improving current processes for the adoption of national measures and joint recommendations
- Encouraging closer cooperation between fisheries and environmental administrations
- Appropriate measures through new EU legislation or review of the relevant legislation
-

Other [please specify]

Q12: Do you have factual/scientific evidence or other structured information indicating that there is a need for any specific additional measures under “Technical Measures”, “Deep-Sea access” and / or the "Mediterranean Regulation" to protect, for example, areas or specific habitat types, including outside of MPAs?

- Yes
- No

Q13: Do you have factual/scientific evidence or other structured information indicating that there is a need for further protecting specific sensitive habitats as a priority?

- Yes
- No

Q14: Do you have factual/scientific evidence or other structured information indicating that there is a need for addressing specific fishing gears and/or techniques as a priority, to reduce impact on seabed habitats?

- Yes
- No

Q15: Beyond the ones identified in the ICES advice on innovative gear [1], are you aware of other alternative or innovative fishing gears and/or techniques that could be used to better protect marine habitats, without having other negative environmental impacts, e.g. on sensitive species or habitats?

[1] ICES advice on innovative gear, ICES 2021. <https://www.ices.dk/news-and-events/news-archive/news/Pages/InnovativeFishingGear.aspx>

- Yes, innovations that are under development or under testing / piloting
- Yes, innovations that are available on the market but not sufficiently used yet
- Yes, innovations that are starting to be used by industry, and could be advertised as success stories (either on a voluntary basis or by means of legislation)
- No

For the *innovations that are under development or under testing / piloting*, please specify the gear and/or technique, fisheries, and areas in which they could be used and provide supporting evidence.

3000 character(s) maximum

GFCM pilot actions in Strait of Sicily

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Q16: Do you have factual/scientific evidence or other structured information indicating that that fishers encounter significant challenges when adopting the innovative gears or fishing techniques/operations mentioned in question Q15? [Tick as appropriate. Multiple answers allowed]

- No significant challenges are encountered
- Making the switch is/would be too costly
- Making the switch requires/would require too much effort and training
- Other [please specify]

Please provide further information - if available - in the textbox below, or by uploading a document

3000 character(s) maximum

MEDAC contribution on EMFAF Strategies Ref.:295/2021
http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2021/12/295_medac_contribution_emfaf_priorities_level.pdf

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Q17: What priority would you give to the following actions to address the challenges you listed in Q16, or more generally to further protect marine habitats at national, regional or EU level?

	(1) Not important	(2) Less important	(3) Neither important nor unimportant	(4) Important	(5) Very important	Don't know
Further data collection on the state of fishery resources and the marine environment, for instance through strengthening the scientific capacity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Further research on innovative gears and/or fishing techniques	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Further testing/piloting of innovative gears and/or fishing techniques	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Awareness raising / training on innovative gears and/or fishing techniques	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Financial support for the development and market uptake of more innovative gears and fishing techniques	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Legislative measures at national, regional or EU level	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
More effective enforcement of existing legislation	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please provide further factual/scientific evidence or structured information to support your answer in the textbox below, or by uploading a document.

Please specify the fisheries, the area(s) concerned (e.g. MPAs, areas for specific habitats (e.g. VMEs or specific habitats protected under Habitats Directive or by Regional Sea Conventions), areas to protect MSFD habitats (listed in Commission Decision (EU) 2017/848))

3000 character(s) maximum

MEDAC OPINION Towards more sustainable fishing in the EU: state of play and orientations for 2021
http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2020/08/200_medac_advice_fishing_opportunities_2021.pdf

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Q18: Do you have factual/scientific evidence providing socio-economic information on the practical implementation of any of the actions listed under Q17?

