



Council of the
European Union

Brussels, 8 May 2023
(OR. en)

8303/1/23
REV 1

LIMITE

PECHE 131
ENV 375
POLMAR 21
ENER 188
UK 85

NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	<p>Council Conclusions on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the Energy Transition of the EU Fisheries and Aquaculture sector• Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council Implementation of Regulation (EU) No 1379/2013 on the common organisation of the markets in fishery and aquaculture products• Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions EU Action Plan: Protecting and restoring marine ecosystems for sustainable and resilient fisheries• Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council The common fisheries policy today and tomorrow: a Fisheries and Oceans Pact towards sustainable, science-based, innovative and inclusive fisheries management <p>- <i>Draft Council conclusions</i></p>

Delegations will find attached revised draft Council conclusions on the above-mentioned subject.

Additions are marked in **bold underline** while deletions are marked in **~~bold strikethrough~~**.

DRAFT COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON THE FISHERIES POLICY PACKAGE

for a sustainable, resilient and competitive fisheries and aquaculture sector

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING:

- the Council conclusions of 19 October 2020 on the Farm to Fork Strategy¹;
- the Council conclusions of 23 October 2020 on Biodiversity – the need for urgent action²;
- the Council conclusions of 18 July 2022 on the EU’s new aquaculture strategic guidelines³;
- the Council conclusions of 13 December 2022 on International Ocean Governance for safe, secure, clean, healthy and sustainably managed oceans and seas⁴;

HAVING REGARD TO:

- the European Commission Communication of 21 February 2023 entitled ‘The common fisheries policy today and tomorrow: a Fisheries and Oceans Pact towards sustainable, science-based, innovative and inclusive fisheries management’ (COM(2023) 103 final)⁵ and its accompanying Commission staff working document entitled ‘Common Fisheries Policy - State of play’ (SWD(2023) 103 final)⁶;
- the European Commission Communication of 21 February 2023 entitled ‘EU Action Plan: Protecting and restoring marine ecosystems for sustainable and resilient fisheries’ (COM(2023) 102 final)⁷;

¹ ST 12099/20.

² ST 12210/20.

³ ST 11496/22.

⁴ ST 15973/22.

⁵ ST 6716/23 + COR 1.

⁶ ST 6716/23 ADD 1 REV 1 + COR 1.

⁷ ST 6690/23 + COR 1.

- the European Commission Communication of 21 February 2023 entitled ‘On the Energy Transition of the EU Fisheries and Aquaculture sector’ (COM(2023) 100 final)⁸;
 - the European Commission Report of 21 February 2023 entitled ‘Implementation of Regulation (EU) No 1379/2013 on the common organisation of the markets in fishery and aquaculture products’ (COM(2023) 101 final)⁹;
 - the European Commission Communication entitled ‘Towards a Strong and Sustainable EU Algae Sector’ (COM(2022) 592 final)¹⁰;
1. EMPHASISES the important role of fisheries and aquaculture products as a source of healthy food and their contribution to food security;
 2. RECALLS the three pillars of sustainability in the Common Fisheries Policy that contribute to the sustainable use of fish stocks and the sustainable development of EU aquaculture, ensure the competitiveness of the sector and guarantee a fair standard of living for coastal and rural communities;
 3. **ACKNOWLEDGES the targets set out by the Commission in the European Biodiversity Strategy and the need to protect marine ecosystems as a contribution to a more resilient and sustainable fisheries industry;**
 4. AGREES with the objective of long-term sustainability, ~~and~~ resilience **and competitiveness** for the fisheries and aquaculture sectors, where innovation and **intensive cooperation between all relevant stakeholders** ~~joint collaboration between the different parties~~ should play a central role; **EMPHASISES the need for a collaborative approach, securing buy-in from stakeholders.**

⁸ ST 6689/23 + COR 1.
⁹ ST 6691/23 + COR 1.
¹⁰ ST 14784/22 + ADD 1.

