

European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)

2014-2020

2011/0380(COD) - 08/08/2013 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Fisheries adopted the report by Alain CADEC (EPP, FR) on the amended proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1198/2006 and Council Regulation (EC) No 861/2006 and Council Regulation No XXX/2011 on integrated maritime policy.

The committee recommends that Parliament's position adopted at first reading, according to the ordinary legislative procedure, should be to amend the Commission's proposal as follows:

Objectives: the EMFF should contribute to the following objectives:

- promoting **environmentally sustainable, economically viable and socially responsible fisheries, aquaculture** and related activities of processing or marketing;
- promoting a **balanced and inclusive territorial development** of fisheries and aquaculture areas;
- fostering the **implementation of the CFP**, including its regionalisation and the implementation of the common organisation of the markets
- fostering **job creation** in order to prevent the disappearance of fishing communities and delivering improved qualifications and working conditions in the fisheries sector.

The EMFF should take full account of the specific situation of the outermost regions.

The achievement of the objectives of the EMFF should be pursued through the following Union priorities:

- enhancement of the competitiveness and viability of fisheries and improvement of their **health, hygiene, safety and working conditions**;
- development of **professional training**, new professional skills and lifelong learning, in particular for young fishermen;
- support to strengthening technological development, technical, social and economic innovation and knowledge transfer;
- improved **market organisation** for aquaculture products and encouragement of investment in the processing and marketing sectors;
- prevention, minimisation and, as far as possible, **elimination of unwanted catches** and of negative impacts of fisheries on the marine environment, especially through better selectivity of fishing gears;
- ensuring a **balance** between fishing capacity and available fishing opportunities;
- promotion of resource efficient **aquaculture**, including by reducing dependence on fish food and oil and reducing the use of chemicals and antibiotics;
- assessment, reduction and, where possible, elimination of the impacts of aquaculture activities on marine, terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems.

Eligibility of applications: support shall not be granted to operators who have committed serious infringements of national or Union law applicable in the following areas: pay and employment conditions in the trade; professional liability; human or drug trafficking; working hours and rest periods for fishermen; health and safety legislation; pay and employment conditions in the trade; the initial qualification and continuous training of fishermen. Other non-applicable include operations jeopardising the sustainability of marine biological resources and ecosystems and destructive employment measures.

Overcapacity: although the Commission justifies its proposed reform of the CFP by asserting that the European fishing fleet suffers from overcapacity, Members drew attention to the questionable nature of this premise by stating that the Commission has so far failed to define what it means by overcapacity, so it is difficult to prove whether or not it exists.

The report called on the Member States to **respect the fleet size limits** determined in the basic Regulation. In this connection, the payments and commitments under the EMFF should be suspended for Member States, which fail to respect their capacity ceilings.

Transferable fishing concessions: Members are opposed to the introduction of transferable fishing concessions which was the key measure proposed in the basic Regulation to limit the alleged overcapacity. According to Members, such an arrangement would serve to monetise fishing rights and would endanger small-scale and coastal fishing.

Fleet renewal: with a view to modernising and renewing the Union's ageing fleet, the EMFF should contribute towards investment in new fishing vessels to replace obsolete vessels that are scrapped or reassigned to non-fishing activities. Such investment should result in higher standards of on-board safety, energy efficiency and fishing gear selectivity and should not increase fishing capacity.

Data collection and transmission: the report recalled the paramount importance of funding data collection, the cornerstone of the CFP and the essential prerequisite for the definition of precise objectives to be achieved, particularly as regards the achievement of the Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) and better fisheries management.

In this context, Members proposed that Member States which do not fulfil their data collection and transmission obligations or fail to report their actual fishing fleet and capacity should have their funds from the EMFF frozen or decreased.

Mutual funds: in order to safeguard fishermen's incomes, contributions should be made from the EMFF to mutual funds that cover losses resulting from natural disasters, bad weather, environmental or health-related accidents or sharp rises in fuel prices.

Social dialogue: the EMFF should provide support for social dialogue at European, national, regional and local level, involving the social partners and enhancing their organisational capabilities.

Financing: annual appropriations should be authorised by the European Parliament and the Council without prejudice to the provisions of the Regulation laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2014–2020 and the Interinstitutional Agreement between the European Parliament, Council and the Commission on cooperation in budgetary matters and sound financial management.

Integrated Maritime Policy: the budgetary resources allocated to the Integrated Maritime Policy should not exceed 6 % of the total EMFF budget.