



# Management Plan 2021

DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries

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## INTRODUCTION

The **mission** of the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (or "DG MARE") is:

“To strive for healthy seas and a sustainable use of the oceans and of marine resources in the EU and worldwide. This involves ensuring sustainable fisheries through the full implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy, promoting in the EU an integrated approach to all policies impacting the oceans, including fostering a sustainable blue economy, thus providing jobs and prosperity to coastal communities and sustainable food, and contributing to a healthy environment for today’s and future generations, as well as projecting these policies internationally.”

This mission statement guides DG MARE’s strategy for the entire mandate of the current Commission, as set out in our [strategic plan 2020-2024](#)<sup>1</sup>. The strategy is built around general objectives reflecting the Commission’s headline ambitions and specific objectives defining the contribution of DG MARE.

The **management plan for 2021** details the outputs that DG MARE will deliver this year. This plan is based on the [Commission Work Programme 2021](#)<sup>2</sup> and covers new policy and legislative initiatives, evaluations and public consultations.

As the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to put its mark, the wider recovery will be pivotal for DG MARE’s actions throughout 2021. This means supporting development in Europe’s coastal communities that is environmentally, economically and socially sustainable, whilst underpinning key political priorities, including the European Green Deal. DG MARE’s external communication will be guided by its 2020-2024 communication strategy, with priority given to actions that help delivering on the three big ambitions of the mandate.

The uncertainty linked to the COVID-19 pandemic requires a degree of flexibility in the implementation of the plan. Adjustments might become necessary in the course of the year, in particular because important events (which determine some of the planned outputs) have been cancelled or postponed. DG MARE will continue to follow the impact of the COVID-19 crisis very closely and will adjust its planning whenever necessary.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/strategy-documents/strategic-plans-management-plans\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/strategy-documents/strategic-plans-management-plans_en)

<sup>2</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/european-commission-work-programme\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/european-commission-work-programme_en)

## **PART 1. Delivering on the Commission’s priorities: main outputs for the year**

Our work will be a crucial contribution to the [European Green Deal](#)<sup>3</sup>, and in particular the [Farm to Fork Strategy](#)<sup>4</sup> and the [EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030](#)<sup>5</sup>, including their external dimension, but also for the preparation of the future [EU Strategy for Adaptation to Climate Change](#) planned for adoption in early 2021<sup>6</sup>. Internationally, we will contribute to the implementation of the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), notably SDG 14 dedicated to life below water, SDG 2 on food security and SDG 6 addressing climate change and its impacts. Our work on International Ocean Governance and sustainable fisheries worldwide makes the Commission an important contributor to making “Europe Stronger in the World”.

As outlined in [Commissioner Sinkevičius’ mission letter](#)<sup>7</sup>, a **full implementation and enforcement of the Common Fisheries Policy** remains a top priority. We strive to bring fish stocks to healthy levels in all EU sea basins and maintain them at this level where this has been achieved. Fishing at maximum sustainable yield (MSY)<sup>8</sup> increases the profitability of EU fishing fleets. It is equally important for the fisheries sector’s recovery from the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic. Full implementation of the landing obligation is also essential. Indeed, we need to ensure an EU-wide level playing field through improved fisheries control. It will therefore be important to make progress in our negotiations with the co-legislators on the [Commission’s proposal reviewing the EU fisheries control system](#)<sup>9</sup> and further enhance compliance by EU Member States through audit verifications and appropriate follow-up actions. The first progress report on the new Technical Measures Regulation will be delivered in 2021. It will identify areas where progress towards the attainment of the regulation’s objectives and targets was lagging behind and where further corrective action is needed. Building on this report, later in 2021, the Commission will present an action plan to conserve fisheries resources and protect marine ecosystems as announced in the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030. The key points of this initiative will be to clearly identify where action, including from Member States, is required to address the by-catch of sensitive species and adverse impacts of fisheries on sensitive habitats, through strengthening technical measures.

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<sup>3</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en)

<sup>4</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/food/farm2fork\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/food/farm2fork_en)

<sup>5</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/actions-being-taken-eu/EU-biodiversity-strategy-2030\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/actions-being-taken-eu/EU-biodiversity-strategy-2030_en)

<sup>6</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12381-EU-Strategy-on-Adaptation-to-Climate-Change>

<sup>7</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/mission-letter-virginijus-sinkevicius\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/mission-letter-virginijus-sinkevicius_en.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> A stock is considered subject to overfishing if the ratio of  $F_{curr}/F_{MSY}$  is greater than 1.  $F_{curr}$ : current fishing rate/mortality.  $F_{MSY}$ : the rate of fishing that produces the maximum sustainable yield (MSY).

<sup>9</sup> [COM\(2018\) 368 final and 2018/0193\(COD\) of 30.05.2018.](#)

Following the departure of the United Kingdom from the EU almost all of the key stocks in the North Sea and the North East Atlantic will have to be managed on a bilateral basis (EU-UK). A Trade and Cooperation Agreement<sup>10</sup> (TCA) was concluded with the UK, including a Heading on Fisheries. The agreement on fisheries provides a stable framework for access to waters, quota sharing and annual consultations on fishing opportunities and other measures for joint management for more than 70 TACs (total allowable catches), as well as common objectives and underlying principles to foster convergent approaches. It provides a platform for cooperation on control, data exchange and for management discussions, especially through the establishment of a Specialised Committee on Fisheries. Implementation of the provisions of the agreement will be a key priority for DG MARE in 2021.

The modalities of the future cooperation as established in the EU-UK TCA will therefore lead to a series of initiatives and actions described in this management plan. DG MARE will represent the Union in consultations and negotiations on the joint management of the shared fish stocks and in the Specialised Committee on Fisheries under the TCA, where all management issues of shared interest are discussed and where decisions can be taken on the agreed measures.

DG MARE will also carefully monitor the implementation of the EU-UK TCA and the possible impacts on the EU's fisheries sector, and will take mitigation measures, whenever necessary. In this context, DG MARE will follow very closely the inter-institutional negotiations on the Commission proposal establishing a Brexit Adjustment Reserve, which foresees specific support for the fisheries sector, as well as its implementation.

The EU-UK TCA will impact the current EU-Norway bilateral relationship because some of the key stocks in the North Sea and North East Atlantic will now have to be managed on a trilateral basis (EU-Norway and the UK) or multilaterally (EU and other coastal states in the North East Atlantic). The negotiations for a new EU-Norway framework agreement, for which the Commission proposed a negotiating mandate<sup>11</sup> end 2020, will start early 2021.

Through the **European Maritime and Fisheries Fund 2014-2020**, we will continue supporting the implementation of fisheries and maritime policies until the end of the programming period, in particular also assisting Member States in addressing the socio-economic challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and supporting the EU fisheries sector towards more sustainable fishing practices. Following the provisional political agreement reached on 4 December 2020 on the **European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund 2021-2027**, we will continue to assist the co-legislators in the

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<sup>10</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/relations-united-kingdom/eu-uk-trade-and-cooperation-agreement\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/relations-united-kingdom/eu-uk-trade-and-cooperation-agreement_en)

<sup>11</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020PC0787&from=EN>

finalisation of the agreement in the first weeks of 2021, so as to ensure speedy adoption and reduce delays in programme implementation as much as possible.

We will also support the Member States in preparing their 2021-2027 programmes and in using them strategically to recover and strengthen the resilience of the fisheries, aquaculture and processing sectors as well as of coastal communities after the COVID-19 crisis, to succeed the green and digital transitions, and to ensure maximum leverage of EU funds.

We will review the Commission's guidelines for the sustainable development of EU **aquaculture** and start the work on actions proposed for their implementation. We will also start preparatory work towards the adoption of an EU Strategy on algae in early 2022, as well as the development of other aspects of the blue bioeconomy. These initiatives will contribute directly towards key 'Farm to Fork' priorities.

Under this strategy, DG MARE will conduct a Review of the **marketing standards** framework for fishery and aquaculture products. The main objective of this initiative is to ensure that the standards can deliver on the objectives defined by the common market regulation by reviewing their content so as to include criteria that are relevant for the market, and in particular on sustainability, and expanding their scope in view of the current competitive context in the EU market. The revision will consider introducing new criteria in the standards that could contribute to providing the EU market with more sustainable products, an element specifically highlighted in the Farm to Fork Strategy. The publication of the impact assessment jointly with the proposal for the review of the regulation are planned for the second quarter 2021, based on the public and targeted stakeholder consultations to be finalised early 2021 .

Developing the **EU blue economy** in a sustainable way will remain a priority. In particular, this will be an important contribution to creating new sources of sustainable economic development in the EU's coastal regions as part of the [EU Recovery Plan](#)<sup>12</sup> in the aftermath of the COVID-19 downturn. DG MARE is preparing a **new strategy for a sustainable blue economy**, addressing both established and emerging sectors, and promoting structural change to allow these sectors to fully contribute to a green and blue recovery to kick-start Europe's economy quickly. To deliver on the European Green Deal objectives at sea, this strategy will set a vision for a transformation of the blue economy under the Green Deal axes of decarbonisation, zero pollution, circularity and biodiversity to guide public and private initiatives and investment. In addition, DG MARE will elaborate an equality mainstreaming work plan covering, among others, the improvement of data collection and analysis on the role of [women in fisheries](#) and the preparation for a call on [women in](#)

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<sup>12</sup> COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS Europe's moment: Repair and Prepare for the Next Generation: [COM\(2020\) 456 final of 27.05.2020](#).

**the blue economy**<sup>13</sup>. Given the important role women play in the fisheries supply chain, DG MARE will also continue to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in third countries via the sector support of Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements.

DG MARE's contribution to the implementation of the EU Recovery Plan, including through the use of the **Recovery and Resilience Facility**<sup>14</sup>, will be an important part of our activities throughout 2021, and will wherever possible be mainstreamed into the actions set out in this plan. The **BlueInvest** assistance mechanism will continue to provide business assistance to small and medium-sized enterprises and match them with investors. A successor to the BlueInvest equity fund, managed by the European Investment Fund, will blend EU finance and external finance.

To help deliver on the EU's ambitious climate targets, DG MARE will contribute to the implementation of the **EU strategy on offshore renewable energy**, adopted in November 2020<sup>15</sup> as part of the European Green Deal, with particular emphasis on new innovative sources of marine energy and the enable infrastructure. This strategy is closely linked to the use of maritime space; the implementation of the **Maritime Spatial Planning** Directive is therefore a key aspect.

DG MARE will further improve the European Marine Observation and Data Network (EMODnet). Planning and assessing the impacts of activities at sea and on our coasts and implementation of nearly all the strategies of the European Green Deal rely on efficient **ocean observation**. Subject to the outcome of an impact assessment, we will prepare a proposal for adoption by the Commission at the end of 2021. The aim is to break down silos between different communities – fisheries, research, environment, transport, climate, space – and to deliver a more efficient process based on the principle “measure once, use many times”.

Following up on the **Single Use Plastics** Directive, the Commission will adopt an implementing decision on a standardization request to the European Committee for Standardisation for circular design of fishing gear and continue to lead a global awareness-raising campaign on fighting marine litter, #EUBeachCleanup.

The Commission, as co-president of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) along with Jordan and with the support of the UfM Secretariat, is organizing the **second UfM Ministerial Conference on Blue Economy** on 2 February 2021. A ministerial declaration is being prepared that should strengthen cooperation on blue economy and maritime

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<sup>13</sup> [COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS - A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025, p. 17.](#)

<sup>14</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/recovery-coronavirus/recovery-and-resilience-facility\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/recovery-coronavirus/recovery-and-resilience-facility_en)

<sup>15</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/energy/topics/renewable-energy/eu-strategy-offshore-renewable-energy\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/energy/topics/renewable-energy/eu-strategy-offshore-renewable-energy_en)

governance to speed up recovery of the blue economy in the Mediterranean and ensure its long term sustainability.

The **Arctic** plays a key role in regulating our climate and oceans. As co-coordinator for the EU Arctic Policy, DG MARE together with the European External Action Service will propose an updated EU Arctic Policy in 2021 by adopting a Joint Communication. It will also work closely with the contracting parties on the implementation of the 2018 Central Arctic Ocean Fisheries Agreement.

The Commission's **International Ocean Governance agenda** is an integral part of the EU's response to the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and contributes to a Stronger Europe in the World. DG MARE and DG TRADE will continue the intense ongoing negotiations in the World Trade Organization, with the aim to reach an ambitious agreement on prohibiting harmful fisheries subsidies as soon as possible, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals' mandate<sup>16</sup>. Following the launch of the [International Ocean Governance Forum](#) in April 2020<sup>17</sup> and the [online consultation](#)<sup>18</sup>, DG MARE and the European External Action Service will start preparing a new initiative on International Ocean Governance in 2021.

We will enhance cooperation with African partners on ocean governance, including in sustainable fisheries and other blue economy sectors, also in the context of the new comprehensive [EU-Africa Strategy](#)<sup>19</sup>. In order to support partner countries in Africa and elsewhere in the world, we will contribute to the programming of the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument.

As a key priority under the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, we will continue to engage actively in the ongoing negotiations on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (**BBNJ**). The EU is committed to reaching an ambitious **agreement** in 2021. DG MARE will therefore continue to engage in the fourth Substantive Session of the Intergovernmental Conference.

To feed discussions and action at global level, we will analyse the costs and benefits of sound ocean governance and study the effectiveness and efficiency of EU policies in view of achieving the targets of the ocean-related Sustainable Development Goals. The EU will continue to strive for a stronger **ocean-climate nexus** in preparing for the next

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<sup>16</sup> The target of Sustainable Development Goal 14.6 is to prohibit harmful subsidies by 2020, but some developing countries claim this is not possible due to the lack of resources caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is expected that negotiations will continue in 2021.

