

# EU Common Fisheries Policy and the revised Fisheries Control Regulation

A Position Paper on the use of GS1 Standards and Services as a tool to help companies address regulation more efficiently



## Background

In our interconnected world, transparency is crucial for organizations and an increasing demand for sustainability has created a need for accurate data throughout company operations. The European Union is further driving that need through policy development and new legislation. Adapting to new legislation often requires substantial investments from companies and many struggle to fulfil all requirements in time.

### The Need for End-to-End Transparency

End-to-end transparency has emerged as a strategic imperative for organizations worldwide. To meet the growing demand for transparency from trading partners, consumers, and investors, many companies are intensifying efforts to facilitate seamless and efficient information sharing across the supply chain.

Regulation has been one of the key drivers as stricter rules on sustainability reporting has created an urgent need for accurate and detailed data about company operations which, as a positive side effect, has helped companies foster the development of solutions to improve supply chain efficiency.

Achieving end-to-end transparency throughout the supply chain has however remained elusive. The lack of standardized data collection, processing, and sharing creates barriers for cooperation. As rules and regulation continues to stack up, companies are forced to reconsider how they operate.

### Sustainability in the European Union

In an effort to overcome the challenges of climate change and environmental degradation, the European Union (EU) has launched a number of initiatives, spearheaded by the European Green Deal, to help transform the EU into a modern, resource-efficient, and competitive economy.

To support the ambitious targets of the European union, policy development and new legislation aimed at creating a more environmentally conscious and socially responsible corporate landscape within the EU, are being put into force.

Several of these, such as the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD), the Regulation on Deforestation Free Products (EUDR), the Eco-design for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR), the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) and the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) along with the revised EU fisheries Control Regulation, require detailed reporting based on access to high-quality data throughout the supply chain.

### EU Common Fisheries Policy

The EU Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) is a set of rules for sustainably managing European fishing fleets and conserving fish stocks. It covers several key areas such as setting criteria for granting fishing licenses and granting access to fishing waters, setting catch limits and quotas for fishing fleets, and setting rules for the trade and marketing of fish and seafood products.

### (Revised) EU Fisheries Control Regulation

The EU Fisheries Control Regulation is a regulation that was adopted in 2013 to ensure that the rules of the common fisheries policy are applied and implemented in practice. It applies to all activities carried out on the territory of the European Union or by fishing vessels of Member States in other countries. In 2018, the European Commission proposed a number of changes to come to terms with illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing.

The revised EU Fisheries Control Regulation updates most of the rules for fishing vessels to bring them in line with technological developments and promote sustainability. Key changes involve enhanced monitoring of fishing activities and better traceability of catches. The new Control Regulation entered into force on 9 January 2024 and most provisions apply after two or four years to allow time for implementation.

## Revised EU Fisheries Control Regulation

The revised EU Fisheries Control Regulation places emphasis on enhancing control within the supply chain. Fishery and aquaculture products covered by the regulation must be traceable at every stage, from catching or harvesting to retail sale. To achieve this, products are organized into identifiable lots, which operators throughout the supply chain must maintain detailed records and information about.

### Traceability and Supply Chain Control

One of the key focus areas of the revised Regulation is to improve control in the supply chain. Fishery and aquaculture products covered under the regulation are required to be traceable at all stages of production, processing, and distribution, from catching or harvesting to retail stage.

Fishery and aquaculture products made available on the market will be required to be put into lots adequately marked to ensure the traceability of each lot throughout the supply chain. Operators in the supply chain will also be required to have in place systems and procedures to identify operators from whom they have been supplied with lots and to whom those products have been supplied.