- Further data collection, on the state of fishery resources and the marine environment, for instance through strengthening the scientific capacity
- Further research on innovative gears and/or fishing techniques
- Further testing/piloting of innovative gears and/or fishing techniques
- Awareness raising / training on innovative gears and/or fishing techniques
- Financial support for the development and market uptake of more innovative gears and fishing techniques
- Legislative measures at national, regional or EU level
- More effective enforcement of existing legislation
- Other

Please provide a detailed reference to the evidence on the socio-economic impacts of "*Further data collection, on the state of fishery resources and the marine environment, for instance through strengthening the scientific capacity*", or insert the information directly in the text box below, or by uploading a document

3000 character(s) maximum

MEDAC OPINION Towards more sustainable fishing in the EU: state of play and orientations for 2021
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Please provide a detailed reference to the evidence on the socio-economic impacts of "*Further research on innovative gears and/or fishing techniques*", or insert the information directly in the text box below, or by uploading a document

3000 character(s) maximum

MEDAC opinion on the contribution to the GFCM Working Group on Fishing technologies (WGFiT)
http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2020/03/79_medac_opinion_wgfit.pdf and
MEDAC contribution on EMFAF Strategies Ref.:295/2021
http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2021/12/295_medac_contribution_emfaf_priorities_level.pdf

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Please provide a detailed reference to the evidence on the socio-economic impacts of "*Further testing/piloting of innovative gears and/or fishing techniques*", or insert the information directly in the text box below, or by uploading a document

3000 character(s) maximum

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Please provide a detailed reference to the evidence on the socio-economic impacts of "*Awareness raising / training on innovative gears and/or fishing techniques*", or insert the information directly in the text box below, or by uploading a document

3000 character(s) maximum

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Please provide a detailed reference to the evidence on the socio-economic impacts of "*Financial support for the development and market uptake of more innovative gears and fishing techniques*", or insert the information directly in the text box below, or by uploading a document.

3000 character(s) maximum

MEDAC contribution on EMFAF Strategies Ref.:295/2021
http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pari_lettere/2021/12/295_medac_contribution_emfaf_priorities_level.pdf

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5.2 Bottom trawling

The Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 refers specifically to the impact of bottom trawling as the most damaging activity to the seabed, according to scientific data. In the feedback received on the roadmap for the Action Plan, several stakeholders called for banning bottom trawlers at least in all MPAs. While an in-depth market analysis still needs to be performed, preliminary data by the Commission services indicates that bottom trawling represents 11% of the EU fishing fleet with 35% gross tonnage and 38% of revenues generated by the EU fleet.

Against this background, the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) proposed an approach in its recent advice on trade-off between reducing the impact of mobile fishing on seafloor and fisheries landings and value ("EU request on how management scenarios to reduce mobile bottom fishing disturbance on seafloor habitats affect fisheries landing and value" ICES 2021 - sr.2021.08). The advice covers the Baltic Sea, North Sea and Atlantic areas in detail, and also provides some elements for the Mediterranean and Black Seas. It covers vessels above 12 meters in length. The advice shows that each fishery has a 'core' fishing ground, which provides 90% of the catch value from less than 40% of the area fished. ICES advises to reduce bottom trawling in 'peripheral' fishing areas of low economic return. It then provides estimates of the costs to achieve different levels of seabed protection: for example, to achieve 10% of unfished area equates to 0.5% reduction in fishing effort in peripheral areas; 30% unfished area would require a 3.9% reduction, while 70% unfished area would require a 26.2% reduction. It also describes benefits in terms of seabed biodiversity, recovery of fish stocks, and protection of essential fish habitats and restoration of the seabed's carbon capture capability. Further assessment is still needed of the impact of such restrictions on a redistribution of the fishing effort on other areas and via other gears that might have other negative impacts, for instance on sensitive species. It should also be noted that ICES explained that management scenarios relating to gear switching, impact quotas and other forms of spatial control (i.e. coastal and/or small-scale sensitive habitats) were not taken forward to the trade-off analysis because of the absence of knowledge and data and difficulty in the assessment at a small-scale level.

