

European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)

2014-2020

2011/0380(COD) - 23/10/2013 - Text adopted by Parliament, partial vote at 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted **amendments** to 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 issue has been **sent back to the committee responsible**. The vote has been postponed to a later plenary session, pending the adoption of the Multiannual Financial Framework.

The main amendments were 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:

- support **innovative operations** and the ecologically sustainable development of businesses, in accordance with the precautionary principle and an ecosystem-based approach .
- focus on **helping young people** gain access to the fishing sector by, for example, by contributing to first-time business start-ups through the creation of specific mechanisms and incentives which should not exceed EUR 100 000 for young fishermen who are acquiring a vessel for the first time;
- promote **small scale coastal fishing**. Member States should attach to their operational programmes action plans for developing such fishing and for ensuring that it is competitive and sustainable;
- support **local, sustainable management of the fisheries** involved and the development of coastal communities;
- support investments for the **protection and preservation of maritime heritage** and related **traditional crafts**;
- prevention, minimisation and, as far as possible, elimination of **unwanted catches**, especially through better selectivity of fishing gears;
- support investments to reduce the contribution of the fishing sector to **emissions of greenhouse gases**;
- promote more **selective gears and equipment** and support the development of more fuel-efficient vessels;
- support the establishment, management, monitoring and control of a **coherent network of fish stock recovery areas**.

These objectives should be pursued without increasing fishing capacity.

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

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.

Parliament 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, in the light of the assessment carried out three years after the date of entry into force of this Regulation.

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.

Data collection and transmission: Parliament 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.

- A maximum of 71.86% of the resources should be allocated to the sustainable development of fisheries, aquaculture and fisheries areas.
- A minimum of 12.5% of the resources should be allocated to control and enforcement measures.
- A minimum of 12.97% of the resources should be allocated to measures on data collection.