Common Fisheries Policy CFP: reform action programme and roadmap

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This document comprises of the Communication from the Commission on the action plan to respond to the potential social, economic and regional consequences of the restructuring of the EU fishing industry. The present Communication from the Commission thus includes: - an assessment of the likely socio-economic impacts of fishing effort limitations and reductions in vessel numbers in particular a review of the provisional estimate of lost jobs; - a review of all the existing means to alleviate these impacts within the existing Community aid regimes (FIFG, ERDF and ESF); - an overview of additional means which could become available in the short term through the reform of the CFP and the reprogramming of the Structural Funds; - an analysis of further options for the longer term. This action plan, which was prepared after consultations with the Member States, identifies the possible impact of the fishing effort limitation in certain areas for certain stocks proposed by the Commission in the context of the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). The measures set out in the action plan should be used by Member States to alleviate the short-term consequences of the proposed conservation measures for affected fishermen and other operators in the fishing industry. They include the reprogramming of EUR 611 million under the FIFG for social measures and for reducing fleet capacity, specific measures in favour of small-scale fishing, the improvement of living and working conditions on board, as well as social protection in the fisheries sector and measures to help young fishermen. Substantial EU funds can be used to help affected fishermen, vessel owners and other operators to cope with economic and social problems. Currently only 3% of the total amount of financial aid under the FIFG have been programmed for social measures, compared to 22 % for fleet renewal and modernisation. The action plan concludes that although there will be a social cost to reducing fishing effort within the framework of multi-annual management plans, the cost of postponing the measures required by the present over-exploitation of common fisheries resources would be even greater. Bilateral consultations with Member States have confirmed that it is not possible at this stage to make a reliable estimate of affected jobs, as no decision has been taken yet on multi-annual management plans.