**Fishery products**

- Lot identification number
- Unique fishing trip or fishing day identification number
- FAO alpha 3 code of the species and the scientific name
- Relevant geographical area for fishery products caught at sea
- Date of catch for fishery products
- Quantities in kilograms or number of individuals
- Information required to be compliant with common marketing standards
- *The category of fishing gear used*
- *Quantities below the minimum conservation reference size if present in the lot*



**Aquaculture products**

- Lot identification number
- Name and registration number of producer or aquaculture production unit
- FAO alpha 3 code of the species and the scientific name
- Relevant production area for aquaculture products
- Date of harvest for aquaculture products
- Quantities in kilograms or number of individuals
- Information required to be compliant with common marketing standards

**Note:** For products imported on the European Union market, operators will have to provide an IMO number, or another unique vessel identifier and the catch certificate number submitted instead of the unique fishing trip or fishing day identification number.

Illustration 1: Traceability information required for fishery and aquaculture products on the European Union market

Operators across the supply chain must ensure that for each lot, the information listed is kept on record, and is made available in a digital way to whoever the product is supplied, and, upon request, to the competent authorities.

### First sale

For fisheries, one key aspect in enabling traceability is to ensure that information about the origin of catches is accurate. To ensure this, all quantities of fishery products must be weighed per species immediately after landing, prior to being held in storage, transported, or placed on the market. The weighing must be carried out by a registered buyer, a registered auction, a producer

organisation or any other natural or legal person authorised by the competent authorities, and on weighing systems approved by the competent authorities.

The regulation then requires buyers at first sale to record and submit that information together with the additional traceability information through a sales note within 48 hours after the first sale. The competent authority to which the sales note should be submitted varies by member state but is in Sweden [Havs- och Vattenmyndigheten](#). The accuracy of the sales note is the responsibility of the buyers, auctions, or producer organisations.

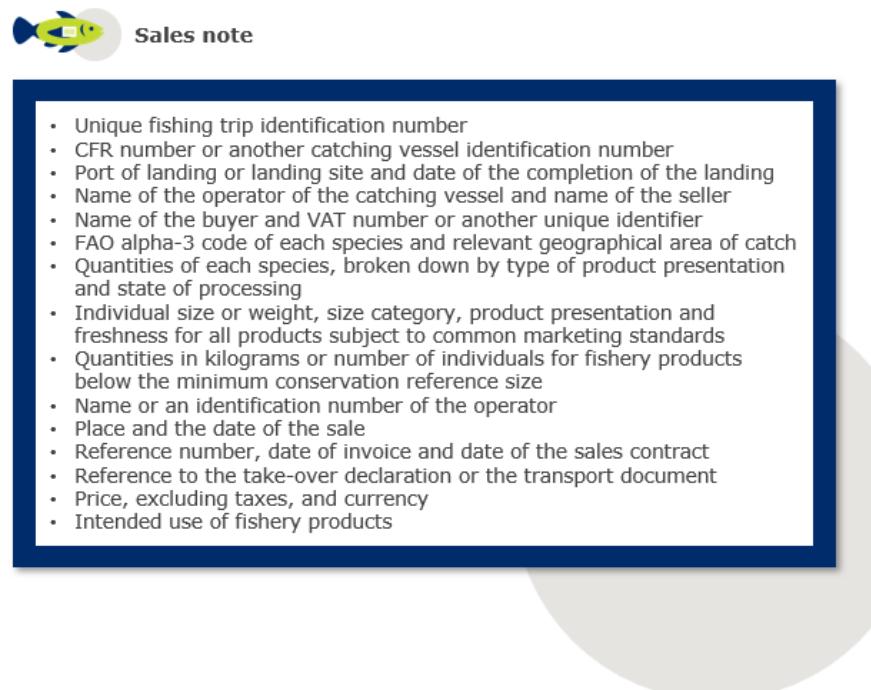


Illustration 2: Required information in sales note submitted to competent authorities

## Fisheries Control System

Through the new regulation, the control of fishing activities will for the first time be entirely digitalised. By complementing the European Union Fishing Fleet Register with mandatory monitoring systems and electronical reporting of catches authorities can more efficiently ensure compliance.

All European Union fishing vessels are required to have a valid **fishing licence** containing information concerning the identification, technical characteristics and fitting out of a catching vessel. The information must always be accurate and consistent with that contained in the European Union [fishing fleet register](#).