<sup>17</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/press/eu-launches-international-ocean-governance-forum\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/press/eu-launches-international-ocean-governance-forum_en)

<sup>18</sup> Targeted consultation from 15/07/2020 to 15/10/2020: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/consultations/targeted-consultation-international-ocean-governance\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/consultations/targeted-consultation-international-ocean-governance_en)

<sup>19</sup> [JOIN\(2020\) 4 final of 09.03.2020](#)



Conference of the Parties under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The **fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing** will continue unabated in cooperation with third countries. The creation of the EU wide IT system (CATCH) in support to the EU IUU catch certification scheme and the establishment of the legal basis for its compulsory use by stakeholders will bring greater assurances that imported fishery products stem from legal fishing operations.

We will continue to work in **Regional Fisheries Management Organisations** for better science, strengthened compliance and science based conservation measures for sustainable fisheries management, and transpose those into EU law. 2021 should provide an opportunity to address key initiatives that could not be properly tackled in 2020 because meetings have been cancelled or postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, we will reinvigorate the reform process with the adoption of the new strategy of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean for 2021-2025 and with the ministerial meeting on the Sofia Declaration.

Delivering on another key priority under the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, and as highlighted in President von der Leyen's 2020 State of the Union speech, we will continue to use all our efforts and tools to broker agreement, in the context of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), on the designation of new large-scale **marine protected areas in the waters around Antarctica**. This would be one of the biggest acts of environmental protection in history, conserving Antarctica's unique marine biodiversity and ecosystems for present and future generations.

An evaluation of the **sustainable fisheries partnership agreements** is planned for end 2021. The objective is to assess the governance framework of these fisheries agreements, to evaluate their effectiveness, relevance and efficiency. The evaluation will also consider the EU added value of the agreements and analyse how to increase their benefits, impacts and visibility in the EU and in third countries, looking in particular at the sectoral support component.

DG MARE will pursue its 5-year **external communication** strategy, with the following three "big ambitions" towards 2024: "position the Common Fisheries Policy as part of the European Green Deal", "promote blue economy as a carbon-neutral, sustainable sector of the future" and "make the EU recognised as a global leader on sustainable oceans". In addition to specific campaigns and media actions, DG MARE's televised magazine OCEAN, produced in partnership with Euronews, will remain a linchpin for thematic communication, including structuring the dissemination of success stories funded through the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund 2014-2020 and the European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund 2021-2027. Due to the impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak on DG MARE activities, some of the actions or events planned for 2021 may have to be adapted, postponed or cancelled.

## **General objective 1: A European Green Deal**

### **Specific objective 1: More sustainable and competitive fisheries and aquaculture by 2024**

*Result indicator: Stocks fished at maximum sustainable yield (MSY) levels (cf. Annex 'Performance tables', p. 41)*

Full implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy – including the landing obligation, multiannual management plans, and effective control and enforcement – will remain a top priority in line with Commissioner Sinkevičius' mission letter. This will be an important contribution to the **European Green Deal**, and in particular the **Farm to Fork Strategy** and the **EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030** adopted in May 2020.

DG MARE will continue to work towards the achievement of the **key objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy**, in particular:

- Bringing fish stocks to and maintaining them at healthy levels. Our target is to maintain maximum sustainable yield (MSY) for those stocks where it was reached and to reach maximum sustainable yield for those stocks where it was not yet possible, and
- Ending the wasteful practice of discards through continued implementation of the landing obligation for all species subject to catch limits or minimum conservation reference sizes, in particular for Mediterranean stocks.
- Minimise the negative impact of fishing on the marine environment, including on sensitive species through appropriate technical measures.

Despite significant improvements in lowering the pressure from fishing in the northeast Atlantic and increasing biomass, challenges remain. In particular where stocks continue to be overfished, the Commission will work with the relevant scientific bodies to provide fuller scientific picture on the state of the stock in order to improve stock management. For stocks shared with third countries, the Commission will aim for an agreement in line with the long-term management strategies or, in the absence of such strategies, the Fmsy advice. For the Mediterranean and Black Seas, vigorous conservation efforts also clearly need to continue, notably with the implementation of the Western Mediterranean Multi-Annual Plan and the many actions taken to deliver on the MedFish4Ever and Sofia Declarations, such as the Adriatic multiannual plan for demersal fisheries adopted by the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean in 2019.

As of 2020, fish stocks are to be managed in line with the maximum sustainable yield target. In mid-2021, we will deliver the fifth report on the state of play of the Common Fisheries Policy and orientations for 2022, which will set out the main elements of our approach for setting the **fishing opportunities for 2022** and will also be the basis of the

traditional stakeholder consultation on this matter. The feedback from stakeholders and the socio-economic analysis will underpin the Commission's annual proposals setting the total allowable catches (TACs) and fishing efforts and quotas for the different EU sea basins (Atlantic, North Sea, Baltic Sea, Mediterranean and Black Seas) and beyond EU waters. The Commission's proposals aim to maintain or further reach maximum sustainable yield (Fmsy) for MSY-assessed stocks. They are planned to be adopted between end of August and November.

We will continue working with the regional groups of Member States to introduce or amend delegated regulations specifying detailed rules on the implementation of the **landing obligation** (discard plans). Regional technical measures will also be established through regionalisation under the [Basic Regulation on the Common Fisheries Policy](#)<sup>20</sup> and the new [Technical Measures Regulation](#)<sup>21</sup>.

The **new Technical Measures Regulation** provides a more regionally flexible and more results-oriented approach. In 2021, our work will focus on the adoption of regional joint recommendations and the necessary implementing regulations. The first progress report was due in 2020 but had to be postponed to 2021 because of delay in the scientific advice process caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. This report will identify areas where progress towards the attainment of the regulation's objectives and targets was lagging behind and where further corrective action is needed. Building on this report, later in 2021, the Commission will present an **action plan to conserve fisheries resources and protect marine ecosystems** as announced in the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030. The key points of this initiative will be to clearly identify where action, including from Member States, is required to address the by-catch of sensitive species and adverse impacts of fisheries on sensitive habitats. This could include measures such as area closures, gear changes (to minimize the effects of damaging gear on the seabed and on juveniles and spawning aggregations), and mitigation measures for sensitive species. Member States are expected to take proactive steps in these areas, even prior to the publication of the report and the action plan.

As regards the **Mediterranean and the Black Sea**, 2021 is the second year of full implementation of the multiannual plan for the Western Mediterranean, with an annual effort reduction to be fixed in the 2021 fishing opportunities regulation for the

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<sup>20</sup> [Regulation \(EU\) No 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the Common Fisheries Policy, amending Council Regulations \(EC\) No 1954/2003 and \(EC\) No 1224/2009 and repealing Council Regulations \(EC\) No 2371/2002 and \(EC\) No 639/2004 and Council Decision 2004/585/EC.](#)

<sup>21</sup> [Regulation \(EU\) 2019/1241 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on the conservation of fisheries resources and the protection of marine ecosystems through technical measures, amending Council Regulations \(EC\) No 1967/2006, \(EC\) No 1224/2009 and Regulations \(EU\) No 1380/2013, \(EU\) 2016/1139, \(EU\) 2018/973, \(EU\) 2019/472 and \(EU\) 2019/1022 of the European Parliament and of the Council, and repealing Council Regulations \(EC\) No 894/97, \(EC\) No 850/98, \(EC\) No 2549/2000, \(EC\) No 254/2002, \(EC\) No 812/2004 and \(EC\) No 2187/2005.](#)

Mediterranean and the Black Sea. The objective of the multiannual plan is to achieve maximum sustainable yield by 2025. The regulation will also include measures from the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), including those adopted in 2019, such as the multiannual plan for demersal stocks in the Adriatic.

In order to achieve more sustainable fisheries in the Mediterranean and the Black Seas, and against the background that no multilateral progress could be achieved at GFCM level in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important to continue enhancing cooperation with and among the riparian third countries and improve ocean governance in the region. We will work towards the adoption of an ambitious **GFCM strategy for 2021-2025** building on the objectives of the [MedFish4Ever Declaration for the Mediterranean](#)<sup>22</sup> and the [Sofia Declaration for the Black Sea](#)<sup>23</sup>. In addition, if the COVID-19 situation allows, further recommendations will be adopted in cooperation with Member States at the 44th Annual Session of the GFCM, covering management and control measures, the protection of sensitive species, the establishment of fisheries restricted areas, measures on fishing capacity, and measures to strengthen compliance and the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. In order to transpose the latest GFCM recommendations into EU law, we will present a proposal for a Regulation.

Building awareness of and support for the Common Fisheries Policy, as part of the European Green Deal, is a cornerstone of DG MARE's **communication** strategy for 2020-2024. In 2021, an integrated campaign will promote sustainable, seasonal fish species among consumers from a selection of Member States with important fish consumption. Disseminated mainly through social media - but also broadcast - the campaign will engage "celebrity chefs" to attract attention and help restoring demand for sustainable EU seafood in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, which hit the seafood sector particularly hard. The campaign will tie in closely with the messaging and visual approach of the Farm to Fork Strategy. The principal result indicator is the number of engagements in the target countries. A successful first campaign could be followed up with a "season 2" to be rolled out in additional Member States and covering other sustainably caught species. Secondly, another seminar will be organised for journalists from national, regional and specialised press to increase awareness and understanding of key challenges and policy responses in relation to the Common Fisheries Policy, thus contributing to an informed and fact-based public debate.

*Result indicator: Profitability of the EU fishing fleet (cf. Annex 'Performance tables', p. 43)*

Our work in 2021 towards sustainable fisheries in the different EU sea basins will continue to contribute to boosting the economic performance of the EU fishing fleets. Sustainable fisheries pays off in terms of higher profits of the fleets. As fish stocks are more abundant, landings per unit of effort (such as the number of fishing days, number of hooks, nets) are

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<sup>22</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP\\_17\\_770](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_17_770)

<sup>23</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/black-sea\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/black-sea_en)

higher and the operational costs lower. By contrast, profitability stagnates in the fleet segments that depend on overfished stocks.

The [Annual Economic Report on the EU fishing fleet](#)<sup>24</sup> will provide an overview of the structure and **economic performance of EU Member States' fishing fleets**. The report will include a nowcast of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and information on the EU fleet's fishing capacity and effort, employment, landings, income and costs, as well as performance estimates.

*Result indicators on aquaculture (cf. Annex 'Performance tables', p. 44):*

- *[Volume and value of aquaculture production in the EU](#)*
- *[Volume of organic aquaculture production in the EU](#)*
- *[Profitability of aquaculture production in the EU](#)*

Aquaculture is a key sector of the EU blue economy. In addition to generating economic development in both coastal and rural areas, aquaculture production contributes to food security. Under the **Farm to Fork Strategy**, aquaculture will play a key role in providing sustainable food that is also safe, nutritious and of high quality.

As part of the **new Strategic Guidelines for the sustainable development of EU aquaculture**, now planned to be adopted in early 2021, the Commission will promote better environmental performance of EU aquaculture activities in all its aspects, as well as the diversification of EU aquaculture towards an aquaculture with a lower carbon footprint and lower impact on the environment, including algae farming (which would be the subject of a specific initiative planned to be adopted in 2022). The new guidelines will also aim at promoting the recognition by the EU consumer of sustainable EU aquaculture products so that sustainability can become a competitive advantage. Studies will assess the potential of shellfish and algae cultivation to contribute to nutrient management and greenhouse gas reduction targets, and to filling knowledge gaps about the impact of aquaculture activities in the EU. In parallel, DG MARE will review the Member States' multiannual national strategic plans on aquaculture, which should take into consideration the new EU Strategic Guidelines.

The [European Market Observatory for Fisheries and Aquaculture Products](#) (EUMOFA)<sup>25</sup> fulfils the legal obligation for market intelligence under the [Common Market Organisation Regulation](#)<sup>26</sup> by ensuring provision of quality data and continues to expand its panel of services. EUMOFA is now the world's largest database on trade flows of fishery and aquaculture products, and is considered a reference market observatory on food

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<sup>24</sup> <https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/reports/economic>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.eumofa.eu/>

<sup>26</sup> [Regulation \(EU\) No 1379/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the common organisation of the markets in fishery and aquaculture products, amending Council Regulations \(EC\) No 1184/2006 and \(EC\) No 1224/2009 and repealing Council Regulation \(EC\) No 104/2000.](#)

commodities. EUMOFA is able to respond to sudden information needs, as in the case of the COVID-19 pandemic, where regular and timely information continues to be provided to inform economic operators and policy-makers.

The [Economic Report of the EU Aquaculture Sector](#)<sup>27</sup> provides for information on the economic performance of the sector and is used as input for policy development and potential impact assessments. It will be published at the beginning of 2021.

The new guidelines for sustainable aquaculture will be accompanied by a **communication** campaign to be implemented jointly with Member States' competent authorities at national and regional level in the second half of 2021. The campaign will aim to create familiarity with the guidelines among stakeholders with potential spill-over to wider audiences regarding the sustainability of EU aquaculture.

*Result indicator: Effectiveness of Member States' fisheries control systems measured by the number of control action plans implemented within the deadline set (cf. Annex 'Performance tables', p. 45)*

The success of the Common Fisheries Policy depends on its effective implementation and thus on an **effective fisheries control system**. Such system helps ensuring a level playing field, where the rules are applied in a harmonised way across the EU. In order to further strengthen the system, the Commission adopted in May 2018 a [proposal to review the EU fisheries control system](#)<sup>28</sup>. The proposal remains under negotiation by the co-legislators. In 2021, DG MARE will continue to work closely with the European Parliament and the Council, with the aim of bringing it to a political agreement and adoption.

