

Dear Member of the Environment Committee,

Tomorrow, Tuesday 20 November, the Environment Committee of the European Parliament will vote on its amendments to the Commission's proposal on the **post-2020 European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)**. The EMFF is the financial instrument to protect our oceans, in particular by safeguarding nature at sea through sustainable management of our resources and supporting the livelihoods of our ocean custodians. This vote provides a unique opportunity for the EU to play a leadership role by eliminating the most harmful subsidies that persist and to instead shift funds to fishing and aquaculture activities that support healthier ecosystems and other economic sectors that support, and are dependent on, healthy seas, thus enhancing the benefits provided to society.

Birdlife, ClientEarth, Seas At Risk and WWF call on you to vote for ambitious amendments that lead to the transformation of the EMFF to ensure that public money contributes to ending overfishing, reducing damage to the marine environment, and promoting healthy and productive seas for present and future generations. In particular, we call on the Environment Committee to consider these recommendations:

- **Eliminate perverse and effort-enhancing subsidies that lead to fishing overcapacity, including funding to acquire new or second hand fishing vessels or replace engines.** Modernising or replacing equipment is often associated with higher efficiency and a greater capacity to catch fish. Even if replacing old engines is conditional upon making them equally or less powerful, it will not necessarily translate into a reduction of the vessel's ability to catch fish, as the power of the engine is difficult to control and vessels still have an incentive to increase their fishing effort, for instance by spending more hours at sea. **Support: AM 132, 159, 170, 178. Reject: AM 18, 158, 179, 180, 181.**
- **Ensure funds for activities that support the protection of the marine environment.** The EMFF must properly contribute to the environmental challenges facing our seas by ring-fencing at least 30% of the budget dedicated to activities linked to the protection and restoration of marine biodiversity and ecosystems. **Support: AM 139.**
- **Remove funding for temporary cessation of fishing activities.** This type of aid contributes to maintaining the status quo instead of enhancing the structural changes needed to end overfishing. Other government social schemes may be used, as necessary, to support incomes while stocks rebuild. **Support: AM 190, 193, 197. Reject: AM 19, 22, 23, 25, 26, 160, 161, 191, 192, 194, 195, 196, 198.**
- **Reject the re-introduction of permanent cessation of fishing activities unless it is effectively controlled and the fishing licence is removed from the system.** While the intended purpose of this aid is to support the removal of vessels from fishing, the evidence suggests that, paradoxically, these funds may have the effect of keeping fishers in business. The continued presence of such aid may actually contribute more to capacity problems by reducing investment risk and injecting funds into businesses. **Support AM 182, 183, 184, 185. Reject AM 20, 24, 160.**
- **Ensure that the EMFF enables the conditions for a truly sustainable blue economy.** A sustainable blue economy may only create economic value from the marine environment if it can be done in a way that preserves and protects the sea's resources and ecosystems. **Support: AM 123, 130, 146, 147, 152, 177, 215, 216, 225, 226, 227, 228.**

- **Ensure that financial support under the EMFF is conditional upon compliance by Member States and operators with the rules of the CFP and of EU environmental law and that public funding supports activities that help achieve the environmental objectives of the CFP and the Integrated Maritime Policy, in particular through making financial support subject to conditions. Support: AM 117, 148, 154, 155, 156, 157, 169, 172, 173, 202, 203, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223. Reject: AM 13, 15, 16, 35, 36, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168.**
- **Ensure that funding for aquaculture is directed at activities that do not damage the marine environment and where there is a societal public good benefit to the investment. Support: AM 206, 207, 224. Reject: AM 208, 209, 210, 211.**
- **Increase the budget allocated to funds dedicated to monitoring and control of fishing activities and data collection from 15% to 30%. Support: AM 138, 140, 201, 218. Reject: AM 31, 137.**
- **Secure appropriate funds to improve the sustainability of the small-scale fishing sector and encourage participative management bodies at local level to increase co-responsibility.** The direct engagement of fishers, in collaboration with scientists and NGOs, is a key part of the fisheries management process. This should ensure management decisions based on enhanced understanding of fisheries' characteristics and lead to improved compliance within the sector. **Support: AM 17, 125, 175. Reject: AM 7, 34, 120, 121.**

We wish to thank you in advance for your consideration. Please feel free to contact us should you require additional information.