Proposal on behalf of the EU and its Member States on fishing gear

Rationale

• The EU and its Member States submit the text proposal below with regard to fishing gear. This proposal builds on elements contained in the streamlined document submitted by the co-chairs on 24 April 2024 for discussions in joined subgroup 1.2 and 1.3.
• Paragraph 1 is based on option 1 OP2 quart under provision 8: it sets out the main objective of the provision on fishing gear. The EU+MS find it crucial that measures are taken across the full lifecycle of fishing and aquaculture gear. Therefore, we believe the text should be strengthened by adding some amendments under para 1.
• Paragraph 2 is new. A global standard would promote circularity and ensure consistency across regions and nations.
• Paragraph 3 is based on elements of paragraph 3 under option 1 of provision 9b.
• Paragraph 4 is based on elements of the same paragraph under option 1 of provision 8.

Text proposal

**OP2 quart.** 1. Each Party shall cooperate and take effective measures across the full lifecycle of fishing and aquaculture gear to prevent, reduce and eliminate, abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing and aquaculture gear and promote circularity, taking into account internationally agreed rules, standards and recommended practices and procedures. In particular, Parties shall take measures to:

a. Enhance the design of fishing and aquaculture gears, with a view to reducing their environmental impact by increasing durability, reusability, repairability, circularity and refurbishability and their capacity to be dismantled, repurposed, recycled and disposed of in a safe and environmentally sound manner at end-of-life, and minimizing releases and emissions of or from fishing and aquaculture gears, including microplastics, to the environment (in accordance with part II. 5 product design, composition and performance);

b. Carry out formal risk assessments to support the scope and design of fishing gear marking taking into account relevant FAO guidelines;

c. Implement effective marking of gears to support owner identification and recovery of such gears and require, retrieval and reporting of lost gears if the gear cannot be retrieved, in accordance with other relevant regional and international regulations, including MARPOL Annex V;

d. Require fishing vessels to have equipment on board to retrieve its lost fishing gear;

e. Promote adequate gear labelling to ensure material traceability, and recyclability for recyclers (in accordance with Part II.13 on transparency, tracking, and labelling);

f. Promote the establishment and achievement of national gear collection targets for end-of-life fishing gear and ensure environmentally sound waste management of fishing gears both onboard and on land in accordance with Part II.7 EPR and Part. II 9 waste management.
g. Promote and facilitate training, education and awareness raising among stakeholders, including fishing industries and practitioners, on best practices and methods regarding paragraphs a-f.

2. Parties are encouraged to work with relevant national and international organizations towards the development and implementation of a global standard, including definitions, the metrics and guidelines for circular design of fishing gear.

3. Parties shall promote synergy and complementarity with relevant initiatives, organizations, and regional and international authorities in their respective actions towards prevention of plastic pollution from fisheries. And shall cooperate, coordinate and, exchange information, including the sharing of best practices regarding to paragraphs 1.a-g.

4. The governing body*, at its first session, shall adopt requirements and guidelines, including where relevant, sectoral requirements and guidelines, to facilitate implementation of the obligations set out in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3.