Once agreed by the co-legislators, the revised Control Regulation will modernise controls, ensure better quality and sharing of fisheries data and information (including for the small-scale fleet), reduce administrative burden, strengthen the enforcement provisions, as well as support the implementation of the landing obligation and the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing by introducing the compulsory use of the EU-wide IT system CATCH in support of the EU IUU catch certification scheme.

In addition, the Commission will oversee that any shortcomings in the Member States' control and enforcement systems are adequately addressed, that rules are complied with, and a level playing field among Member States is sustained. Among other things, this requires an active monitoring of the implementation of ongoing (and future) **control action plans** to overcome inadequacies identified in the fisheries control system of some Member States. The Commission will also continue to perform audits and verifications in Member States to assess the correct implementation of the rules of the Common Fisheries

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<sup>27</sup> <https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/reports/economic>

<sup>28</sup> [COM\(2018\) 368 final and 2018/0193\(COD\) of 30.05.2018](#). This proposal includes amendments to the Control Regulation 1224/2009, the IUU Regulation 1005/2008 and the founding Regulation of the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA).

Policy, taking into account the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 outbreak. In addition, the Commission will work closely with the European Fisheries Control Agency and Member States to share best practices on safety measures for fisheries inspections at sea and land during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Besides verifications and audit work, the Commission will finalise a study on the **Member States' sanctioning systems**. This will feed into the ongoing discussions with co-legislators for a new fisheries control system as well as the second 5-year (2015-2019) report from the Commission on the implementation of the Fisheries Control Regulation, expected to be adopted in early 2021.

The Commission will pursue the implementation of the **EU/FLUX standard** within the EU, ensuring that all Member States exchange fisheries data as required by the Control Regulation, in particular vessel positions and electronic logbooks, and by extending it to the automatic exchange of authorisations.

*Result indicator: Contribution from the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) for 2014-2020 and 2021-2027 to climate-related EU spending (cf. Annex 'Performance tables', p. 47)*

The **European Maritime and Fisheries Fund** (EMFF, 2014-2020) and its successor, the **European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund** (EMFAF, 2021-2027) are both the specific financing instrument for DG MARE's policies, covering also the Blue Economy Strategy under Priority 3 and International Ocean Governance under Priority 4.

The EMFF/EMFAF are essential as the EU's financing instrument to support the full implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy, both under the 2014-2020 and under the 2021-2027 multi-annual financial frameworks. The funds provide support to fishers in the transition towards more sustainable fisheries and provide funding for data collection and fisheries control, both essential for ensuring sustainable fisheries. They also support the implementation of a new Blue Economy Strategy, and will help transforming the EU into a modern, resource-efficient and sustainable economy.

Throughout 2021, we will continue supporting the implementation of the fisheries and maritime policies through the EMFF 2014-2020 and encourage Member States to improve the use of the EU funds, including for dedicated climate related actions and to cater for the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed, the fishing and aquaculture sectors, but also other blue economy sectors such as coastal tourism, were among the most immediately affected by the economic disruption caused by the pandemic. Specific support measures for

the fisheries and aquaculture sectors have been made available through an [amendment of the EMFF adopted by the co-legislators in April 2020](#)<sup>29</sup>.

Member States will also be encouraged to give the necessary consideration to climate and biodiversity related actions to ensure that all efforts possible are made to deliver the expected contribution of 30% of the **EMFAF 2021-2027** budget towards EU climate objectives and to reflect the agreement between the co-legislators to reach an intermediate target of 7,5% for biodiversity in 2024 and to strive for 10% in 2026 and 2027.

If necessary, DG MARE will continue to facilitate the negotiations between the co-legislators on the EMFAF 2021-2027 to allow Member States to adopt their programmes and launch implementation with as little delay as possible. Any delays would lead to an initial low spending which may also be exacerbated by the time allowed to declare costs (the 'n+3' rule)<sup>30</sup> under the EMFF 2014-2020. For countries with high implementation rates of the current EMFF delays may result in funding gaps for continuous activities such as data collection, control and community-led local development.

DG MARE will fully contribute to and align with corporate **communication** on the next Multi-annual Financial Framework (2021-2027), including by applying the appropriate visual identity and actively engage in and contribute to the INFORM-INIO network of Member States' managing authorities coordinated by DG REGIO. Showcasing successful EU-funded projects will remain a fixture of DG MARE's televised magazine, "Ocean", produced monthly in cooperation with Euronews. The third season will broadcast in 2021 with 12 episodes of 8 minutes and extensive accompanying social media support. Moreover, DG MARE will further develop its close cooperation with implementing bodies, including CINEA, FAME and FARNET<sup>31</sup>, to ensure a continuous flow of success stories, with a particular emphasis on the tangible benefits of projects for citizens (human angle stories).

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<sup>29</sup> [Regulation \(EU\) 2020/560 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2020 amending Regulations \(EU\) No 508/2014 and \(EU\) No 1379/2013 as regards specific measures to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak in the fishery and aquaculture sector.](#)

<sup>30</sup> Member States have three years to use the funds committed and declare costs to the Commission for reimbursement (the "n+3" rule). After that time, a system of "automatic decommitments" is meant to clear any unused funds.

<sup>31</sup> Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA), Fisheries and Aquaculture Monitoring and Evaluation under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (FAME), European Fisheries Areas Network (FARNET).



## **Specific objective 2: A sustainable blue economy generating sustainable economic development, jobs and prosperity by 2024**

*Result indicator: Size of the EU blue economy (cf. Annex 'Performance tables', p. 48)*

Contributing to the European Green Deal, the Commission is preparing a new approach for a **sustainable blue economy**, to replace the [Blue Growth strategy from 2012](#)<sup>32</sup>. A [public consultation](#) has been launched in 2020<sup>33</sup>. This new Communication should be adopted in early 2021 and will have a particular focus on the contribution of the blue economy to economic recovery. In order to support the recovery in the blue economy sectors, DG MARE will contribute to the implementation of the EU Recovery Plan, including through the use of the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

In 2021, the **BlueInvest Assistance Mechanism** will continue to support access to finance for small and medium-sized enterprises and start-ups, early stage businesses and scale-ups in the blue economy through business support and matchmaking events between private investment capital and innovative blue economy projects, thus supporting the development of sustainable technologies. A new investment product will be launched, which will be specifically designed to help small and medium-sized enterprises introduce new products and services into the market. This will help the blue economy meet the challenges of the European Green Deal and global competitiveness. Using a blending of finance from the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, InvestEU and the European Investment Fund, it will invest in venture capital or impact funds specialising in this sector and crowd-in other investors.

Human capital is equally important. As the project developing a blueprint for vocational **skills** in the maritime technology and offshore renewable energy sectors enters its penultimate year, DG MARE will launch an analysis of skills gaps in other areas of the blue economy.

To stimulate the blue economy at regional level, DG MARE will continue to foster **cooperation in Europe's sea basins**, including with third countries with whom the EU shares the same seas. The EU has provided an important input to the ministerial declaration of the Union for the Mediterranean on sustainable blue economy that should be adopted in February 2021, setting an ambitious framework for regional cooperation. In 2021, DG MARE will fund flagship projects to support the implementation of the revised

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<sup>32</sup> [Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Blue Growth opportunities for marine and maritime sustainable growth, COM\(2012\) 0494 final of 13.09.2012.](#)

<sup>33</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12659-Green-Recovery-for-the-Blue-Economy-tentative->

Atlantic Action Plan, the West Med Initiative and the Common Maritime Agenda. We will continue to support outermost regions to help them develop their blue economy strategies.

Since 2018, DG MARE (in collaboration with the Joint Research Centre) has been producing an EU Blue Economy Report to measure and monitor the size of the blue economy in the EU. The [Blue Economy Indicators](#)<sup>34</sup> IT tool provides open access to the blue economy data in a simplified, centralised and user-friendly way. Reliable and accurate data may contribute to shaping informed policies and initiatives as part of the European Green Deal.

**Communication** efforts to promote the blue economy in 2021 will be aligned with the Blue Economy Strategy. DG MARE will organise a background seminar for journalists in the first half of 2021. The main aim is to increase awareness among European press about the potential of the blue economy as a sustainable sector of the future, driven by innovation. Efforts will also focus on attracting skilled labour to sustain the sector's future development. A campaign will aim to raise the profile of the blue economy and its job opportunities among students and young graduates in a variety of professional education ranging from engineering and IT over ecology to food science or tourism. Cooperation with other DGs including DG Education and Culture will be explored and links will be established with ongoing initiatives such as the Blue Careers Project or the European Skills Agenda.

*Result indicator: Improved marine knowledge measured by the degree of use of the European Marine Observation and Data Network (EMODnet) in terms of the quantity of downloaded data per month (cf. Annex 'Performance tables', p. 49)*

Efficient and accurate **ocean observation** is essential for planning any activity at sea and along coasts and for monitoring its impacts on other activities and on the environment. Depending on the results of a public consultation and impact assessment, DG MARE will propose an initiative that will codify the principle of “*measure once use many times*”.

The **European Marine Observation and Data Network** (EMODnet) will continue to provide data and data products, enhancing the productivity of those analysing our seas and oceans, stimulating innovation and reducing uncertainty and therefore risk for investors. Private bodies are responsible for about a quarter of EMODnet usage. 2021 will see several upgrades including the progressive shift of user interfaces from thematic portals to one central gateway, the inclusion of new data products such as coastal wetland characteristics and extension of coverage to the Caribbean Sea.

As “co-creator”, DG MARE will provide important input to the **Horizon Europe 2021-2027** work programme and its implementation.

DG MARE has stepped up efforts to promote **ocean literacy** and its EU4Ocean platform is now operational. It unites ocean literacy efforts in Europe with particular emphasis on increasing understanding amongst youth of how humankind and the ocean influence each

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<sup>34</sup> <https://blueindicators.ec.europa.eu/>

other. During 2021, a grant to the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO will join this up with analogous efforts in other continents.

As part of the **communications** portfolio and to increase citizens' awareness and facilitate the public's access to knowledge about ocean-related issues, DG MARE is developing a **virtual reality tool** covering the EU's ocean policies in an innovative format. The project is developed in close cooperation with Euronews and will be launched in the first half of 2021. "Ocean 360" will be displayed at events and also be available in an online version that allows users to explore from home the blue planet and what the EU is doing to protect it. Whilst the latter will be measured by number of unique visitors, event specific indicators will be established, when the tool is displayed.

*Result indicator: Reduction of economic impact of marine litter in the EU measured in terms of median number of litter items per 100 metres of beach in the EU (cf. Annex 'Performance tables', p. 50)*

The Commission has taken unprecedented action to **reduce the quantity of plastic reaching the sea**. Directive (EU) 2019/904 on the reduction of the impact of certain plastic products on the environment, also introduced obligations for producers of fishing gear to take responsibility for its safe disposal. Directive (EU) 2019/883 on port reception facilities for the delivery of waste from ships removed incentives to dump waste at sea. To that end, port fees should not depend on the amount of waste delivered. This includes passively-fished waste. DG MARE's intense work on the follow-ups to these measures will be finalised in 2021 with a Commission Implementing Decision on a standardization request to the European Committee for Standardisation as regards circular design of fishing gear.

In September-October 2021, DG MARE will lead the fourth edition of the global **#EUBeachCleanup campaign**, jointly with DG COMM and the European External Action Service and in partnership with the United Nations, [IMPS/Smurfs](#) and a number of civil society organisations<sup>35</sup>. Building on the success of previous years, the campaign will be branded to underpin European Green Deal communication. It will be organised across the EU and the world by Commission Representations and EU Delegations, with central support for partnerships, branding, social media promotion, etc. Depending on the COVID-19 pandemic, local modalities may need to be adapted. Where large group actions are not possible, due to sanitary restrictions, a social media challenge implemented jointly with DG COMM and the European External Action Service will appeal to individualised or community engagement.

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<sup>35</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/press/smurfing-our-blue-planet-european-union-and-smurfs-team-protect-ocean\\_ro](https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/press/smurfing-our-blue-planet-european-union-and-smurfs-team-protect-ocean_ro)

*Result indicator: Maritime security measured by the number of new CISE (Common Information Sharing Environment) connections/nodes (cf. Annex 'Performance tables', p. 50)*

Successful economic activities in the maritime domain depend on the security of this environment. The [EU Maritime Security Strategy \(EUMSS\) and its related Action Plan](#)<sup>36</sup>, have set the EU agenda for safe and secure seas and oceans. The EUMSS Action Plan was revised in June 2018 to ensure that the policy remains fit for purpose. DG MARE – acting as the coordinator of the implementation of the EUMSS Action Plan for the Commission – will continue to promote it and to report, together with the European External Action Service, on the follow-up by all stakeholders, including other Commission services, EU Agencies and Member States.

In 2021, DG MARE will continue the implementation of the **Common Information Sharing Environment** (CISE) during the current transitional phase to operations managed by the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) with close involvement of Member States and support of the Joint Research Centre. DG MARE will continue to play its key role to support EMSA, the European Fisheries Control Agency and FRONTEX in dedicated inter-agency cooperation for enhanced assistance to Member States' national authorities that perform coast guard functions, as well as to the European **Coast Guard** Functions Forum (ECGFF) and the Mediterranean Coast Guard Functions Forum (MedCGFF).

*Result indicator: Installed capacity of offshore wind energy and ocean energy in the EU (cf. Annex 'Performance tables', p. 51)*

As announced in the European Green Deal the Commission adopted on 18 November 2020 an **offshore renewable energy strategy**. Beyond issues related to energy policy (e.g. grid development, financing), the strategy includes actions to be taken to ensure that maritime spatial planning (MSP) respects marine biodiversity and ensures interaction between offshore renewable energy development and other economic sectors that are using the sea, such as fisheries, tourism and aquaculture. These actions will be implemented from 2021 onwards. For example, by 31 March 2021, Member States will have to submit their national maritime spatial plans to the Commission under the Maritime Spatial Planning Directive (2014/89/EU). DG MARE will, by March 2022, establish a report which will look at Member States' plans and their interaction with the 2030 climate and biodiversity targets. The strategy also urges Member States to deliver more data through the European Marine Observation and Data Network (EMODnet). DG MARE will facilitate the process through its data ingestion service.

