

EN
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Answer given by Mr Kadis
on behalf of the European Commission
(27.2.2026)

Prior to the revision of Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009¹ (the Control Regulation), the obligation to notify a return to port in advance already applied to vessels of 12 meters or more targeting stocks covered by multiannual plans. The revision of the Control Regulation extended the scope of this requirement to additional stocks, while maintaining the same vessel-length threshold. The obligation serves fisheries control and enforcement objectives, ensuring authorities have sufficient time to organise inspections, regardless of distance travelled or trip duration.

The revised framework already allows noticeable flexibility: Member States may apply shorter notification periods for certain vessels, and the Commission may grant derogations in duly justified cases. Concerns regarding implementation should therefore be raised with the competent national authorities, which are best placed to assess any necessary adjustments or follow-up within the legal framework.

As regards catch recording, the legislation does not require all catches to be weighed on board before landing, but only “estimated” quantities, as under the previous system. These requirements aim to improve the accuracy and reliability of catch data in support of sustainable fisheries management and the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy.

The Spanish authorities have asked the Commission to explore possible solutions, including a regulatory amendment. Solutions can and should be pursued within the existing control framework, making full use of the existing flexibilities and implementing powers provided by the revised Control Regulation.

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2009/1224/oj/eng>.