To track movement and monitor fishing activity in and outside the European Union all fishing vessels must now be equipped with a **tracking device** transmitting position data at regular intervals to a **vessel monitoring systems** operated by the **fisheries monitoring centres** in each country.

Additionally, all Union fishing vessels must keep an **electronic fishing logbook** for the purpose of recording fishing activities. Fishing vessels in the European Union are required to **submit the information** in the logbook electronically to the competent authority of their flag Member state at least once a day, after the last fishing operation and before entering a port or a landing site.

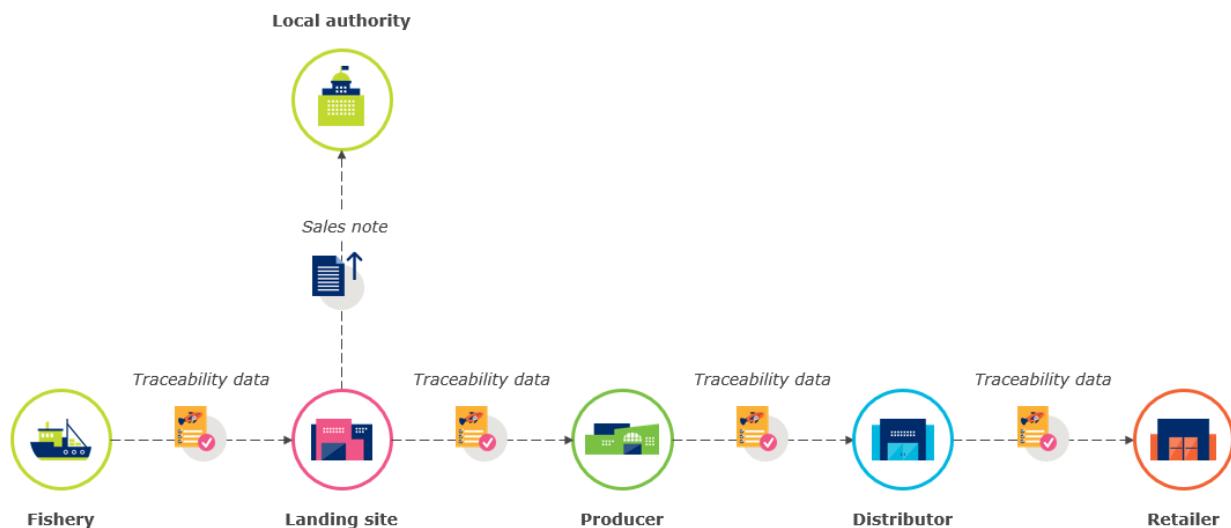


Illustration 3: Required information sharing across an illustrative supply chain

## Challenges in addressing the Regulation

Many companies grapple with understanding and adapting to new legislation, from accurately interpreting the requirements to establishing proper internal governance to address them. Companies sometimes also struggle with accessing the relevant data from across their supply chain as they can be large and complex. As regulation mounts, companies must work towards end-to-end transparency to be able to ensure compliance.

### Achieving End-to-End-Transparency

The challenges companies are facing today range all the way from understanding how to interpret new legislation properly to how to set-up the appropriate internal governance and implement adjustments in technology systems within a given timeframe.

One of the most pressing issues will be to establish a way to efficiently gather and verify the required data across the supply chain. The global scale of modern supply chains means that large volumes of data add great complexity for companies unless a standardized approach is taken.

To be able to enable proper due diligence, companies must, to an extent, aim at achieving end-to-end transparency across the supply chain. To be able to do this, three key challenges would need to be addressed:

#### 1: Digitalizing and Mapping the Supply Chain

Many companies working with products and commodities targeted by legislation are sourcing products directly or indirectly from a large number of smaller stakeholders, sometimes spread across the globe. Companies, who up until now has been able to rely on trading partners further up the supply chain for information, will now need first-hand access to accurate and up-to-date information on every producer across their supply chain network. This will require significant investments from companies to ensure access to proper technology, resources, and expertise.