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<sup>36</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/policy/maritime-security\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/policy/maritime-security_en)

## **General objective 2: A Stronger Europe in the World**

### **Specific objective 3: More sustainable fisheries worldwide and improved international ocean governance by 2024**

*Result indicator: Sustainable management of the main regulated tuna and tuna-like species fished by the EU fleet under the purview of Regional Fisheries Management Organisations of which the EU is a Member (cf. Annex 'Performance tables', p. 52)*

Scientific evidence shows that the oceans and their ecosystems are in a dire state due to climate change, pollution and other impacts from human activities such as the overexploitation of marine resources. Failure to act decisively in the short term entails the risk of escalating costs to achieve **healthy oceans**.

In 2021, DG MARE and the European External Action Service will propose a Joint Communication on an updated **EU Arctic policy**. We will also work with the other parties to the Central Arctic Ocean Fisheries Agreement to start its implementation. In the **Antarctic**, we will continue to promote the adoption of marine protected areas in the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, thus delivering on a key priority under the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030.

The Commission will continue to implement the **International Ocean Governance agenda** in 2021. It is an integral part of the EU's response to the United Nations' 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and our contribution to A Stronger Europe in the World and the international dimension of the European Green Deal. The Commission will continue its actions to fill governance gaps, reduce the pressure on the oceans and increase ocean science and knowledge. Bilateral dialogues on sustainable oceans and fisheries will take place with key partners, including through the joint implementation of the "Ocean Partnerships" with China and Canada. The EU Stakeholder Forum for International Ocean Governance will present solutions for a better ocean governance at its final session in Spring 2021. Together with the contributions to an on-line consultation in 2020 on the future of international ocean governance, this will determine whether and which update of the International Ocean Governance agenda is required.

The Commission is committed to leading the way on International Ocean Governance by playing a prominent role in the discussions in various regional and international fora<sup>37</sup>. In particular:

- Considering the urgency to address the unprecedented **climate change impacts on the oceans** and cryosphere, DG MARE will continue to support the "*dialogue on the ocean and climate change*" aiming to "*consider how to strengthen ocean climate change mitigation and adaptation action*" as decided at the 25<sup>th</sup> conference of the

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<sup>37</sup> Most meetings listed are being postponed in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (CoP25) and prepare for relevant discussions at the CoP26.

- Relations with **Africa** have gained a higher profile on the EU external action agenda. DG MARE will enhance cooperation with African partners to encourage better ocean governance, including the development of sustainable fisheries and blue economy. DG MARE will consider the setting-up of an EU-Africa Ocean Task Force in the framework of the [EU-Africa Strategy](#)<sup>38</sup>.
- In the wider context of protecting global biodiversity and also as a priority of the international dimension of the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, DG MARE will continue to engage in the fourth Substantive Session of the Intergovernmental Conference on an International legally binding instrument under UNCLOS on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (**BBNJ**) with the aim to conclude an ambitious agreement in 2021.
- DG MARE will endeavour to take a more active role and to promote a precautionary and eco-system approach for the extraction of marine minerals in the international seabed area at the International Seabed Authority (ISA) in line with the EU Biodiversity Strategy.

On fisheries governance, DG MARE will actively participate in the 34<sup>th</sup> session of the **FAO Committee on Fisheries**, which will feature in particular climate change, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, and food security. It will lead to the adoption of a declaration on sustainable fisheries for the future following the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Code of Conduct in 2020.

Furthermore, the EU will be hosting jointly with the FAO the first Review Conference on the **Port State Measures Agreement** which was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic from December 2020 to 31 May-4 June 2021. Meanwhile, at the United Nations, DG MARE will participate in the review on actions taken by States and Regional Fisheries Management Organizations or Arrangements in implementing measures to protect **vulnerable marine ecosystems** from the impacts of bottom fishing.

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<sup>38</sup> [A Comprehensive Strategy with Africa, JOIN\(2020\) 4 final of 09.03.2020.](#)

Result indicator: Conservation measures based on scientific advice adopted for the main regulated species fished by the EU fleet under the purview of Regional Fisheries Management Organisations of which the EU is a Member (cf. Annex 'Performance tables', p. 53)

**Regional Fisheries Management Organisations** (RFMOs) are the key vectors for the joint management of straddling and highly migratory fish stocks under the Law of the Sea. Their performance is key to ensure sustainable fisheries worldwide, notably through:

- the promotion of science based conservation and sustainable management of the highly migratory and straddling stocks and their ecosystems and marine biodiversity more generally,
- better compliance with rules,
- a reinforced fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, and
- improved performance of RFMOs in accordance with the external objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy and the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and the Farm to Fork Strategy.

The EU, represented by the Commission, plays an active role in 6 tuna and 11 non-tuna RFMOs or Regional Fisheries Bodies without decision making power (CECAFC, WECAFC). The transposition of binding conservation and control measures adopted by these organisations into EU law is key for ensuring legal certainty and compliance within the EU.

In 2021, we expect to see the adoption by the co-legislators of:

- six regulations transposing the control, conservation and management measures of four tuna RFMOs i.e. in the Indian Ocean (IOTC) and the Pacific (IATTC and WCPFC), as well as two regulations for the ICCAT's multiannual management plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean, and a catch documentation programme for bluefin tuna, and
- one regulation concerning the most recent amendments to conservation and enforcement measures adopted by NAFO.

In addition, the Commission plans adopting two proposals transposing the control, conservation and management measures adopted by the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA) and the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT). The recommendations adopted by the GFCM in 2018 and 2019 will be transposed into EU law through a Commission proposal for a recast.

The regulation on control measures in the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) will be amended to provide for an electronic reporting system in NEAFC using the UN/FLUX standard. NEAFC will be the first RFMO to launch such a system. In 2021, DG MARE will continue the discussions in bilateral and other contexts to further align the electronic reporting systems to the UN/FLUX standard as a global standard thereby reducing the administrative burden of the EU fleets when fishing outside EU waters.

*Result indicator: Fighting illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing measured by the number of non-EU Member States that the Commission has engaged in a dialogue with and the number of countries having addressed their deficiencies (cf. Annex 'Performance tables', p. 54)*

Pursuant to [Regulation \(EC\) No 1005/2008](#) on the **fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing**<sup>39</sup>, only fishery products that are certified as caught in accordance with applicable conservation and management measures can access the EU market. Currently, the competent authorities of 92 third countries have been notified to the EU for the validation of **catch certificates** required to import fishery products to the EU.

Using a system of green, yellow and red cards, the EU warns third countries' partners that they could be listed as a non-cooperating country in the fight against IUU fishing, if they do not comply with their **obligations as flag, coastal, port and market State** under international law. Since November 2012, the Commission entered into formal dialogues with 27 third countries, i.e. officially warning them of the need to take effective action to fight against IUU fishing (yellow card; one country has been warned twice). Only a few countries have not demonstrated the willingness to carry out the necessary reforms, resulting in that the fishery products caught by their vessels cannot be imported into the EU (red card). DG MARE will pursue systematic cooperation and dialogue to foster the necessary reforms in all third countries that are currently subject to the card system.

*Result indicator: Control of imports of fisheries products in the EU measured by the number of catch certificates import refusals by Member States (cf. Annex 'Performance tables', p. 55)*

One of the main operational instruments of the [IUU Regulation](#)<sup>40</sup> is the **EU IUU catch certification scheme**. The scheme aims to ensure that fishery products imported into the EU stem from legal fishing operations in accordance with international law of the sea and in compliance with national and regional conservation and management measures. Member States are responsible for the implementation of the scheme and, in particular, for performing all necessary IUU-related checks and verifications on imports of fishery products. Such tasks require certain structures, resources and supporting tools to be in place. Currently, the scheme is paper based. An IUU IT system (CATCH) has been put in place to digitalise the submission of information contained in catch certificates and other relevant documents. CATCH will support Member States' checks and verification tasks by providing for a number of automated checks and related alerts, thus improving the efficiency of the certification scheme. The formal release of the CATCH project, functional and available to all Member States, took place in May 2019. The CATCH functionalities were further developed in 2020 in close cooperation with the Member States. In 2021, the

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<sup>39</sup> [Council Regulation \(EC\) No 1005/2008 of 29 September 2008 establishing a Community system to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, amending Regulations \(EEC\) No 2847/93, \(EC\) No 1936/2001 and \(EC\) No 601/2004 and repealing Regulations \(EC\) No 1093/94 and \(EC\) No 1447/1999.](#)

<sup>40</sup> See before.



Commission will also continue working with co-legislators for the mandatory use of CATCH in the context of the revision of the fisheries control system.

An evaluation of the **autonomous tariff quotas** (ATQs) for fisheries products is planned to start in 2021 and finalised for end 2022. The objective is to analyse the pertinence of the ATQ Regulation and its current modalities, including whether sustainability related criteria should be added, in order to define which products and volumes should be subject to the ATQ regime. The recently adopted ATQ Regulation will expire in December 2023.

*Result indicator: Number of sustainable fisheries partnership agreements (SFPAs) in force (cf. Annex 'Performance tables', p. 55)*

**Sustainable fisheries partnership agreements** (SFPAs) give access for the EU fishing fleet to a number of fishing zones in third country waters, while at the same time providing support to the third countries concerned to improve fisheries governance and ensure the sustainable development of their local fishing sector, also in the context of the COVID-19 crisis. DG MARE's objective is to renew and possibly extend the network of agreements and active protocols (currently 13 protocols are being implemented) to ensure continuity in the activities of the EU long distant fishing fleets in third country waters. When needed, the framework agreement is also renegotiated in order to integrate the Common Fisheries Policy principles. This work will be pursued throughout 2021. Moreover, an evaluation of the sustainable fisheries partnership agreements will be launched in 2021.

## **PART 2. Modernising the administration: main outputs for the year**

In parallel with our policy priorities, we will focus on **modernising the way we work**.

We will put a revamped human resources strategy in place with particular focus on a “new normal”, move further towards digitalisation and collaborative methods, further streamline workflows and procedures and continue to reduce the environmental footprint of DG MARE.

The ongoing professionalization of external communication will continue in order to enable efficient and impactful actions supporting the delivery of DG MARE's policy objectives, whilst underpinning wider corporate communication priorities and approaches.

The internal control framework<sup>41</sup> supports sound management and decision-making. It notably ensures that risks to the achievement of objectives are taken into account and reduced to acceptable levels through cost-effective controls. DG MARE has established an internal control system tailored to its particular characteristics and circumstances. The effective functioning of the service's internal control system will be assessed on an ongoing basis throughout the year and be subject to a specific annual assessment covering all internal control principles.

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<sup>41</sup> [Communication to the Commission - Revision of the Internal Control Framework, C\(2017\) 2373 of 19.04.2017.](#)

## A. Human resource management

DG MARE is fully committed to achieving the corporate objectives set in the area of organisational management. In its human resource (HR) policy, DG MARE will finalise a local HR strategy with a medium to long-term outlook (3 to 5 years), consistent with the overall corporate HR strategy and taking into account a “new normal”. Wellbeing and engagement of staff will remain high on our agenda as outlined in the Staff Engagement Action Plan adopted in 2019. To this end, in line with the corporate Fit@Work strategy and based on lessons learnt from the COVID-19 pandemic, DG MARE will continue to promote flexible working methods (including teleworking, flexitime and part-time arrangements) as a way to boost productivity and ability to adapt to changing workloads and demands.

DG MARE is committed to ensuring that the gender balance targets are fully attained at all management levels. We will make sure that the target of 50% of women at all levels of management by 2024 is met, by designating deputies to the directors and establishing deputy heads of unit positions in all units and filling them in a gender balanced manner by 2022.

With regard to further strengthening managerial competencies, DG MARE will finalise 360° evaluations for all middle managers followed up by individual and group coaching; we will invest in specialised training programmes within and outside DG MARE and peer-learning via the MARE Middle Management network established in 2019. Improving middle managers' people management skills will help DG MARE to attract and retain talented staff, develop potential, and to boost staff engagement and satisfaction, which will contribute to increased productivity and operational outputs. We aim to support the professional development of all staff, through training courses, coaching, internal mobility, including for colleagues with temporary contracts, building on the creation of a network of MARE temporary staff in 2019.

To ensure that DG MARE's needs for highly specialised expertise in our policy areas are met DG MARE will continue recruitments from the specialised reserve lists of temporary agents in the areas of fisheries science and management, control and inspection. Based on the input from the local HR Strategy, we will prepare the launch of a specialist competition for permanent staff in 2021.

We will also continue to use regularly satisfaction surveys - via EU Learn or simple intranet polls - to facilitate internal communication and feedback. The various communities of staff that have been set up in the past two years also enable to effectively share HR-related news within the DG (e.g. MARE Staff Engagement Diversity and Inclusion group, MARE cyclists, Greening DG MARE team).

**Objective:** DG MARE employs a competent and engaged workforce and contributes to gender equality at all levels of management to effectively deliver on the Commission's priorities and core business

**Main outputs in 2021:**

Output	Indicator	Target
Gender balance at all management levels	1 woman out of 2 first appointments in middle management	50% women in middle management
Staff engagement	Staff engagement index	80%

## B. Sound financial management

Internal control processes ensure an adequate management of the risks relating to the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions, taking into account the multiannual character of programmes and the nature of the payments concerned.

The overall control system established within DG MARE provides reasonable assurance as to the sound financial management in respect of transactions carried out. This assurance is underpinned by the financial circuits established within the DG as well as ex-post controls.