Q19: Do you have any factual/scientific evidence or other structured information that would support any of the following actions? [Multiple answers allowed]

- Bottom trawling should be banned in all MPAs
- Bottom trawling should be limited (e.g. temporal restrictions, spatial restrictions, reduced effort) in all MPAs
- Bottom trawling should be banned only in marine protected areas aimed at protecting seabed habitats
- Bottom trawling should be banned from 'peripheral' fishing grounds with low economic value
- Bottom trawling should continue to be allowed wherever it is currently allowed
- Bottom trawling should continue to be allowed where innovative/alternative fishing gear is not an option
- An alternative /complementary approach [please specify]

Please elaborate, and provide supporting evidence for an alternative or complementary approach in the textbox below, or by uploading a document

3000 character(s) maximum

The MEDAC does't have an official position on it, for this reason it was not possible to provide an answer. Please find below the contribution sent by the French Fishery Sector. "L'approche du questionnaire vis-à-vis du chalut de fond semble problématique. En effet, elle semble ne pas considérer pleinement une des conclusions du dernier rapport du CIEM sur le sujet qui indique que certains niveaux de chalutage de fond peuvent être compatibles avec les objectifs de conservation des habitats benthiques. Dans le cas du chalut de fond, il apparaît important d'avoir une analyse de l'impact socio-économique de mesures d'encadrement pour la pêche, la filière amont et aval ainsi que les régions côtières qui en dépendent. De plus, la profession se mobilise sur la problématique de la réduction de la consommation de gasoil grâce à différents projets. L'étude du CIEM WKTRADE, régulièrement citée dans la consultation, nécessite d'être beaucoup plus poussée dans son analyse de l'activité de pêche. Une étude socio-économique dédiée, dépassant les concepts simplistes déployés dans l'étude, doit pouvoir venir éclairer les décideurs publics et les parties prenantes avant toute prise de mesure. Une telle étude sera cruciale pour le cas du chalut de fond.

Pour compléter l'étude du WKTRADE, la prise en compte de l'ensemble des flottilles, et non pas seulement chalutière, est nécessaire pour disposer d'une image complète des activités, les différents métiers doivent pouvoir être identifiés et distingués dans l'étude, la résolution spatiale adoptée doit être affinée, des seuils d'acceptabilité de pertes de biomasse dans les écosystèmes benthiques doivent être définis, et les effets de reports d'effort de pêche doivent être mieux compris. Les partis pris des scénarios, concernant l'hypothèse de travail, que la ressource halieutique est uniformément répartie et que la pêche est flexible (pouvant s'affranchir des droits de pêche, distance des ports, etc.) sont utiles pour l'étude mais ne permettent pas une application concrète des recommandations. Enfin, les années de référence utilisées pour l'étude peuvent également être remises en question (avec de récents changements et réductions dans les flottilles, mais aussi la sortie du RU).

Pour les raisons évoquées précédemment, nous recommandons de ne pas répondre à Q19."

Ressources documentaires utilisées :

- IPCC, 2019. Chapter 5: Changing Ocean, Marine Ecosystems, and Dependent Communities, Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate (p.254). <https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads>

/sites/3/2019/11/09_SROCC_Ch05_FINAL-1.pdf

- ICES WKTRADE, 2021 <https://www.ices.dk/sites/pub/Publication%20Reports/Advice/2021>

/Special_Requests/eu.2021.08.pdf

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Q20: Is additional information or research needed to collect further evidence on this topic to feed a possible decision of a possible ban on bottom trawling?

- Yes
 No

Please specify in which areas / sea basins this would be necessary, and provide further information in the text box below.

3000 character(s) maximum

In the whole Mediterranean - http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2021/07

/142_medac_advice_msy_fish_opportunities_gfcm_decisions.pdf

http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2017/09

/228_medac_working_document_map_demersal_species_wmed.pdf

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Q21: Bottom-trawling is not the only activity that damages the seabed. Other activities, such as anchoring, dredging or infrastructure construction also affect the seabed. These are often zoned through maritime spatial planning[1]. Should limiting bottom trawling take into account these activities?

