**Recreational fisheries**  
Some 10 million Europeans go fishing at sea every year with an economic impact of about 10.5 billion euro, supporting almost 100,000 jobs.[[1]](#footnote-1) Far the most recreational sea fishing is recreational angling (rod & line fishing).  
   
EIFAC/FAO have defined recreational fisheries[[2]](#footnote-2)[[3]](#footnote-3). Before that (in 2004) EAA came up with a proposal for a recreational angling definition.[[4]](#footnote-4)  
  
Various EU legislation define recreational fisheries as “*non-commercial fishing activities exploiting marine biological resources for recreation, tourism or sport;”*  
  
The EU’s Data Collection Framework includes recreational fisheries in the definition of ‘fisheries sector’:  
*‘fisheries sector’ means activities related to commercial fisheries, recreational fisheries, aquaculture and industries processing fisheries products;*Subsistence fishing can be difficult to determine as it can be both recreational and commercial fishing. In EU this is not a big problem. The EU legislation does not operate with subsistence fishing only commercial- and recreational fishing. Recreational fishers are not allowed to sell of their catches, which is an important demarcation line between the two types of fishing, commercial- and recreational fishing. However, it can be difficult to determine if the catch by a passenger onboard a fishing vessel (e.g. ‘pesca tourism’) or boat not owned by the fisher shall be deemed commercial catch or recreational catch. With the reviewed Control Regulation this will be somewhat easier as all recreational fishers shall be licensed or registered. But there is still some room left for interpretation. If some, or all, of a passenger’s catches remain on the fishing vessel, these catches shall be registered as commercial catches.   
   
The Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) has no articles about recreational fisheries but one recital: *“(3) Recreational fisheries can have a significant impact on fish resources and Member States should, therefore, ensure that they are conducted in a manner that is compatible with the objectives of the CFP.”*

Nevertheless, recreational fisheries management and data collection provisions are adopted increasingly at EU level. The CFP of 2013 needs be updated to reflect the present and future situation of recreational fisheries legislation at EU level. The CFP scope should include recreational fisheries, with an emphasize not only on the impact on the fish resource but also the contributions to the economy, people and society. This is already done to some extent in some EU documents most recently in the revised control regulation. Cutting from the draft version of 15 June 2023:  
 *“(30) Recreational fisheries play an important role in the Union, both from a biological, economic and social perspective...”*  
  
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**Note:** This event took place in the European Parliament 2022:  
*Exploring the inclusion of marine recreational fisheries in the Common Fisheries Policy[[5]](#footnote-5)*

1. Research for PECH Committee - Marine recreational and semi-subsistence fishing - its value and its impact on fish stocks. Study 14-07-2017  
   [www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/IPOL\_STU(2017)601996](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/IPOL_STU(2017)601996) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [www.fao.org/3/i0363e/i0363e00.htm](http://www.fao.org/3/i0363e/i0363e00.htm) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. www.fao.org/3/i2708e/i2708e00.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. [www.eaa-europe.org/topics/what-is-recreational-fishing/](http://www.eaa-europe.org/topics/what-is-recreational-fishing/) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. www.eaa-europe.org/european-parliament-forum/ep-recfishing-forum-events/23-march-2022-recreational-fisheries-and-cfp.html [↑](#footnote-ref-5)