### Shared management (+/- 85% of the budget):

For the 2014-2020 programming period, DG MARE has developed a Single Audit Strategy in conjunction with DG REGIO and DG EMPL. It has carried out a desk review of a selected number of "designation packages". DG MARE has also carried out early preventive system audits (EPSAs) focussing on the functioning of the most important key requirements at this early stage of implementation. This provided a source of direct assurance prior to receipt of the first "full" assurance packages, consisting of the accounts, an annual summary and management declaration as well as an annual control report and audit opinion, from Member States.

In addition, the Single Audit Strategy provides for compliance audit assignments, which focus on assessing the legality and regularity of expenditure declared to the Commission. These will continue to form the main audit work in 2021, together with other targeted audit assignments focussing on specific horizontal themes or risks.

All 27 Member States transmitted substantial (i.e. non-zero) accounts in February-March 2020. The accompanying documents, in particular the annual control reports of the national audit authorities, are the subject of thorough desk reviews and are being complemented by targeted audits, based on a risk assessment.

DG MARE has reasonable assurance on EU payments made for the 2014-2020 programming period since they bear practically no risk (pre-financing) or, for the interim payments made, adequate mechanisms are in place to ensure that only legal and regular expenditure is included and certified in the annual accounts. In addition, the retention of 10% from each of the interim payments made by the Commission will protect the EU budget year on year. The assurance packages received from 24 Member States, with substantial accounts, in February 2019, i.e. for which the entire control cycle including DG MARE on-the-spot audit work was finalised, confirmed that overall the risk for the payments made is below the materiality threshold.

For the assurance packages received from all 27 Member States in February 2020, the audit work is on-going. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the majority of related audits are carried out remotely from the premises of DG MARE. The constraints relating to the lack of on-the-spot audit work raise the issue of sufficient assurance and there is a clear trade-off for desk reviews between time spent (efficiency) and assurance obtained (effectiveness). This has also been translated into a related risk for the targeted risk assessment exercise related to the COVID-19 crisis, which was launched by the central services and which is being constantly monitored and updated as appropriate. However, the mitigating actions taken by DG MARE are at this stage expected to effectively limit the assurance risk linked to the COVID-19 outbreak.

The risk related to the expenditure declared to DG MARE in the accounting year 2019/2020 (assurance packages to be received in February 2021) is considered limited since most of the national authorities appear to have been able to carry out their respective controls to a sufficient level. In addition, DG MARE is expecting to reach an adequate level of assurance through desk reviews on those controls.

**(In)direct management** – 15% of the budget:

A substantial part of directly managed expenditure has been delegated to the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME)<sup>42</sup>. Also in the period 2021-2027, DG MARE will continue to delegate a substantial part of its directly managed budget to the Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA), following a reallocation of tasks of executive agencies. When it comes to the remaining (non-delegated) part, DG MARE ensures 100% ex ante verification of all payment above €5.000. Smaller payment transactions below €5.000 are checked by the financial verification team on a regular basis as part of the accounting controls on the quality of the financial data. 100% of the grants and procurement procedures are also verified ex-ante before the award decisions are issued.

Significant efficiency measures were introduced in the period 2017-2020, including improved efficiency of the electronic workflows for financial transactions (update of

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<sup>42</sup> See section F on the 'Cooperation with CINEA.

checklists). In addition, a centralisation of the financial management of pre-financing payments for grants is planned.

In 2020, following the roll-out of the Corporate IT Public Procurement Management Tool (PPMT), incorporating all procurement procedural modules, DG MARE was able to improve its planning and reporting for procurement procedures, allowing in addition full electronic management of the process up to the signature of contracts. Following the PPMT practices, common templates are now used for the various stages of the procurement processes. In addition, the ARES<sup>43</sup> filing system for such procurement procedure has been improved, driven by the automatic filing system initiated by the PPMT tool.

With the introduction of the Qualified Electronic Signature in DG MARE at the end of 2020, it is expected that the legal commitments will be dealt with in a fully electronic way, shortening significantly the time between the budgetary commitment and the legal commitment.

As part of maintaining a strong internal control system, regular meetings will be maintained with the Director-General of DG MARE, informing of the status and implementation of financial and internal control. In addition, periodical meetings will continue to be held with the Budget Correspondents in the DG, offering guidelines, a communication channel, and a forum for discussions.

**Objective:** The authorising officer by delegation has reasonable assurance that resources have been used in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and that cost-effective controls are in place which give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of underlying transactions

**Main outputs in 2021:**

Output	Indicator	Target
Effective controls: legal and regular transactions	Risk at payment	< 2 % of relevant expenditure
	Estimated risk at closure	< 2 % of relevant expenditure
Efficient controls	Budget execution	100% of payment appropriations
Efficient controls	Time-to-pay	97% of payments (in value) on time
Economical controls	Overall estimated cost of controls	<5% of funds managed
Monitoring of the effectiveness of the internal control system	Bi-annual reporting to the Commissioner on the results of audit controls	Reporting twice a year
Monitoring of the effectiveness of the internal control system	Quarterly meetings with the Budget Correspondents – provide guidelines on financial management, open a forum for discussions and improvements	2-4 meetings a year

<sup>43</sup> Advanced Records System (ARES).

Monitoring of the effectiveness of the internal control system	Regular meetings with MARE Director-General on financial management	At least 2 meetings a year
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## C. Fraud risk management

The Joint Anti-Fraud Strategy of DG REGIO, DG EMPL and DG MARE was updated in December 2019, following the new 2019 anti-fraud strategy of the Commission. The Joint Anti-Fraud Strategy covers the whole anti-fraud cycle: prevention, detection, investigation and corrective measures. It seeks to reinforce measures in place to protect the financial interests of the EU by providing support to Member States in their anti-fraud efforts and strengthening the capacity of DGs to deal with fraud, as well as intensifying cooperation with OLAF. The controls aimed at preventing and detecting fraud are essentially the same as those intended to ensure the legality and regularity of the transactions.

The Joint Anti-Fraud Strategy builds upon the relevant measures that were implemented both at administrative and at institutional level including as part of the action plan attached to the previous Joint Anti-Fraud Strategy and the outcome of a stocktaking study on Member States' compliance with the new anti-fraud requirements following the entry into force of the Common Provisions Regulation (EC) No 1303/2013. The main actions for 2021 will continue focussing on further developing cooperation with key partners such as OLAF based on established exchange and information sharing practices. The joint action plan of the updated Joint Anti-Fraud Strategy includes several actions for the three DGs, for one of which DG MARE is in the lead – Development of a new checklist for Key Requirement (KR) 7 agreed by the three DGs. This checklist was drafted by DG MARE and tested during the three related thematic audits carried out during October-November 2019. Based on the good experience gained from these audits, two additional assignments are planned for end-year 2020 and further audits will be envisaged for 2021.

**Objective:** The risk of fraud is minimised through the application of effective anti-fraud measures and the implementation of the Commission Anti-Fraud Strategy (CAFS)<sup>44</sup> aimed at the prevention, detection and correction<sup>45</sup> of fraud

### Main outputs in 2021:

Output	Indicator	Target
Raising awareness regarding OLAF-related procedures and update of the anti-fraud training offer to ensure that Commission	Information sessions organised about OLAF-related procedures	At least 2 information sessions in 2021

<sup>44</sup> Communication from the Commission 'Commission Anti-Fraud Strategy: enhanced action to protect the EU budget', [COM\(2019\) 196 final of 29.04.2019](#) – 'the CAFS Communication' – and the accompanying action plan, [SWD\(2019\) 170 final](#) – 'the CAFS Action Plan'.

<sup>45</sup> Correction of fraud is an umbrella term, which notably refers to the recovery of amounts unduly spent and to administrative sanctions.

staff remains vigilant to fraud		
Regular meetings with counterparts from OLAF policy and investigative units	Number of meetings per year	At least 4 meetings in 2021

## D. Digital transformation and information management

### Information and knowledge management

DG MARE will continue the revamping of its web presence in line with corporate guidance under the digital transformation process. This involves putting user needs first, making what the EU does easier to understand and striving for cost efficiency, including by reducing the overall amount of content and number of **websites maintained by DG MARE**. This will partly be achieved by continuing the practice of hosting websites run by assistance mechanisms under the umbrella of the maritime forum thus ensuring corporate standards, sustainability and business continuity.

DG MARE will deploy its intranet as a means to sharing information between management and staff and among staff, sustaining a collaborative community of active users. DG MARE will proactively align internal communication actions with the “Together” campaign, fostering a harmonized approach and harvesting efficiency gains, where relevant. Internal communication will remain an important tool to facilitate remote working environments during the COVID-19 pandemic.

DG MARE’s Staff Engagement Action Plan contains actions aiming to improve **information flow** in the DG, in particular between colleagues working with a specific sea-basin or Member State. This includes, for example, the development of informal thematic or geographic networks. In addition, we continue to try and improve the process for bringing newcomers on-board more rapidly, and also to draw on **knowledge** of colleagues with long-standing experience (Active Seniors, Legacy Talks).

### Digital transformation

In December 2020, DG MARE management decided to strengthen data governance in the DG. As a result, the Information Technology Steering Committee will need to evolve to a Digital Strategy Steering Committee ensuring the appropriate implementation and steer encompassing both data and technology. A transversal role for coordinating data management approach across all MARE units was assigned to the Data Management Unit, covering all data sets of DG MARE.

In order to enhance corporate and local data management, building on our experience in DG MARE, we contribute to the elaboration of corporate rules for managing and providing corporate reference data. This will allow avoiding redundancy in managing data when exchanging/sharing between various entities and partners. Moreover, we ensure that data

assets are governed in accordance with corporate rules on data governance. When such databases include personal data, the rules on the protection of personal data set out in Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 must be complied with. For several of the IT systems elaborated by DG MARE, these obligations require for instance keeping a record available in the public [register of the Data Protection Officer](#) of the Commission<sup>46</sup> and informing concerned people about the main elements of processing of their personal data by means of specific privacy statements.

**Objective:** Compliance by DG MARE with corporate data strategy

**Main outputs in 2021:**

Output	Indicator	Target
Corporate rules for managing corporate reference data	Alignment	Full implementation within MARE data assets
Inventory of data assets	Up-to-date inventory of MARE data assets	100%

The IT plan supporting business needs are implemented according to the **priorities** established by the DG MARE IT Steering Committee:

- 1) Ensuring the smooth functioning of existing operational systems under the Integrated Fisheries Management Programme (IFDM), starting the development of the Ocean Store, completing the final phase of the project LICENCE and upgrading the system for aggregated catch reports (ACDR) to support new functional needs and modernise its technology:
  - Data Storage Solution (Ocean Store): the priority for 2021 is the launching of a pilot project for the construction of a Data Storage Solution using cloud-based services;
  - LICENCE: after the launching of the system in production, the priority is the finalisation of development and successful launch in production of a fully-fledged system, supporting the implementation of [Regulation \(EU\) 2017/2403](#) on the sustainable management of external fishing fleets<sup>47</sup>;
  - ACDR: The Aggregated Catch Reporting System will be upgraded to cover functional needs using new technologies. ACDR has a critical infrastructure constraint due to the usage of outdated technologies (Coldfusion and PL/SQL). Revamping ACDR offers also the opportunity to develop a cloud-native application, building already in the direction of the new IT strategy. The main functionalities of ACDR will be

<sup>46</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/dpo-register/>

<sup>47</sup> [Regulation \(EU\) 2017/2403 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2017 on the sustainable management of external fishing fleets, and repealing Council Regulation \(EC\) No 1006/2008.](#)



maintained, and reviewed when necessary, to cover business needs: receiving ACDR, parsing, storing messages and creating a variety of reports.

- 2) Reinforcing the IT support provided to business Units with IT initiatives, supporting alignment with corporate requirements (Data Protection, IT Security, IT Governance) and with the EC Digital Strategy;
- 3) Progressing with corporate actions, notably phasing out outdated technologies (ColdFusion) and coordinating with DG DIGIT the modernisation of our Digital Workplace and our Digital Solutions;
- 4) Automating processes for preparing and monitoring the direct management of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) and the European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF).

**Objective:** DG MARE is using innovative, trusted digital solutions for better policy-shaping, information management and administrative processes to forge a truly digitally transformed, user-focused and data-driven Commission

**Main outputs in 2021:**

Output	Indicator	Target
Development of IFDM tools	Alignment with the IT Plan	December 2021
Monitoring EMFF/EMFAF	Delivery of key performance indicators to Infosys	July 2021

## Document management

The document management policy will be implemented in DG MARE according to Commission Decision C(2020)4482 and its Implementing Rules SEC(2020)800, now focused on **records** management and archives. To that end, DG MARE will contribute to:

- a **digital, paperless administration** by fully implementing electronic workflows in ARES and HAN<sup>48</sup> integrated systems, minimising the paper consumption while applying the Qualified Electronic Signature whenever a handwritten blue ink signature is legally required; supporting teleworking into an entirely paperless environment boosted by the COVID-19 crisis. We will continue supporting the HAN integration of IT systems whenever necessary as well as the use of artificial intelligence.
- the **sharing of data, information and knowledge and to networking** by promoting the widest sharing of files within the DG and throughout the Commission to ensure good flow of information and breaking silos while ensuring the protection and security of sensitive and classified information on a “Need to know” basis;

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<sup>48</sup> Advanced Records System (ARES). Hermes/Ares/NomCom (HAN).

promoting proper electronic register and filing of documents, high quality filing plan and better metadata quality of documents and files via different networking, dialogue, communication and training actions.

- a **data driven administration** by cooperating with the IT sector following the action plan on Digital Preservation Strategy (SEC(2020) 850) regarding medium and long term preservation of IT systems; supporting the data, information and knowledge corporate search by promoting the use of better metadata in ARES and NOMCOM (*Nomenclature Commune*).
- the **protection of personal data** by cooperating with the Data Protection Coordinator in sharing knowledge and application of rules on protection of personal data.

