

## Multiannual plan for Adriatic fisheries

During the November I plenary session, Parliament is due to vote to establish its first-reading position on a legislative proposal for a multiannual plan to manage fisheries of small pelagics (anchovy and sardine) in the Adriatic Sea, the first such plan proposed in the Mediterranean basin.

### Background

In the Adriatic fisheries, a significant component consists of small pelagics (i.e. species living in the water column, as contrasted to demersal species, living close to the bottom). The vast majority of these fisheries target anchovy and sardine, with small amounts of mackerel and horse mackerel mainly forming by-catches. Italy and Croatia account for almost all catches of small pelagics in the Adriatic Sea, while Slovenia, along with Albania and Montenegro, take a minor part of the catches. Anchovy and sardine stocks have been overfished and are far from sustainable fishing levels. Management at EU and national level complements international measures adopted by the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), in an overall framework that has been [evaluated](#) as complex and ineffective.

### European Commission proposal

On 24 February 2017, the Commission adopted a [proposal](#) for a multiannual plan for small pelagic fisheries (sardine and anchovy) in the Adriatic Sea. The plan proposes a major shift in fisheries management in the Adriatic, currently based on fishing effort, by introducing a system of total allowable catches (TACs). The plan is based on target ranges of fishing mortality that would be used in setting fishing opportunities, and includes levels of spawning stocks biomass, under which safeguard measures must be taken. It also provides for regional cooperation between Member States concerned, and introduces additional measures to reinforce control.

### European Parliament position

The Parliament's Committee on Fisheries (PECH) adopted its [report](#) on 9 October 2018, by 14 votes to 11 with 1 abstention. The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) also contributed a [position](#) in the form of amendments. The report makes several significant modifications to the proposal. In particular, it supports maintaining the current regime based on management of fishing effort, and opposes introduction of TACs. The report also requires using reference points based on stock biomass, instead of target fishing mortality ranges. In addition, catch limits for small pelagics in 2019 must be set at the level of the 2014 catches, and reduced by 4 % annually between 2020 and 2022. The Commission is required to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan three years after its application, and if appropriate, amend it.

Map of the Adriatic Sea



Data source: [European Atlas of the Seas](#).

First-reading report: [2018/0043\(COD\)](#); Committee responsible: PECH; Rapporteur: Ruža Tomašić (ECR, Croatia). For further information see our 'EU Legislation in progress' [briefing](#).