#### 2: Enabling Seamless and Secure Data Sharing

Given a supply chain where every actor is working in a way that enables transparency, the coordination and management of various stakeholders (each with different systems, objectives, and levels of visibility) will still prove challenging for any company that requires access to accurate and up-to-date data across the entire supply chain.

Legacy systems, lack of integration, and compatibility issues will manifest as barriers and complexities to the seamless sharing of data between these diverse systems. Additionally, many companies are often reluctant to implement data

sharing-solutions that are dependent on third party-platforms due to concerns about data privacy and security.

#### 3: Ensuring Verifiable and Up-To-Date Information

The information flow between stakeholders can be inconsistent due to varying policies, procedures, and technologies used. This means that companies risk using inaccurate information in due diligence statements. To be able to confidently trace products back to their origin and to be able to ensure that products and suppliers are compliant with new legislation will be a challenge and different approaches across the supply chain can lead to inefficiencies when trying to aggregate data.

## How GS1 Standards and Services can help

Accessing the detailed level of data about products, events and suppliers that is required to be compliant with this new regulation might seem daunting. Various stakeholders will need to collect, process, and share substantial amounts of data from different enterprise systems and databases throughout the supply chain. By utilizing existing standards and services, companies can reduce complexity and streamline the process.

### Identifying actors in the supply chain

One of the key criteria to ensure compliance with the regulation is to be able to trace products back to their origin, requiring actors to identify and gather information about suppliers across their supply chain all the way back to the very beginning.

In the revised Fisheries Control Regulation, for example, actors need to collect, among other things, for every supplier their products originate from: Name and identification number of the fishing vessels, the name of the master of the fishing vessel, and the fishing gear used by that fishing vessel.

By requiring suppliers to identify themselves with unique identifiers like the **Global Location Number (GLN)**, actors can efficiently map out their supply chain and attribute information to the suppliers in a standardized way, ensuring it can be efficiently shared.

### Identifying products in the supply chain

To ensure traceability, operators must also be able to identify products as they make their way through the supply chain. This can mean identifying commodities or products from different suppliers and the relevant properties of those items.

By assigning products or commodities a unique identifier such as the **Global Trade Item Number (GTIN)**, suppliers can store information about their specific product or commodity. When combined with a lot number, additional lot-specific information can also be recorded.

In the case of the revised Fisheries Control Regulation, this gives supplier a standardized way of recording product information such as the trade name of a lot, the specific fish in each lot expressed in FAO alpha 3 code of the species or the scientific name of the fish. The lot number allows suppliers to include additional information about each lot, such as when or where the fish was caught and the quantity it contains.

### Identifying shipments in the supply chain

Fishery and aquaculture products can sometimes be part of a complex supply chain where different

lots can be combined and mixed along the way. Each actor in the supply chain often sources and sells from and to multiple different actors and in the process products from different lots are combined.

To ensure traceability, actors must be able to identify and trace each lot they receive and ensure non-compliant products or products of unknown origins have not been mixed in along the way. To do this companies can utilize unique identifiers for logistic units such as the **Serial Shipping Container Code (SSCC)**. It is a unique identifier used for logistic units such as cases, pallets, or containers and through the use of an SSCC, each logistic unit can be linked to information about its content.

This includes, for example, which lots of what products the unit contains (GTIN + lot number) and what quantity of each lot, along with the sending and receiving parties (GLN) and other relevant information that can help companies ensure their shipments have remained compliant throughout the supply chain.

### Capturing data in the supply chain

One significant part of being able to trace products is the use of data carriers such as **barcodes** to capture data throughout the supply chain. Barcodes can be encoded with the GTIN, GLN or SSCC and connected to information which is made available when scanned.

This makes it easier to identify and separate compliant commodities during storage and transportation. Additional information such as best-before-dates, serial numbers, and lot numbers may also be encoded into the barcodes.