[1] Directive 2014/89/EU of the European parliament and of the council of 23 July 2014 establishing a framework for maritime spatial planning.

- Yes
 No
 Don't know

Please provide further information or evidence in the text box below, if available.

3000 character(s) maximum

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Q22: Would the inclusion in national maritime spatial plans (MSPs) of “core” and “peripheral” fishing grounds areas, as described above) benefit the implementation of the approach proposed by ICES?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

6 Protecting marine ecosystems - sensitive species

NB: the focus here is on sensitive species, while commercial species are covered under point 3.

Fishing unavoidably affects certain species that are not the target of fishing operations (often referred to in the context of environmental legislation as incidental bycatch[1]). Generally, small-bodied fish and other animals will pass through nets unharmed. Larger-bodied species are more affected as even the very youngest individuals may be large enough to become trapped in fishing gear. Air-breathing animals such as dolphins and other cetaceans, seabirds and turtles can drown as they cannot withstand even short periods of forced immersion if they are entangled.

There is a documented loss of large, slow-growing fish in European waters. These include sharks, rays and sturgeons, which once were common. In addition, there is a concern that cetaceans such as dolphins, harbour porpoises, seabirds and turtles may be caught and killed in fishing gears in numbers that put their populations at risk. Some species of large marine animals are now virtually extinct in large parts of the EU seas where once they were common, such as the harbour porpoise in the Baltic Sea as well as the Balearic shearwater, large skate and angel shark across all EU waters, sturgeons in Europe’s estuaries, and bull ray and spiny butterfly ray in the Mediterranean.

In addition, the extent of impact of bycatch remains difficult to monitor, due to very large knowledge gaps.

The CFP and the Technical Measures Regulation have already introduced several measures to reduce such adverse impacts on sensitive species, such as the ban on the use of pelagic drift netting. This is the most dangerous kind of fishing gears for sensitive, large-bodied pelagic species. The ban on the use of pelagic drift netting applies to large nets of more than 2.5 km in the Baltic Sea and targeting pelagic species. These Regulations also provide a framework for Member States to introduce the fisheries management measures necessary to comply with their obligations under EU environmental law. However, the application of the ban on drift nets has been challenging.

Deliberate killing or disturbance of sensitive species is prohibited under EU law (notably under Article 12 of the Habitats Directive, Article 5 of the Birds Directive and Articles 10(3) and 11(2) of the Technical Measures Regulation). It also hinders the achievement of the good environmental status under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and the favourable conservation status of these species under the Birds and

Habitats Directives. If caught accidentally, sensitive species should be released promptly and unharmed.

As detailed in the previous section 3, innovation in fishing gear and fishing techniques plays a key role in addressing this challenge.

[1] Non-commercially-exploited species, as referred to in Decision 2017/848/EU

Q23: Do you have any factual/scientific evidence or other structured information indicating that there is a need for any specific additional measures to prevent incidental by-catch of sensitive species and to implement the obligation for fishers to release them unharmed back to the sea?

- Yes
- No

Please specify the species, areas/time periods concerned and the supporting evidence.

3000 character(s) maximum

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Q24: It is prohibited to offer sensitive species (as defined by Article 6(8) of the Technical Measures Regulation) for sale. Do you have any factual/scientific evidence or other structured information indicating that there is a need for any specific additional measures to facilitate implementation of this prohibition?

- Yes
- No

Q25: Do you have any factual/scientific evidence or other structured information indicating that there is a need for any specific additional measures to facilitate implementation of the drift-net ban and/or for extending its coverage?

- Yes
- No

Please specify the areas concerned and provide supporting evidence.

3000 character(s) maximum

http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2020/07/152_medac_letter_iuu_swo_med-1.pdf

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Q26: Do you have any factual/scientific evidence or other structured information indicating that there is a need for addressing certain species, group(s) of species or populations in priority, in view of their current conservation status and/or risk of by-catch?