**Objective:** DG MARE is using innovative, trusted digital solutions for better policy-shaping, information management and administrative processes to forge a truly digitally transformed, user-focused and data-driven Commission

**Main outputs in 2021:**

Output	Indicator	Target
Implementation of e-signatory workflow as a general rule applying the Qualified Electronic Signature whenever required by legal reasons, replacing the blue ink signature	Minimum percentage of non-incoming registered documents with a fully approved e-signatory	90%
	Minimum percentage of usage of the Qualified Electronic Signature	90%
	Maximum percentage of above mentioned documents with a paper circulation in parallel	10%
Sharing data, information and knowledge: files opened to the entire Commission	Minimum percentage of MARE files opened to the entire Commission	40%
Filing of registered documents	Percentage of non-filed registered documents	≤1%
Use of internal message in ARES	Minimum number of total internal messages used in ARES at the end of 2021	200
Reducing paper storage in eligible case	Minimum reduction of volume of paper files stored in MARE archives spaces (in linear meters and corresponding number of files (physical units) approximately)	15 linear meters / ±180 files (physical units)

## **Protection of personal data**

Since 2018, new rules on protection of personal data apply to the EU Institutions. The Data Protection Coordinator in DG MARE provides guidance on the implementation of these rules laid down in the Internal Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 and the Commission's Data Protection Action Plan (C(2018) 7432).

These rules essentially set out how the right to the protection of personal data enshrined in Article 8(1) EU Charter of the fundamental rights and Article 16(1) TFEU is to be guaranteed in the daily work of the Commission services. In the fisheries and maritime policy, DG MARE handles personal data of many sorts such as identification and professional data of natural persons like stakeholders, or vessels identifiers, which under certain circumstances can constitute personal data of owners and operators of fishing vessels.

On the basis of the work done in 2020, DG MARE's work will in 2021 continue the focus on ensuring compliance with the data protection rules, in particular by:

- Keeping an updated and complete inventory of all data processing operations (mostly new records as in 2020 DG MARE has finalized the conversion of the notifications of DG MARE into records in the IT system dedicated to record keeping of the Commission – the Data Protection Records Management System which then makes all finalised records available for public consultation in the public register);
- Continued assessment of compliance with general principles in particular as regards lawfulness, data minimisation and storage limitation, by for instance the Data Protection Coordinator who will keep the controllers in DG MARE informed about the rules and principles and check with the controllers whether the processing operations under their responsibility are compliant with these rules and principles;
- Assessment of consequences for DG MARE in the area of international transfers of personal data after the judgment of 16 July 2020 in case C-311/18, known as 'Schrems II'.
- Appropriate information provided to the data subjects concerned through concise and intelligible privacy statements (including a thorough exercise of updating the specific privacy statements on the websites under DG MARE's responsibility);
- Implementing the Commission Decision (EU) 2019/1862 laying down internal rules in relation to the provision of information to data subjects and the restrictions of certain of their rights in the context of Implementing Council Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008 establishing a Community system to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing;
- Organisation of awareness raising events such as lunch conferences about the topic, trainings to newcomers and eDomec correspondents and, if necessary, joint

workshops with EASME/CINEA to explain how to protect personal data when managing projects delegated to the Agency by DG MARE.

<b>Objective:</b> Compliance by DG MARE with rules on the protection of personal data		
<b>Main outputs in 2021:</b>		
<b>Output</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Target</b>
Record keeping of processing operations under DG MARE's responsibility	Conversion rate of legacy notifications into records; finalization of pending draft records (the number of pending draft records)	Full conversion of legacy notification to published records
Updated specific privacy statements by means of which natural persons are informed about their rights and the processing operations of their personal data	Updating all websites under DG MARE's responsibility and IT systems managing personal data; Informing natural persons when collecting data	Full compliance every time personal data are collected and processed
Implementing Commission Decision (EU) 2019/1862	Establishing internal DG MARE procedure on handling in line with the decision every time DG MARE restricts certain rights of natural persons	Compliance with the decision and internal procedure every time application of restrictions of certain rights of natural persons is necessary
Awareness raising on the rules and principles of personal data	Number of events organised and trainings given by the Data Protection Coordinator (DPC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Every time ARES training is organised to the newcomers to DG MARE, the DPC presents the basic information on the protection of personal data.</li> <li>- DPC is invited when necessary to eDomec correspondents meetings to present a selection of topics related to protection of personal data.</li> <li>- DPC organises lunch conferences on different aspects of protection of personal data. DPC may also organise, if necessary, joint workshops with partners (e.g. Data Protection Officer of EASME/CINEA).</li> </ul>

## E. Sound environmental management

In January 2020, DG MARE adopted a package of measures to reduce the environmental footprint of our DG. These measures were developed in an inclusive manner, building on many individual local initiatives put in place in DG MARE in recent years, at the initiative of the Greening MARE Team and MARE management.

The 2020 Greening MARE package includes at its core, the [Strategy to Reduce DG MARE's Carbon Footprint](#)<sup>49</sup>, together with the [MARE Green Pledge](#)<sup>50</sup>, signed by all MARE managers, in which they commit to implement a number of measures. To raise awareness of the importance of staff's behaviour in reducing our carbon footprint, DG MARE also launched a "MARE New Year's Resolution 2020" video featuring MARE colleagues and teams making a personal pledge to adopt a green behaviour at work.

The Green Strategy covers the following core areas for which we set targets to reduce DG MARE's carbon footprint: MARE conferences, missions, commuting to work, resources and waste, electricity and gas. The reductions will be achieved through a combination of structural measures and supporting actions, such as training. In addition, the strategy presents "good practices" which all colleagues are encouraged to adopt on a voluntary basis to help us reduce our carbon footprint, and meet our target.

In addition to improvements at local level, DG MARE is actively contributing to corporate efforts reducing the Commission's carbon footprint. In 2021, once corporate measures on Greening the Commission are adopted (expected in the first quarter), we will reflect on how to implement them at local level, and will update our local Greening Strategy as necessary. This reflection is likely to focus on how best to achieve corporate reduction targets for missions, and how we move more of our events and conferences online, without reducing our impact and outreach.

DG MARE will continue in 2021 to contribute to ongoing corporate efforts. This will be done through our contribution to the EMAS Steering Committee, which DG MARE was invited to join in 2019 following our active contribution to waste-reduction in the Commission, as well as through the EMAS network and by sharing good practice with other services.

For several structural measures, such as those relating to infrastructure, we rely on support from corporate services such as the Office for Infrastructure and Logistics in Brussels (OIB).

The table below reflects the targets and outputs adopted in our Strategy to Reduce DG MARE's Carbon Footprint. According to the UNEP's Emissions Gap Report 2019<sup>51</sup>, the

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<sup>49</sup> <https://myintracomm.ec.europa.eu/dg/mare/NewsPortal/Documents/MareIntranetNewsMain/strategy-to-reduce-dg-mare-s-carbon-footprint.pdf>

<sup>50</sup> <https://myintracomm.ec.europa.eu/dg/mare/collaboration/Documents/greening/signed-management-greening-pledge.pdf>

<sup>51</sup> UNEP's emissions gap report 2019.

greenhouse gas reduction required worldwide to meet the objective of the Paris Agreement is of a magnitude of 7.6% per year<sup>52</sup>. At our level, therefore, we set a target to reduce the carbon footprint of DG MARE by 8% per year as of 2020. The target for 2021 is a reduction of 15,4% compared to the baseline, the year 2019. As we do not have data on DG MARE’s total emissions, beyond those generated by our missions, this target will be applied to each of the areas in the Strategy, at the level at which we can monitor our progress. The targets in this action plan may also be revised in light of new corporate targets, which the Commission may adopt notably in the context of the Communication on Greening the Commission and the potential new areas that will be included in the monitoring system.

Regarding DG MARE Conferences, we do not have baseline data on their environmental impact, so we propose a target relating to the number of conferences that follow green criteria.

**Objective:** DG MARE takes full account of its environmental impact in all its actions and actively promotes measures to reduce the related day-to-day impact of the administration and its work

**Main results and outputs in 2021:**

Output	Indicator	Target <sup>53</sup>
Reduced carbon emissions caused by MARE missions	Emissions from MARE missions	Reduce by 15,4% compared to 2019
Reduced carbon emissions caused by commuting of MARE staff	Average number of working days on which MARE staff travelled to work by car	Reduce by 15,4% compared to 2019
Reduced generation of unsorted waste	Unsorted waste produced per person in MARE building J-99	Reduce by 15,4% compared to 2019
	Consumption of electricity & gas in MARE building J-99	Reduce by 15,4% compared to 2019

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<sup>52</sup> The UNEP emissions gap report 2019 calculated that to get in line with the Paris Agreement, emissions must drop 7.6% per year from 2020 to 2030 for the 1.5°C goal.

<sup>53</sup> To contribute internally to the Green Deal, and be consistent with the Paris Agreement, DG MARE has developed this strategy, which sets an annual target of 8% reduction of its carbon footprint as of 2020. The target for 2021 is therefore 15,4% compared to the baseline, the year 2019.  
<https://myintracomm.ec.europa.eu/dg/mare/NewsPortal/Documents/MareIntranetNewsMain/strategy-to-reduce-dg-mare-s-carbon-footprint.pdf>

## F. Example(s) of initiatives to improve economy and efficiency of financial and non-financial activities

If successfully implemented, the environmental measures presented under section E. should result in financial savings for the Commission, for example fewer missions, fewer travel costs to reimburse for participants in MARE events/meetings, fewer resources (energy, paper used) and improvement of our image as an institution. We do not have sufficient data to estimate accurately the exact financial savings that would result in meeting our target of an annual **reduction in DG MARE's carbon footprint**, as not all indicators translate directly into the equivalent financial savings: for energy and paper, an annual 8% reduction<sup>54</sup> should translate in an annual decrease of 8% in the costs associated with those areas. However, an 8% reduction in missions may not translate into the equivalent financial savings, as we do not know which of the cheaper/more expensive missions will be reduced. For events, it is also hard to estimate the exact financial savings linked to an annual 8% reduction in events. Reducing emissions linked to MARE staff's commuting, will not per se lead to direct financial savings for the Commission, although this will produce indirect financial savings via the health benefits for staff linked to physical exercise and reduced pollution<sup>55</sup>, the reduced sick-leave of staff commuting to work actively (walking, cycling)<sup>56</sup>.

We strive to continuously improve and optimise the **financial process**. While our control mechanisms will ensure full respect of the Financial Regulation requirements, further automation of the financial processes will be sought. We will also explore opportunities to further reduce the time needed to complete financial transactions.

For 2021, DG MARE will look for further opportunities to centralise the initiation of the pre-financing payments for grant agreements, thus reducing the risk of payment delays and shortening the workflows.

In 2021, DG MARE will begin a process to improve the efficiency and transparency of the direct management of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund through the digitalisation of procedures based on corporate tools and the production of key performance indicators matching those of the direct management.

In addition, with the introduction of the Qualified Electronic Signature, the contractual agreements managed by DG MARE will be signed in a much faster and more efficient way,

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<sup>54</sup> Equivalent to a reduction of 15,4% over 2019-2021.

<sup>55</sup> The European Commission has estimated in a 2018 [study](#) that motorised transport creates societal costs and negative externalities to society of around 0,14 € per kilometre. On the other hand, [cycling produces net gains to society of around 0,16 € per cycled kilometer](#).

<sup>56</sup> Cycling to work is associated with less sickness absence. The more often people cycle to work and the longer the distance travelled, the less they report sick. Hendriksen et al. (2010): The association between commuter cycling and sickness absence. Journal of Preventive Medicine 51:132-135.

allowing an important reduction in the time lap between the budgetary and legal commitment dates.

Another simplification measure DG MARE plans is the introduction of the lump-sums to be applied to the operating grants with the Advisory Councils. The lump-sums will be assessed in advance together with the grant applications. Once agreed with the beneficiaries and incorporated in the agreements, they will not be subject to further control or audit. This will bring down the cost of control for directly managed transactions.

As regards the **IT contracts**, the two following actions aim at more efficiency:

- Close follow-up and flexible planning for the implementation of actions assigned to external consultants;
- Shifting the development from insourcing (external staff doing the development in-house) to outsourcing, which has proven to be effective in terms of deadlines and budget. It is yet to be seen on the long term how the quality and maintainability of the applications are. On the other hand, the contractual aspects are more tedious and take time. Until now, the experience is rather positive as the value for money is rather high.

As regards our **cooperation with the Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA)**: DG MARE will delegate a number of actions under the work programme 2021 to CINEA in the following areas:

- Maritime Policy, in areas such as marine knowledge, maritime spatial planning, maritime surveillance, monitoring trends in the blue economy, ocean governance, and support for investment for jobs and sustainable economic development in innovative and emerging maritime sectors (18 actions);
- Scientific advice and projects necessary for the development and the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy (16 actions).

Given their policy support nature, CINEA will implement the delegated actions in close cooperation with DG MARE and in accordance with the EMFF specific Memorandum of Understanding with the executive Agency. In addition, CINEA will continue to look for synergies, closely cooperate with regard to communication, and provide policy-relevant feedback to DG MARE.



## ANNEX: Performance tables

This annex includes under each specific objective the most important outputs planned for 2021.