### Sharing data across the supply chain

Once objects in the supply chain have been identified and data about them have been captured, a seamless exchange of information between actors must be enabled. A process which quickly becomes time consuming and ineffective unless a standardized approach is taken.

The **GS1 Registry Platform (GRP)** is a global registry of GTINs and GLNs that can be used to share small sets of **Master data** about products or locations between actors in the supply chain in a

standardized way. By registering and making their GLN and GTINs searchable on GRP, suppliers can allow actors across the supply chain to verify authenticity and access information about them and their products.

The GRP also provides an opportunity to register links to **additional product- or location data** stored in the suppliers' own repositories. This can allow for suppliers to share, for example, lot-specific data like the time or day of a catch along with its geographical origin.

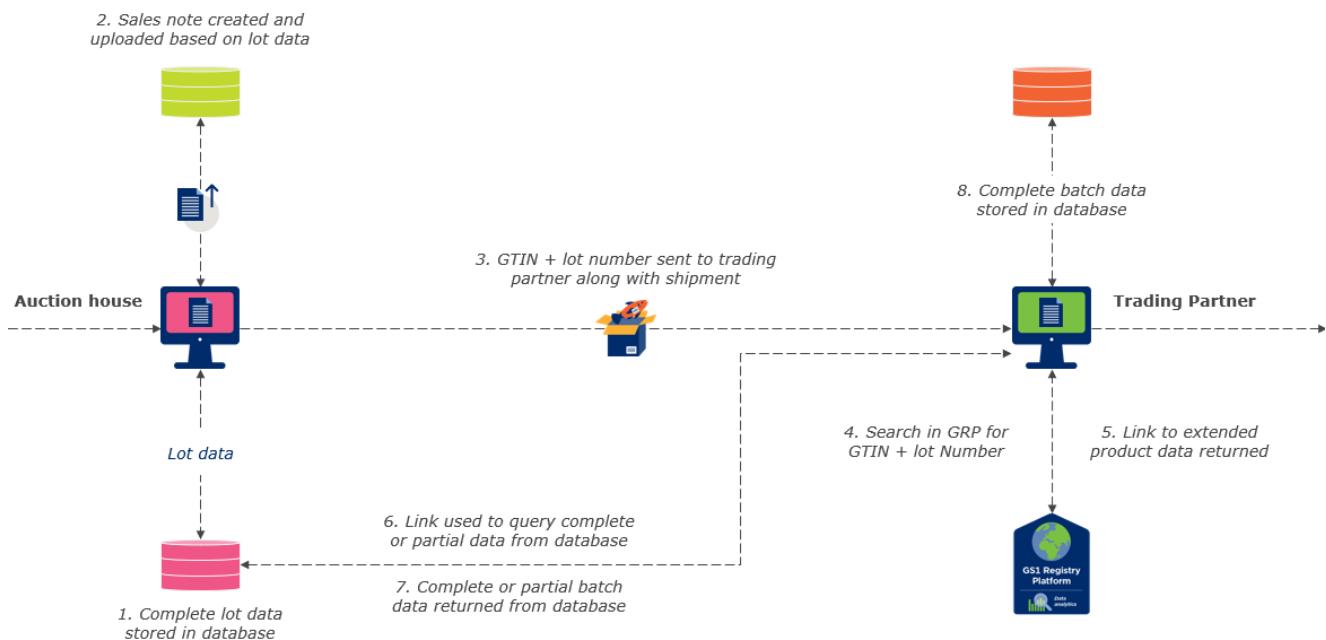


Illustration 4: Example use of GS1 Standards and Services for regulatory compliance

There is growing interest for making available master data using more recent GS1 standards such as the **GS1 Web Vocabulary** and the **Global Data Model (GDM)**. These two, combined with the GS1 Registry Platform's linking feature, offers a modern, flexible methodology by which master data about products and locations can be easily accessed in a scalable manner, no matter where that data is being authoritatively stored or kept.

