

Reform of the common fisheries policy - overarching communication

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PURPOSE: presentation of a Commission communication on the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP).

BACKGROUND: the [2009 Green Paper on the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy](#) (CFP) concluded that the policy is not achieving its key objectives: (i) fish stocks are overfished, the economic situation of

parts of the fleet is fragile despite receiving high levels of subsidies; (ii) jobs in the fishing sector are unattractive; (iii) and the situation of many coastal communities depending on fisheries is precarious.

Against this background, the Commission is proposing **an ambitious reform of the policy**. This reform is about putting in place the conditions for a better future for fish and fisheries alike, as well as the marine environment that supports them.

Sustainability is at the heart of the proposed reform. According to best estimates⁵, if stocks were exploited at maximum sustainable yield, this would increase stock sizes by about 70%. Overall catches would increase by around 17%, profit margins could be multiplied by a factor of three, return on investments would be six times higher, and the gross value-added for the catching industry would rise by almost 90%.

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Fishing sustainably would **free the catching sector from depending on public support**. It would also make it easier to achieve **stable prices** under transparent conditions, bringing clear benefits for consumers. Fishing sustainably is essential for the **future of coastal communities**, which in some cases will need specific measures to help manage their small-scale coastal fleets. The Commission proposes to develop the CFP as part of the broader maritime economy.

The CFP reform package consists of the following components:

- a [legislative proposal for a Basic Regulation](#) (replacing Council Regulation (EC) No. 2371/2002),
- a [legislative proposal for a Market Policy](#) (replacing Council Regulation (EC) No.104/2000),
- a [Communication on the External Dimension of the CFP](#),
- a **Report on Council Regulation (EC) No. 2371/2002**, regarding the chapters Conservation and Sustainability and Adjustment of Fishing Capacity, and on Article 17(2) on fleet access restriction to 12 nautical miles.

In the context of the Multi-annual Financial Framework and the Financial Perspectives, the Commission has scheduled a legislative proposal for the future financial instrument 2014-2020 in support of the CFP for adoption later in 2011.

CONTENT: a summary of **new measures proposed in the CFP reform package** is as follows:

Conservation and sustainability

- maximum Sustainable Yield as conservation target with deadline (2015);
- elimination of discards through landing obligation and necessary management rules with timeline for introduction;
- multi-annual plans focused on essential objectives, targets, boundaries and time frames, based on the ecosystem-based approach to fisheries management;
- authorisation for Member States to take measures under EU law on multi-annual plans and technical conservation measures;
- fast-track procedures to adopt fisheries measures needed under environmental management (Natura 2000).

Data and Science

- obligation for Member States to collect and provide data, and to prepare (regional) multiannual data collection programmes;
- national fisheries research programmes with regional coordination among Member States.

Access to resources and fleet capacity

- **transferable fishing concessions mandatory for large-scale fleets** — with transferability at national level;
- moving away from fleet-related subsidies.

Aquaculture

- National strategic plans 2014-2020 on promotion of aquaculture;
- set up of a new Advisory Council for Aquaculture.

Market policy

- empowerment of Producers Organisations and Inter-branch Organisations to increase their role and responsibility on production and marketing planning with emphasis in sustainable fishery resource management and reducing the impact of the aquaculture activities;
- modification of intervention regime, by setting up one single intervention mechanism for storage;
- fixing intervention prices at decentralised and adequate level;
- strengthened consumer information and review of marketing standards.

Governance

- expand the role of Advisory Councils in the implementation of the CFP at regional level;
- new approach to stakeholder involvement on horizontal issues not covered by the Advisory Councils.

Financial instrument

- full alignment with the Europe 2020 Strategy;
- conditionality provisions on compliance with the rules — both applicable to Member States and to individual operators.

External dimension

- **Regional Fisheries Management Organisations** — enhanced EU involvement in Regional Fisheries Management Organisations to strengthen science, control and compliance within these fora in order to improve their performance;
- **Multilateral level** — joint actions with EU’s most important partners aimed at combating IUU fishery and reducing overcapacity;
- better coherence between EU fisheries, development, trade and environment policies;
- **sustainable Fisheries Agreements** — enhanced science base and clear identification of surplus resources in partner countries to ensure sustainable fishing practices in these countries by our fleet;
- **larger financial contribution** by industry and establishment of a high-quality governance framework. Human rights clause should be included in all future agreements.