- Yes
- No

Please specify the species, the specific area(s) concerned, and provide supporting evidence

3000 character(s) maximum

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Q27: Do you have any factual/scientific evidence or other structured information indicating that there is a need for certain fishing gears or techniques to be addressed in priority to reduce impact on specific sensitive species?

- Yes
- No

Please specify which fishing gear and area/time period(s) and provide supporting evidence.

3000 character(s) maximum

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Q28: Beyond the ones identified in the ICES advice on innovative gear [1], are you aware of other alternative or innovative fishing gears and/or techniques that could be used to better protect specific sensitive species?

[1] ICES advice on innovative gear, ICES 2021. <https://www.ices.dk/news-and-events/news-archive/news/Pages/InnovativeFishingGear.aspx>

- Yes, innovations that are under development or under testing / piloting
- Yes, innovations that are available on the market but not sufficiently used yet
- Yes, innovations that are starting to be used by industry, and could be advertised as success stories (either on a voluntary basis or by means of legislation)
- No

For the "*innovations that are under development or under testing / piloting*", please specify the gear and/or technique, fisheries, and areas in which they could be used and provide supporting evidence.

3000 character(s) maximum

GFCM pilot actions in Strait of Sicily.

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Q29: Do you have any factual/scientific evidence or other structured information indicating that that fishers encounter significant challenges when adopting the innovative gears or fishing techniques/operations addressed in question Q28? [Tick as appropriate. Multiple answers allowed]

- No significant challenges are encountered
- Making the switch is/would be too costly
- Making the switch requires/would require too much effort and training
- Other [please specify]

Please provide further information

3000 character(s) maximum

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Q30: What priority would you give to the following actions to address the challenges you listed in Q29, or more generally to further protect specific sensitive species at regional or EU level?

	(1) Not important	(2) Less important	(3) Neither important nor unimportant	(4) Important	(5) Very important	Don't know
Further data collection on the state of fishery resources and the marine environment, for instance through strengthening the scientific capacity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Further research on innovative gears and/or fishing techniques	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Further testing/piloting of innovative gears and/or fishing techniques	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Awareness raising / training on innovative gears and/or fishing techniques	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Financial support for the development and market uptake of more innovative gears and fishing techniques	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Legislative measures at national, regional or EU level	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
More effective enforcement of existing legislation	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please provide further factual/scientific evidence or other structured information to support your answer.

3000 character(s) maximum

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Q31: Do you have any factual/scientific evidence on the practical implementation of any of the actions listed under Q30?

- Further data collection on the state of fishery resources and the marine environment, for instance through strengthening the scientific capacity
- Further research on innovative gears and/or fishing techniques
- Further testing/piloting of innovative gears and/or fishing techniques
- Awareness raising / training on innovative gears and/or fishing techniques
- Financial support for the development and market uptake of more innovative gears and fishing techniques
- Legislative measures at national, regional or EU level
- More effective enforcement of existing legislation
- Other
- No

Please provide a detailed reference to the evidence on the socio-economic impacts of "*Further data collection, for instance through strengthening the scientific capacity*", or insert the information directly in the text box below

3000 character(s) maximum

MEDAC OPINION Towards more sustainable fishing in the EU: state of play and orientations for 2021
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Please provide a detailed reference to the evidence on the socio-economic impacts of "*Further research on innovative gears and/or fishing techniques*", or insert the information directly in the text box below

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Please provide a detailed reference to the evidence on the socio-economic impacts of "*Further testing/piloting of innovative gears and/or fishing techniques*", or insert the information directly in the text box below

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http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2020/03/79_medac_opinion_wgfit.pdf

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Please provide a detailed reference to the evidence on the socio-economic impacts of "*Awareness raising / training on innovative gears and/or fishing techniques*", or insert the information directly in the text box below

3000 character(s) maximum

MEDAC opinion on the contribution to the GFCM Working Group on Fishing technologies (WGFiT)
http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2020/03/79_medac_opinion_wgfit.pdf and
MEDAC contribution on EMFAF Strategies Ref.:295/2021
http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2021/12/295_medac_contribution_emfaf_priorities_level.pdf