General objective 1: A European Green Deal		
<i>Specific objective 1: More sustainable and competitive fisheries and aquaculture by 2024</i>		<i>Related to spending programmes: European Maritime and Fisheries Funds for 2014-2020 and 2021-2027</i>
<b>Result indicator: Stocks fished at maximum sustainable yield (MSY) levels</b>		
<b>Main outputs in 2021:</b>		
New policy initiatives		
Output	Indicator	Target
Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council “Towards more sustainable fishing in the EU: <b>state of play and orientations for 2022</b> ” (PLAN/2020/9351)	Adoption by the Commission	Q2 2021
Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on the <b>action plan</b> to conserve fisheries resources and protect marine ecosystems (PLAN/2020/9887)	Adoption by the Commission	Q2 2021
Proposals for Council Regulations fixing for 2022 the <b>fishing opportunities</b> in:	Adoption by the Commission	
- the Baltic Sea (PLAN/2020/9374)		August 2021
- the Mediterranean and Black Seas (PLAN/2020/9724)		August 2021
- Union waters and, for Union fishing vessels, in certain non-Union waters (PLAN/2020/9402)		October 2021
Proposals for Council Regulations <b>amending</b> Regulation (EU) 2021/xxx as regards certain <b>fishing opportunities</b> :	Adoption by the Commission	
- 1 <sup>st</sup> amendment (PLAN/2020/9516)		- March 2021
- 2 <sup>nd</sup> amendment (PLAN/2020/9518)		- July 2021
- 3 <sup>rd</sup> amendment (PLAN/2020/9520)		- September 2021
- 4 <sup>th</sup> amendment (PLAN/2020/9521)		- Q4 2021
Commission Delegated Regulations establishing <b>discard plans</b> for:	Adoption by the Commission	
- demersal and pelagic species in the North Sea (PLAN/2020/9600)		Q3 2021
- demersal and pelagic species in the Western Waters (PLAN/2020/9601)		Q3 2021
- certain demersal fisheries in the western Mediterranean Sea for 2022-2023 (PLAN/2020/10021)		Q3 2021
Commission Delegated Regulation <b>amending the</b>	Adoption by the Commission	Q1 2021

<b>discard plan</b> for Western Waters demersal and pelagic fisheries (PLAN/2018/4371)		
Commission Delegated Regulations amending fisheries conservation measures in the North Sea (PLAN/2018/4360, PLAN/2018/4363, PLAN/2018/4366)	Adoption by the Commission	Q1 2021
Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013 on the Common Fisheries Policy (Extension of the access to waters regime) (PLAN/2020/7512)	Adoption by the Commission	Q2 2021
Commission Implementing Regulation establishing the deep-sea fishing footprint in EU waters, including the establishment of a list of areas where Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems are known to occur or are likely to occur (PLAN/2018/2448)	Adoption by the Commission	Q1 2021
Commission Delegated Regulation 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 (PLAN/2018/4411)	Adoption by the Commission	Q1 2021
Commission Implementing Regulation 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 (PLAN/2018/4409)	Adoption by the Commission	Q1 2021
Report on the implementation of the Technical Measures Regulation (Article 31 of Regulation (EU) 2019/1241) (PLAN/2020/9335)	Adoption by the Commission	Q2 2021
Commission Delegated Regulation to manage fisheries in the Dogger Bank, Cleaver Bank, Frisian Front, Central Oyster Ground Natura 2000 sites (PLAN/2020/7539)	Adoption by the Commission	Q1 2021
Commission Communication - Action plan to conserve fisheries resources and protect marine ecosystems (PLAN/2020/9336)	Adoption by the Commission	Q4 2021
Commission Implementing Regulation laying down the detail rules and the specifications provided by Article 24 of Regulation (EU) No 2019/1241 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on the conservation of fisheries resources and the protection of marine ecosystems through technical measures (PLAN/2020/8437)	Adoption by the Commission	Q2 2021
Commission Delegated Regulation establishing technical measures for the North Sea and South-Western Waters (PLAN/2020/7644)	Adoption by the Commission	Q3 2021
Commission Implementing Regulation - emergency measure to protect Harbour porpoise in the Baltic Sea (PLAN/2020/9412)	Adoption by the Commission	January 2021
<b>Initiatives linked to regulatory simplification and burden reduction</b>		

Output	Indicator	Target
See before: Proposal on conservation and control measures in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea region (recast) (PLAN/2019/5890)	Adoption by the Commission	March 2021
<b>Evaluations and fitness checks</b>		
Output	Indicator	Target
Evaluation of access to deep-sea fishing in the north-east Atlantic (PLAN/2019/5337)	Publication of the Staff Working Document	Q1 2021
<b>External communication actions</b>		
Output/ Result	Indicator	Target
Campaign promoting sustainable seasonal fish species among consumers	Number of impressions	10,000,000
Seminar for journalists on the Common Fisheries Policy	Number of journalists participating (physical and online)	15
<b>Other important outputs</b>		
Output	Indicator	Target
Commission Implementing Regulation adding to the 2021 fishing quotas certain quantities withheld in the year 2020 pursuant to Article 4(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 847/96 (PLAN/2020/9488)	Adoption by the Commission	July 2021

## General objective 1: A European Green Deal

**Specific objective 1:** *More sustainable and competitive fisheries and aquaculture by 2024*

*Related to spending programmes: European Maritime and Fisheries Funds for 2014-2020 and 2021-2027*

**Result indicator: Profitability of the EU fishing fleet**

**Main outputs in 2021:**

### Other important outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
2021 Report on the balance between fleet capacity and fishing opportunities (STECF)	Publication of the report	December 2021
2021 Annual Economic Report on the EU fishing fleet (STECF)	Publication of the report	November 2021
2021 Report on Social data in the EU fisheries sector (STECF)	Publication of the report	December 2021
EU Fleet Portal on Europa website <sup>57</sup>	Further development of the portal	December 2021

<sup>57</sup> [https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fleet-europa/index\\_en](https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fleet-europa/index_en)

## General objective 1: A European Green Deal

**Specific objective 1:** More sustainable and competitive fisheries and aquaculture by 2024

Related to spending programmes: European Maritime and Fisheries Funds for 2014-2020 and 2021-2027

### Result indicators on aquaculture:

- Volume and value of aquaculture production in the EU
- Volume of organic aquaculture production in the EU
- Profitability of aquaculture production in the EU

### Main outputs in 2021:

#### New policy initiatives

Output	Indicator	Target
Commission Communication on the revision of the Strategic Guidelines for the sustainable development of EU aquaculture (PLAN/2019/5572)	Adoption by the Commission	February 2021
Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on a review of the marketing standards framework for fishery and aquaculture products (PLAN/2019/5780)	Adoption by the Commission	Q2 2021
Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Towards a strong and sustainable EU Algae sector (PLAN/2020/7855)	Adoption by the Commission	Q4 2021

#### Public consultations

Output	Indicator	Target
See 'New policy initiatives': Proposal on a review of the marketing standards for fishery and aquaculture products	Public consultation on Have your say	Public consultation from 17/11/2020 to 23/02/2021 <sup>58</sup>
See 'New policy initiatives': Commission Communication - Towards a strong and sustainable EU Algae sector	Public consultation on Have your say	Q1 2021

#### External communication actions

Output/ Result	Indicator	Target
Stakeholder event on the revised Strategic Guidelines for EU Aquaculture	Stakeholder event to be held	March 2021
Awareness raising campaign on revised	Campaign takes place	Q4 2021 (pending)

<sup>58</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12262-Review-of-the-marketing-standards-framework-for-fishery-and-aquaculture-products>

Strategic Guidelines for EU Aquaculture in partnership with Member State and stakeholders	decision with co-organising Member State partners)
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### Other important outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
Impact assessment on the Proposal for a review of the marketing standards framework for fishery and aquaculture products (PLAN/2019/5780)	Impact assessment published	Publication together with Commission adoption of the proposal
Impact assessment on Commission Communication - Towards a strong and sustainable EU Algae sector (PLAN/2020/7855)	Impact assessment published	Publication together with Commission adoption of the proposal
2021 EU Fish Market report	Publication of the report	December 2021
Digital maps of potential for algae and shellfish production taking into account nutrient availability	Delivery of digital maps	Q4 2021
Report on greenhouse gas implications of expansion of algae cultivation	Publication of maps	Q4 2021

## General objective 1: A European Green Deal

<b>Specific objective 1:</b> <i>More sustainable and competitive fisheries and aquaculture by 2024</i>	<i>Related to spending programmes: European Maritime and Fisheries Funds for 2014-2020 and 2021-2027</i>
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**Result indicator: Effectiveness of Member States fisheries control systems measured by the number of control action plans implemented within the deadline set**

**Main outputs in 2021:**

### New policy initiatives

Output	Indicator	Target
Proposal on the revision of the Fisheries Control System (REFIT initiative) (COM(2018) 368; 2018/0193(COD) of 30/05/2018)	Adoption by the co-legislators	2021

### Initiatives linked to regulatory simplification and burden reduction

Output	Indicator	Target
See 'New policy initiatives': Proposal on the revision of the Fisheries Control System		

### Enforcement actions

Output	Indicator	Target
Commission Implementing Decisions establishing an action plan to improve the fisheries control and enforcement system of certain Member States (PLAN/2020/6776, PLAN/2020/9536, PLAN/2020/9576)	Adoption by the Commission	PLAN/2020/6776: Q2 2021 PLAN/2020/9536 and PLAN/2020/9576: Q4 2021

Other important outputs		
Output	Indicator	Target
Control expenditure under EMFF Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 (shared management) and Regulation (EC) No 861/2006 (direct management)	Payments	2021
Commission Report to the European Parliament and Council on the application of the Control Regulation according to Article 118 for the period 2015-2019 (PLAN/2020/9514)	Adoption by the Commission	Q2 2021
Commission Decision appointing the representatives of the Commission and their alternates to the Administrative Board of the European Fisheries Control Agency (PLAN/2020/8296)	Adoption by the Commission	Q1 2021
Commission Opinion on the draft Single Programming Document for 2022-2026 of the European Fisheries Control Agency (PLAN/2020/9538)	Adoption by the Commission	Q3 2021
Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) amending Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 404/2011 of 8 April 2011 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 establishing a Community control system for ensuring compliance with the rules of the Common Fisheries Policy (PLAN/2020/9523)	Adoption by the Commission	Q4 2021
Commission Implementing Decisions approving sampling plans and control plans for the weighing of fishery products in accordance with Article 60 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 (PLAN/2020/9577)	Adoption by the Commission	Q4 2021
Commission Implementing Decisions approving common control programmes for the weighing of fishery products in accordance with Article 61 of Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 (PLAN/2020/9578)	Adoption by the Commission	Q4 2021
Commission Implementing Decisions revoking the approval of sampling plan, control plan or common control programme for the weighing of fisheries products in accordance with Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 (PLAN/2020/9541)	Adoption by the Commission	Q4 2021
Commission Implementing Decision establishing the list of Union inspectors who may carry out inspections pursuant to Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009 (PLAN/2020/9487)	Adoption by the Commission	Q4 2021
Roll-out of FLUX UN/CEFACT in the EU for all domains	Number of Member States exchanging in EU	22
Further Roll-out of FLUX FMC in MARE	System operational in MARE and EFCA	October 2021
Commission Implementing Regulation operating deductions from fishing quotas available for certain stocks in 2021 on account of overfishing in	Adoption by the Commission	September 2021

the previous years (PLAN/2020/9489)		
Commission Implementing Regulation operating deductions from fishing quotas available for certain stocks in 2021 on account of overfishing of other stocks in the previous years and amending Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/XXXX (PLAN/2020/9490)	Adoption by the Commission	November 2021
Issuing of fishing stops due to established overfishing (PLAN/2020/6595)	Adoption by the Commission (subdelegation)	Continuous

## General objective 1: A European Green Deal

**Specific objective 1:** More sustainable and competitive fisheries and aquaculture by 2024

*Related to spending programmes: European Maritime and Fisheries Funds for 2014-2020 and 2021-2027*

**Result indicator: Contribution from the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) for 2014-2020 and 2021-2027 to climate related EU spending**

**Main outputs in 2021:**

### New policy initiatives

Output	Indicator	Target
Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the EMFAF 2021-2027 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council (COM(2018) 390 of 12/06/2018; 2018/0210(COD))	Adoption by the co-legislators	Q1 2021

### Initiatives linked to regulatory simplification and burden reduction

Output	Indicator	Target
See 'New policy initiatives': proposal on the EMFAF 2021-2027		

### Other important outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
Commission Implementing Decisions on the modification of the EMFF operational programme of the Member States (except Luxemburg)	Adoption by the Commission	2021
Commission Implementing Decisions for the adoption of Member States' EMFAF 2021-2027 programmes (except Luxemburg)	Adoption by the Commission	2021
Commission Delegated Decision on the revision of the EU Programme for biological, environmental and socio-economic data collection in fisheries and aquaculture (PLAN/2018/3286)	Adoption by the Commission	Q1 2021
Commission Implementing Decision on revision of the format for submitting work plans and annual reports for data collection in fisheries and aquaculture (PLAN/2019/5722)	Adoption by the Commission	Q2 2021

### External communication actions

Output/ Result	Indicator	Target
Televised magazine OCEAN, Season 3, showcasing EU/EMFF and EMFAF-funded projects	Average number of views per month (as measured by Euronews – quarterly reports)	2,000,000

## General objective 1: A European Green Deal

**Specific objective 2:** A sustainable blue economy generating sustainable economic development, jobs and prosperity by 2024

*Related to spending programmes: European Maritime and Fisheries Funds for 2014-2020 and 2021-2027*

**Result indicator: Size of the EU blue economy in terms of:**

- **Percentage of gross value added (GVA) generated by the blue economy relative to the total economy**
- **Percentage of employment in the blue economy relative to the total economy**
- **Direct employment in the blue economy in number of persons**

**Main outputs in 2021:**

### New policy initiatives

Output	Indicator	Target
Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on a new approach for a sustainable blue economy in the EU (PLAN/2020/7583)	Adoption by the Commission	Q1 2021