Exchanging data can be addressed by alternative solutions as well. Companies who are already actively working with **Electronic Data Interchange (EDI)** and data repositories such as the **GS1 Global Data Synchronisation Network (GDSN)** can utilise those to efficiently share master data and **transactional data** as well (for example orders, delivery notes and invoices).

Companies will however ultimately be dependent on utilizing standards for sharing **visibility event data** to efficiently ensure traceability. Visibility event data are records of the completion of business process steps. Each visibility event captures what objects participated in the process, when the process took place, where the objects were and will be afterwards, and why.

The **GS1 EPCIS** standard enables disparate applications to create and share visibility event data, both within and across enterprises. Data that can then be made available via GRP and the extended product information.

## Getting started with GS1 Standards and Services

In the context of addressing new regulations, companies can leverage GS1 Standards and Services to enhance supply chain transparency. Key steps include adopting standards-based product, location, and shipment identification, educating suppliers about standardized data models, and utilizing services like the GS1 Registry Platform.

### First steps

To start working towards end-to-end transparency with GS1 standards and services there are a few steps companies can take:

#### 1. Obtain a GS1 Company Prefix (GCP) license:

- Start by licensing a GS1 Company Prefix. This prefix allows you to utilize GS1 standards for identifying, labelling, and sharing data about products, locations, and packages.
- The GCP serves as the foundation for creating unique numbers that enable barcode generation.

#### 2. Generate Identifiers:

- Once your company has licensed a GCP, you can begin assigning specific identifiers:
  - GLN (Global Location Number): Used to identify locations (such as warehouses, stores, or facilities).
  - GTIN (Global Trade Item Number): Used to identify products.
  - SSCC (Serial Shipping Container Code): Used to identify logistic units (e.g., pallets, cases).

#### 3. Use Online Services from GS1 Member Organizations:

- Access easy-to-use online services such as MyProducts and MyPlaces (names of these services may vary between GS1 Member Organizations).
- These services allow you to create and manage identifiers efficiently and make the information available in the GS1 Registry Platform.

#### 4. Promote Standardization:

- Ensure that all actors in your supply chain (including suppliers, manufacturers, and distributors) follow GS1 standards.
- Educate them about the benefits of standardized identifiers and a common data sharing standard.

#### 5. Leverage GRP Services:

- When all supply chain actors adhere to GS1 standards:

- Utilize the GS1 Registry Platform (GRP).
- Make products and locations searchable and verifiable globally through web services.

### Long-term vision

The data accessible through these solutions can guide your path towards regulatory compliance. However, to efficiently meet future demands, the capture and sharing of object data throughout the supply chain journey will become essential.

Standards like EPCIS enable capturing key data elements - such as who (GLN), where (GLN), when, what (GTIN + lot and quantity), and why (e.g., harvesting or shipping) - at critical supply chain points such as harvesting, lot mixing, ingredient production, packing, and shipping. Allowing companies to achieve end-to-end traceability without compromising existing systems or external solutions and lets data sharing remain technology-agnostic.

Getting started on the journey toward end-to-end traceability is, however, a longer process. [GS1 TraceWay](#) is a step-by-step approach to design and implement traceability systems where GS1 offers practical details about key aspects of traceability implementation, regardless of the drivers and technologies involved.

## Further questions regarding the revised EU Fisheries Control Regulation

For additional inquiries related to the revised EU Fisheries Control Regulation we encourage reaching out to local GS1 member organizations and relevant authorities within each country. They can provide specific guidance and address any further questions.

### Useful links:

[The EU Common Fisheries Policy](#)

[The Revised EU Control Regulation](#)

[Information from the European Commission on the Regulation](#)

## About GS1

GS1 is a global organization and GS1 Sweden is one of 118 national member organizations. We provide a common digital language for businesses through unique identification, proper labelling, and automatic data sharing for products, locations, and other physical objects. With the help of GS1, companies can improve efficiency, safety, sustainability, and traceability.

## Contact information

Do you want to know more about GS1 in Sweden and how GS1 Standards and Services can help companies efficiently address the revised EU Fisheries Control Regulation? Don't hesitate to reach out:

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