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Please provide a detailed reference to the evidence on the socio-economic impacts of "*Financial support for the development and market-uptake of more innovative gears and fishing techniques*", or insert the information directly in the text box below

3000 character(s) maximum

MEDAC opinion on the contribution to the GFCM Working Group on Fishing technologies (WGFiT)
http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2020/03/79_medac_opinion_wgfit.pdf and
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Q32: In view of the remaining knowledge gaps on the question of sensitive species, should a 2-step approach be envisaged, with short term actions focusing on a set of priority species, combined with further data gathering on other species in view of longer-term actions as a second step?

between 1 and 2 choices

- Yes
- No
- Alternative suggestion

Please elaborate on why a 2-step approach should not be considered in your view.

3000 character(s) maximum

In the Mediterranean a shared approach has been already adopted in the last GFCM plenary Session (held on 2-6 Nov), but the following decisions have to be still enforced, and where also further monitoring programs are planned in order to collect additional data:
Recommendation GFCM/44/2021/13 on the mitigation of fisheries impacts on seabirds in the Mediterranean Sea
Recommendation GFCM/44/2021/14 on the mitigation of fisheries impacts for the conservation of sea turtles
Recommendation GFCM/44/2021/15 on the mitigation of fisheries impacts for the conservation of cetaceans
Recommendation GFCM/44/2021/16 on additional conservation and mitigation measures for the conservation of elasmobranchs in the Mediterranean Sea

7 Process and next steps

The main legal frameworks for the protection of the marine environment are the birds and habitats directives and the MSFD. These are under 'shared management', meaning that Member States play a big role in implementing them. The **MSFD** sets out specific obligations to achieve good environmental status (GES) in relation to 11 key topics (descriptors), which address aspects of ecosystem state (species,

habitats, food webs) or environmental pressures and their impacts (e.g. unsustainable fisheries, litter, contaminants, eutrophication). Regional coordination, notably through the Regional Sea Conventions, is an important element of the MSFD. Under the **Birds and Habitats directives**, Member States need to implement measures to ensure strict protection of certain species and their habitats, and to establish and effectively manage marine protected areas (Natura 2000 sites) in order to achieve favourable conservation status (FCS) of protected species and habitat types.

The **CFP**[1] contributes to the implementation of environmental law through its fisheries conservation measures under exclusive competence. Managing the negative effects of fishing on marine ecosystems and protecting these ecosystems, where appropriate, is a responsibility which is primarily allocated to Member States through the regionalisation of the common fisheries policy and the shared competence of environmental legislation. According to the Technical Measures Regulation (Regulation 2019/1241), the Member States have a responsibility to meet their environmental obligations through joint actions at a regional level.

[1] Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013

Q33: Do you have any factual/scientific evidence or other structured information indicating that the actions taken by Member States so far to protect the marine environment through the above instruments have delivered on this objective?

- Yes
- No

Q34: Do you know of any examples of successes and of good practices implemented in an area that could be followed in other areas?

- Yes
- No

Q35: Do you have any suggestion on how to improve the process (e.g. evidence base, speed, level of ambition, etc.) to prepare Joint Recommendations to address the issues covered in this consultation?

- Yes, regarding the evidence base
- Yes, regarding the speed
- Yes, regarding the level of ambition
- Yes, regarding another topic
- No

Please elaborate on your suggestion

3000 character(s) maximum

http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2017/01/18_medac_opinion_technical_measures_en.pdf

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Q36: Have there been examples on which managing the effects of fishing on marine ecosystems and protecting them have produced social and economic benefits for the local communities – including outside EU waters?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Please specify

3000 character(s) maximum

The creation of the FRA of Jabuka Pomo Pit – see GFCM SAC Report 2021

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Q37: Would you see the need for any closer cooperation between environmental and fisheries authorities, for instance in the framework of regional groups of Member States in the context of the common fisheries policy?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Please specify

3000 character(s) maximum

MEDAC discussion paper Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) in Mediterranean fisheries management. Some food for thoughts http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2021/05/115_medac_discussion_paper_msy_management_decisions.pdf
MEDAC ADVICE ON CLIMATE CHANGE
http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2021/03/70_medac_advice_on_climate_change.pdf

Q38: Are there examples of good practices that could be followed elsewhere in that respect?