### External communication actions

Output/ Result	Indicator	Target
BlueInvest 2021	Satisfaction of participants	80%
Journalist seminar on Blue Economy Strategy	Number of journalists participating (physical and online)	15
European Maritime Day 2021	Number of participants (physical and online)	700
	Number of 'EMD in my country' events	120

### Other important outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
Commission Decision on the adoption by the EU of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Blue Economy 2021 (PLAN/2020/6298)	Adoption by the Commission	January 2021
Mechanism for clustering EMFF/EMFAF projects	Contract signed	Q2 2021
Monitoring tool for EMFF/EMFAF	Indicators provided to Infosys	Q3 2021
Maritime Forum upgrade	Migrated to Drupal8	Q4 2021
Preparation of a charter for sustainable cruise tourism	Charter to be endorsed by cruise tourism players at Second Pan-European Cruise Dialogue	Q1 2022
Flagships project in support to the implementation of sea basin strategies	Publication of the call for proposals	Q4 2021



## General objective 1: A European Green Deal

**Specific objective 2:** A sustainable blue economy generating sustainable economic development, jobs and prosperity by 2024

Related to spending programmes: European Maritime and Fisheries Funds for 2014-2020 and 2021-2027

**Result indicator: Improved marine knowledge measured by the degree of use of the European Marine Observation and Data Network (EMODnet) in terms of the quantity of downloaded data per month**

**Main outputs in 2021:**

### New policy initiatives

Output	Indicator	Target
Legislative initiative on Ocean Observation (PLAN/2020/7284)	Adoption by the Commission	Q3 2021

### Evaluations and fitness checks

Output	Indicator	Target
Evaluation of EMODnet (PLAN/2017/1441)	Publication of the Staff Working Document	Q2 2021

### Public consultations

Output	Indicator	Target
Legislative initiative on Ocean Observation (PLAN/2020/7284)	Public consultation on Have your say	Public consultation from 27/11/2020 to 19/02/2021 <sup>59</sup>

### Other important outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
Impact assessment on Ocean Observation (PLAN/2020/7284)	Impact assessment published	Publication together with Commission adoption of the proposal
Ocean literacy	Signing grant agreement with International Ocean Commission	Q3 2021
Call for tender for two decarbonisation studies	Contract signature	January 2021
Call for tender for seven thematic portals for EMODnet	All contracts signed	July 2021
Delivery of more data and data products through central gateway	Number of thematic portals providing all data through central portal	Bathymetry migration complete by July 2021

<sup>59</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12539-Ocean-Observation>

## General objective 1: A European Green Deal

**Specific objective 2:** A sustainable blue economy generating sustainable economic development, jobs and prosperity by 2024

Related to spending programmes: European Maritime and Fisheries Funds for 2014-2020 and 2021-2027

**Result indicator: Reduction of economic impact of marine litter measured in terms of median number of litter items per 100 metres of beach in the EU**

**Main outputs in 2021:**

### New policy initiatives

Output	Indicator	Target
Commission Implementing Decision on a standardization request to the European Committee for Standardisation as regards circular design of fishing gear in support of Directive (EU) 2019/904 (PLAN/2020/7937)	Adoption by the Commission	Q1 2021

### External communication actions

Output/ Result	Indicator	Target
4th edition of the global #EUBeachCleanup campaign, led by DG MARE	Number of participants	10,000

### Other important outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
Creation of 3 EU4Ocean communities	Number of members	200-250 in 2021

## General objective 1: A European Green Deal

**Specific objective 2:** A sustainable blue economy generating sustainable economic development, jobs and prosperity by 2024

Related to spending programmes: European Maritime and Fisheries Funds for 2014-2020 and 2021-2027

**Result indicator: Maritime security measured by the number of new CISE (Common Information Sharing Environment) connections/ nodes**

**Main outputs in 2021:**

### Other important outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
Grant to EFCA to maintain the CG qualifications Network and the GCF Handbook	Grant allocation	Q2 2021
European Coast Guard Functions Forum (ECGFF)	Grant allocation	Q2 2021
Mediterranean Coast Guard Functions Forum (MCGFF)	Grant allocation	Q2 2021
Creation of a CISE incident alerting service	Call for proposals	Q2 2021

## General objective 1: A European Green Deal

**Specific objective 2:** A sustainable blue economy generating sustainable economic development, jobs and prosperity by 2024

Related to spending programmes: European Maritime and Fisheries Funds for 2014-2020 and 2021-2027

**Result indicator: Installed capacity of EU offshore wind energy and ocean energy**

**Main outputs in 2021:**

### Evaluations and fitness checks

Output	Indicator	Target
Evaluation of EU ocean energy development and the related policy (PLAN/2019/6047)	Publication of the Staff Working Document	Q1 2021

### Other important outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
Investment in the blue economy:		
– Assistance mechanism	Coaching provided to 150 companies with at least 3 in each sea basin	Q4 2021
– Investment platform	150 companies in project pipeline	Q2 2021
– Blue Invest Strategy	Conference takes place	Q1 2021
– BlueInvest Fund	Investment of Fund in 2 intermediaries	Q4 2021
Blue Economy Financing Principles - commitment by financial industry	Number of organisations (e.g. financial institutions and NGOs) signing up to the principles as members/signatories	Increased number of commercial and development banks signing up to the principles
Call for proposals MSP cross border cooperation Baltic, North Sea, Atlantic, Mediterranean and Outermost regions	Publication of the call	Q3 2021
Blue Economy Report 2021	Publication of the 4th edition	May 2021
Blue Indicators IT Tool	Ongoing improvements and addition of data (graphs/charts for sea basin data, general improvements, possible section on emerging sectors)	2021 (throughout)

## General objective 2: A Stronger Europe in the World

**Specific objective 3:** *More sustainable fisheries worldwide and improved international ocean governance by 2024*

*Related to spending programmes:  
Regional Fisheries Management Organisations*

**Result indicator: Sustainable management of the main regulated tuna and tuna-like species fished by the EU fleet under the purview of Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) of which the EU is a Member**

**Main outputs in 2021:**

### Other important outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
Stakeholder Forum for International Ocean Governance	Third meeting	April 2021
BBNJ	Fourth meeting under General Assembly resolution 72/249 or number of preparatory meetings under the extended intersessional period.	2021
Implementation of the support for the FAO global capacity development umbrella programme on the Port States Measures Agreement	Number of third countries that received support	Number tbc early 2021
Hosting of the Port State Measures Agreement Meeting of the Parties taking place in Brussels	Meeting to be held	2021
Our Ocean Conference 2021 – commitments	Adoption by the Commission and endorsement by Council	2021
UN Ocean Conference commitments	Adoption by the Commission and endorsement by Council	2021
Study on the costs of sound ocean governance	Study published	Q4 2021
Setting-up of an EU-African Task Force for policy cooperation and dialogue on international ocean governance depending on the outcome of a feasibility study	Study completed	Q3-Q4 2021
5 <sup>th</sup> and 6 <sup>th</sup> editions of International Maritime Spatial Planning Forum	Workshops to be organised	Q2-Q3 2021
Third International MSP Conference; jointly organised between DG MARE and IOC UNESCO	Conference takes place	September 2021

## General objective 2: A Stronger Europe in the World

**Specific objective 3:** More sustainable fisheries worldwide and improved international ocean governance by 2024

Related to spending programmes:  
Regional Fisheries Management Organisations

**Result indicator: Conservation measures based on scientific advice adopted for the main regulated species fished by the EU fleet under the purview of Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) of which the EU is a Member**

**Main outputs in 2021:**

### New policy initiatives

Output	Indicator	Target
Joint Communication on the EU's <b>Arctic policy</b> (PLAN/2020/8710, co-lead: European External Action Service and DG MARE)	Adoption by the Commission	Q4 2021
<p><b>Transposition of RFMO rules into EU law</b> – proposals for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- establishing a multiannual management plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean, amending Regulations (EC) No 1936/2001, (EU) 2017/2107, and (EU) 2019/833 and repealing Regulation (EU) 2016/1627</li> <li>- laying down management, conservation and control measures applicable in the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Convention area and amending Council Regulation (EU) No 520/2007</li> <li>- amending the Regulation (EU) 2019/833 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2019 laying down conservation and enforcement measures applicable in the Regulatory Area of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation</li> <li>- establishing an electronic catch documentation programme for bluefin tuna repealing Regulation (EU) No 640/2010</li> </ul>	Adoption by the European Parliament and by the Council	<p>Q1 2021</p> <p>Q1 2021</p> <p>Q1 2021</p> <p>Q4 2021</p>
<p>Transposition of conservation and control measures adopted by the following RFMOs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean and the Black Sea (GFCM) (recast - PLAN/2019/5890)</li> <li>o Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) (PLAN/2019/6100)</li> <li>o Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) (PLAN/2018/4716)</li> <li>o Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Commission (SIOFA) (PLAN/2020/9697)</li> <li>o Commission for the Conservation of the Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT) (PLAN/2020/9696)</li> </ul>	Adoption by the Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o GFCM: February 2021</li> <li>o IOTC: Q1 2021</li> <li>o WCPFC: Q1 2021</li> <li>o SIOFA: Q4 2021</li> <li>o CCSBT: Q4 2021</li> </ul>
Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council regarding the	Adoption by the Commission	April 2021

introduction of the electronic reporting system in the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) (PLAN/2020/7568)		
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## General objective 2: A Stronger Europe in the World

**Specific objective 3:** *More sustainable fisheries worldwide and improved international ocean governance by 2024*

*Related to spending programmes: European Maritime and Fisheries Funds for 2014-2020 and 2021-2027*

**Result indicator: Fighting illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing measured by the number of non-EU Member States that the Commission has engaged in a dialogue with and the number of countries having addressed their deficiencies**

**Main outputs in 2021:**

### New policy initiatives

Output	Indicator	Target
Commission Decisions on pre-identification of a third country as a non-cooperating third country in fighting IUU fishing	Adoption by the Commission	2021
Revocations of pre-identifications	Adoption by the Commission	2021
Commission Decisions on identification of a third country as a non-cooperating third country in fighting IUU fishing	Adoption by the Commission	2021
Revocations of identifications	Adoption by the Commission	2021
Proposals for Council Implementing Decisions amending Implementing Decision 2014/170/EU, establishing a list of non-cooperating third countries in fighting illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing	Adoption by the Commission	2021
Commission Implementing Regulation on the EU list of vessels engaged in IUU fishing (update of list) (PLAN/2020/6792)	Adoption by the Commission	Q1 2021

Output	Indicator	Target
Establishment of a Mediterranean virtual regional training academy on fisheries control and inspection	Grant allocation	Q4 2021

## General objective 2: A Stronger Europe in the World

**Specific objective 3:** More sustainable fisheries worldwide and improved international ocean governance by 2024

Related to spending programmes: European Maritime and Fisheries Funds for 2014-2020 and 2021-2027

**Result indicator: Control of imports of fisheries products in the EU measured by the number of catch certificates import refusals by Member States**

**Main outputs in 2021:**

### Other important outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
Modernisation of the IUU catch certification system (CATCH 1.0) as part of DG SANTE TRACES system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>List of amended functionalities in CATCH environment</li> <li>List of modifications in CATCH environment following adoption of legal basis for its compulsory use (Proposal on the revision of the Fisheries Control System)</li> </ul>	2021

## General objective 2: A Stronger Europe in the World

**Specific objective 3:** More sustainable fisheries worldwide and improved international ocean governance by 2024

Related to spending programmes: Sustainable fisheries partnership agreements

**Result indicator: Number of sustainable fisheries partnership agreements (SFPAs) in force**

**Main outputs in 2021:**

### New policy initiatives

Output	Indicator	Target
<b>Proposals</b> for negotiation mandates and/or for the signature and conclusion of a <b>new SFPA/Protocol or the renewal of an existing SFPA/Protocol</b> with the following third countries <sup>60</sup> :	Adoption by the Commission	
- Equatorial Guinea – mandate (2016/MARE/068) and proposals (PLAN/2020/9474, 9475, 9476)		mandate: Q3 2021 proposals: Q4 2021
- Gabon – proposals (2016/MARE/065, 066 and 067)		Q2 2021
- Greenland – proposals (PLAN/2018/4779 and 4780)		Q1 2021
- Guinea – mandate (PLAN/2019/5069) and proposals (PLAN/2020/9741, 9763)		mandate: Q2 2021 proposals: Q4 2021

<sup>60</sup> SFPAs and their associated protocols enter into force after concluding negotiations with the third country concerned.

and 9764)		
- Kenya (proposals: 2016/MARE/053, 054 and 055)		Q4 2021
- Kiribati (proposals: 2015/MARE/006, 007 and 008)		Q3 2021
- Liberia – proposals (PLAN/2020/9477, 9479, 9480)		Q4 2021
- Madagascar – proposals (PLAN/2017/1307, 1308 and 1309)		Q2 2021
- Mauritius – mandate (PLAN/2020/8773) and proposals (PLAN/2020/9639, 9640 and 9642)		mandate: Q2 2021 proposals: Q4 2021
- EU-Seychelles Agreement on access to the waters of Mayotte (PLAN/2018/4897 and 4899)		Q1 2021
- Mozambique (proposals: 2015/MARE/009, 010 and 011)		Q4 2021

#### Evaluations and fitness checks

Output	Indicator	Target
Ex-post evaluation of the current SFPAs/Protocol and ex-ante evaluation and analysis of the impact of a new SFPAs/Protocol between the EU and Mauritius (PLAN/2020/8772):	Publication of the Staff Working Document	Q2 2021
Evaluation of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (PLAN/2020/9451)		Q4 2021

#### Public consultations

Output	Indicator	Target
Public consultation linked to the Evaluation of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (see above)	Public consultation on Have your say	Q1 2021

#### Other important outputs

Output	Indicator	Target
Commission Decisions regarding credits for the implementation of SFPAs (financing decisions)	Adoption by the Commission	2021

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