



CRPM CPMR

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CPMR POLICY POSITION

OPINION OF THE CPMR GENERAL ASSEMBLY

(Approved by the CPMR General Assembly, 26-27 September 2013, Saint-Malo, Brittany - France)

EUROPEAN MARITIME AND FISHERIES FUND (EMFF) 2014-2020

On 15 July 2013, representatives of the Member States reached an agreement¹ on the proposal for a Regulation on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund² (EMFF). This came a few days after the adoption of the Cadec Report³ by the European Parliament Fisheries Committee at first reading. In the coming weeks, negotiations on the EMFF will be stepping up. There will be a vote on the Cadec Report in the plenary session of the European Parliament in the autumn (October 2013), and the trilogue will begin talks after approval of the report at first reading. In this context, a political agreement between the Council, Parliament and the European Commission on the final version of the EMFF Regulation is expected by the end of 2013 under the six-month Lithuanian presidency.

Over the past three years, the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions of Europe (CPMR) has been constantly petitioning the Commission, Council and European Parliament, calling for the introduction of a Common Policy Fisheries Policy (CFP) capable of ensuring a sustainable balance between the social, economic and environmental components of the fishing industry. The future EMFF plays, of course, a strategic role in establishing the conditions to achieve this balance.

The most recent work led by the Council and European Parliament resulted in some cases in some quite substantial changes to the draft EMFF regulation. However, the CPMR asks the Council and Parliament to go beyond the content of the compromise reached in July to provide the future CFP with a financial instrument that constitutes the backbone of a sustainable food policy designed to serve EU citizens, built on coastal communities and respectful of the sea and its fish stocks.

The policy position below takes into account the latest developments in the political debate on the future EMFF, while complying with the policy framework already adopted by the CPMR in [2012](#)⁴ and [2013](#)⁵. It is addressed in particular to the representatives of national ministries in charge of maritime affairs and to Members of the European Parliament.

¹ [Outcome of the meeting of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council, 15 July 2013](#)

² [Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund](#)

³ [Report on the amended proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, 8 August 2013](#)

⁴ CPMR's response to the European Commission's proposal on the new European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)

⁵ A strong and effective EU Budget for the CFP and IMP

BUDGETARY RESOURCES

1. Following the political agreement on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2014-2020, which was reached on 15 July, the Council adopted a proposed budget for the EMFF of approximately 6 396 million euro. In this respect, while well aware of the current context of economic crisis and austerity with regard to European public finances, the **CPMR regrets that the Council's proposal means a reduction of around 170 million euro (almost 2.6%)** compared with the overall budget proposal unveiled by the European Commission in 2011⁶. Moreover, given the breakdown within the EMFF budget which accompanies the Council proposal, the CPMR:
 - 1.1. **deplores the reduction of approximately 150 million euros affecting the allocation of funding for shared management measures** for the sustainable development of fisheries, aquaculture and fisheries-dependent areas;
 - 1.2. **welcomes the increase (up to 192 million euros) in the ceiling on aid for the outermost regions**, which aims to take into account the additional costs of fishery and aquaculture products.
2. The CPMR welcomes the work carried out by the Fisheries Committee of the European Parliament on the IMP. **However, it reminds the European Parliament that a budget fixed at a maximum of 6% of the total EMFF allocation represents only a minimum basis for the effective implementation of the IMP.**

ELIGIBLE MEASURES

The CPMR:

3. **is positive about the progress made within the Council and European Parliament regarding the legal framework for aid to promote “diversification”**. It particularly welcomes the proposal adopted by the Council introducing a specific legal framework for financial support for the development of complementary⁷ activities outside of the fishing activity;
4. **welcomes the clear willingness of the Council and the European Parliament to maintain start-up support for young fishermen** under the EMFF. However, in this regard, the CPMR regrets that the proposal agreed by the EP Fisheries Committee:
 - 4.1. **limits EU financial support solely to the entry of young people into the profession through the fleet segment corresponding to small-scale coastal fishing. The CPMR therefore requests the removal of this restriction;**
 - 4.2. **prevents young fishermen from benefiting from start-up aid to purchase vessels over 20 years old.** Given that in many maritime regions, the average age of the fishing fleet is about 25 years, the CPMR fears that this measure may remain inoperative. **The CPMR therefore urges the European Parliament to amend its proposal and reintroduce, for the purchase of vessels, the age limit of 30 years currently applied by the European Fisheries Fund (EFF);**
 - 4.3. **lowers the age limit for beneficiaries eligible for start-up aid to 35.** In this regard, it should be pointed out that the implementation of this measure under the 2007-2013 EFF allowed for late career choices within the fisheries and aquaculture sector, which is positive. **The CPMR therefore urges the European Parliament to maintain the 40-year age limit currently in force under the EFF;**
5. **recalls the strategic importance of maintaining financial support for the renewal and modernisation of the fleet under the EMFF.** In this regard the CPMR:
 - 5.1. warmly welcomes the introduction by the EP Fisheries Committee of Art. 32b (new) on investments for fleet renewal. However, the CPMR:
 - 5.1.1. **regrets that in the European Parliament’s proposal, aid is only available to the fleet segment corresponding to small-scale coastal fishing. It therefore requests the extension of this measure to the entire European fleet;**

⁶ COM 2011 804 Final of 2 December 2011

⁷ Art. 32a – Measures to create “New forms of income” for fishermen

- 5.1.2. considers the requirement *“to achieve a reduction of at least 40% in the vessel’s capacity, fishing effort and energy consumption”* to be too restrictive. The CPMR is convinced that if all these criteria are upheld, it could jeopardise the implementation of the measure itself, and therefore **it calls on Parliament to review the eligibility conditions of paragraph 1 of Art. 32b;**
- 5.1.3. regrets that in the European Parliament’s proposal, aid is capped at 15% of the total investment. **It therefore asks for this ceiling to be raised to 30%.**
6. welcomes the proposal of the Council and EP Fisheries Committee which recommends that the EMFF should introduce the possibility of contributing to on board investments or investments in equipment for the storage of unwanted catches. In this regard, given the current uncertainty in the estimation of costs and the number of interventions to be funded by fishermen in order to meet the obligations of “zero discards”, it is important that eligibility for this measure is not restricted to only one application per beneficiary for the whole duration of the next programming period. **The CPMR therefore welcomes the Council’s proposal to delete paragraph 2 of Art. 36 of the draft EMFF regulation⁸ and asks the EP to align itself with the Council initiative in this regard;**
7. believes that it is essential for the EMFF to be able to grant direct aid to economic actors involved in the processing industry within the fisheries and aquaculture sector. **In this regard the CPMR supports the proposal adopted by the Council to delete paragraph 2⁹ of art. 72 of the proposed draft EMFF Regulation.**

⁸ Paragraph 2 states that support shall not be granted more than once during the programming period for the same Union fishing vessel and for the same type of equipment.

⁹ Paragraph 2 limits financial support exclusively through the financial instruments provided for in Title IV of the Regulation laying down Common Provisions for the ERDF, ESF, CF, EAFRD and EMFF - COM(2013) 246 final