- Yes
-

No

Don't know

Q39: Would you see the need for further strengthening the scientific community supporting the conservation of fisheries resources and the protection of marine ecosystems?

Yes

No

Don't know

Q40: Are there examples of good practices that could be followed elsewhere in that respect?

Yes

No

Don't know

8 Regional cooperation

Since neither fish stocks nor marine ecosystems stop at EU borders, the EU closely engages with third countries bilaterally and in multilateral fora to ensure good ocean governance.

Q41: How could Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) be further strengthened in their mandate to promote the conservation and sustainable management of fish stocks and their ecosystems?

3000 character(s) maximum

The GFCM already adopts and implements measures for the management and conservation of Mediterranean and Black Sea marine living resources as well as for aquaculture development.

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Q42: How could the role of Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (SFPAs) be further strengthened to promote the conservation and sustainable management of fish stocks and their ecosystems and maximise synergies between fisheries and environmental policies?

3000 character(s) maximum

It is not included in the MEDAC topics

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Q43: How can we strengthen sustainable use of fisheries resources and marine ecosystem protection with neighbouring third countries?

3000 character(s) maximum

Through the GFCM

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Q44: When conservation of fisheries resources is within the remit of Regional Sea Conventions, how could their role be strengthened in their mandate to promote the protection of marine ecosystems?

3000 character(s) maximum

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Q45: Have there been examples of successes and of good practices in a specific RFMO that could be followed in other areas?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Q46: How could collaboration and coordination between RFMOs and Regional Sea Conventions be improved to maximise synergies in practice between fisheries management and ecosystem conservation?

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Q47: Do you have any specific remarks regarding any of the previous questions raised in this consultation in relation to regional cooperation?

3000 character(s) maximum

MEDAC position on the Regulation Proposal on Technical Measures COM (2016)134
http://www.med-ac.eu/files/documentazione_pareri_lettere/2017/01/18_medac_opinion_technical_measures_en.pdf

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9 Other

Is there any further comment / information that you would like to share with us?

- Yes
 No

Please elaborate in the text box below, or upload a document

3000 character(s) maximum

Comments by the French Fishery Sector: "Critiques sur la consultation :
- Quasi-absence de considération des autres activités anthropiques ayant un impact sur le milieu marin ;
- La vision partielle et à charge envers certaines pratiques de pêche ;
- La nécessité absolue de davantage d'études scientifiques et d'analyses socio-économiques et environnementales."

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Useful links

[News Announcement: Sustainable fisheries: Commission publishes first report on the implementation of the Technical Measures Regulation \(https://ec.europa.eu/oceans-and-fisheries/news/sustainable-fisheries-commission-publishes-first-report-implementation-technical-measures_en\)](https://ec.europa.eu/oceans-and-fisheries/news/sustainable-fisheries-commission-publishes-first-report-implementation-technical-measures_en)

[Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 \(https://ec.europa.eu/environment/strategy/biodiversity-strategy-2030_en#the-business-case-for-biodiversity\)](https://ec.europa.eu/environment/strategy/biodiversity-strategy-2030_en#the-business-case-for-biodiversity)

[Marine Strategy Framework Directive \(MSFD\) \(https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/research-area/environment/oceans-and-seas/eu-marine-strategy-framework-directive_en\)](https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/research-area/environment/oceans-and-seas/eu-marine-strategy-framework-directive_en)

Background Documents

[ICES \(2020\). EU request on review of innovative gears for potential use in EU waters and their impacts](#)

[Implementation of the Technical Measures Regulation \(Article 31 of Regulation \(EU\) 2019/1241\)](#)

[Roadmap Action Plan](#)

Contact

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