5. NOTES that the European Commission's Fisheries Policy Package sets out a significant number of ambitious objectives for Member States and operators in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors, and HIGHLIGHTS the need to identify the mechanisms and legal instruments that are best suited to achieve these objectives. EMPHASISES that this requires an overall evaluation of the adequacy of the legal framework, policy instruments and financial means within the CFP to achieve these ambitions and at the same time provide a perspective for an economically viable and modern European fisheries and aquaculture sector that guarantees a stable supply of healthy proteins for the European market for years to come;
6. RECALLS that factors other than fisheries, such as climate change, eutrophication, predators, ~~and~~invasive alien species and other economic activities at sea contribute to fishing mortality and ecosystem deterioration. All these anthropogenic and natural ~~that all~~factors need to be addressed in a holistic manner through proper environmental measures that will, amongst others, allow for the ~~to~~ safeguard of fish stocks and enable species in poor status to return~~recovery~~ to healthy and sustainable levels, ~~of species in poor status taking into account scientific advice and the economic impact;~~
7. EMPHASISES the complexity of the sector given the ~~variety of~~differences within the EU's fisheries sector, the number and characteristics of small-scale fisheries, ~~and~~the particularities of each sea basin as well as the specificities of fish farming in each Member State, including in the outermost regions (as foreseen in article 349 of the TFEU); FURTHER EMPHASISES, hence, the need to establish conservation measures that can be adapted to regional specificities and UNDERLINES that these measures should be justified, proportionate to the benefits sought and based on the best available scientific knowledge ~~advice~~and a comprehensive assessment that also considers socio-economic aspects;

I. SHIFTING FISHERIES' INTERESTS BEYOND EU WATERS

8. NOTES that the geopolitical context has changed substantially since the last reform of the Common Fisheries Policy in 2013 and POINTS OUT the challenges this presents to fishers, aquaculture producers, coastal communities and all stakeholders concerned; **CALLS on the Commission to fully analyse and report on the impact that the UK's withdrawal from the EU has had on the functioning of the CFP, particularly with regard to relative quota shares as a result of quota transfers under the Trade and Co-operation Agreement, as well as on the challenges arising from the new post-Brexit reality where a large number of EU fishing opportunities are being determined by annual consultations with third countries; in this regard, STRESSES the need to defend EU's fisheries interests through the external dimension of the CFP, in particular in the post-Brexit context and the new framework of EU fisheries relation with the United Kingdom as of 2026;**
9. EMPHASISES also the need for close cooperation **within Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) and with third countries** on shared stocks ~~on~~^{at} all levels in order to achieve the EU's sustainability objectives, ~~and~~ improve global ocean governance, **increase food and nutrition security and improve social viability and the ecologic sustainability of international fish value chains;**
10. **DEEMS IT NECESSARY, therefore, to develop a comprehensive and integrated strategy for relations with third countries and future external fishery agreements that protects the interests of the Union's coastal communities as well as quotas and access to waters on which they depend, in particular in the post-Brexit context and the new framework of EU fisheries' relations with the United Kingdom as of 2026. HIGHLIGHTS the need for this strategy to take into account, where appropriate, access to the EU single market;**
11. **NOTES with great satisfaction and fully SUPPORTS the recent conclusion of the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, which aims to abolish harmful fisheries subsidies, and in this context ENCOURAGES the Commission to undertake all necessary efforts to continue the negotiations within the WTO to complement this agreement on the outstanding issues;**

12. ~~HIGHLIGHTS~~**EMPHASISES** the need to work towards a level playing field and responsible and sustainable value chains at international level **in all sea basins** in both fisheries and trade in fishery and aquaculture products, in order to ~~maintain~~**strengthen** the competitiveness of the industry, **including the small-scale coastal fisheries sector**, and **ensure** the EU's food sovereignty in line with the new EU policy on an open, sustainable and assertive trade policy as well as with the European Green Deal and the Farm to Fork Strategy; **ENCOURAGES the Commission to examine how seafood products imported from third countries can be subjected to EU environmental standards;**
13. LOOKS FORWARD to the forthcoming update of the European maritime security strategy and its action plan and the forthcoming Joint Communication on Climate Change, Environmental Degradation and on Security and Defence to address the nexus between climate change, environmental degradation of coastal and maritime areas and maritime security;

II. EMPOWERING PEOPLE IN FISHING AND AQUACULTURE COMMUNITIES

14. ACKNOWLEDGES that generational renewal is key to ensuring that the EU fishing, aquaculture and seafood processing sectors and coastal communities have a viable future and can continue to ensure food security; UNDERLINES, therefore, the importance of making these activities more attractive by **providing an economic perspective**, improving social and working conditions, **including** through innovation, continuing to protect the biodiversity of the marine environment and promoting the role of fishers and ~~marine~~aquaculture farmers as 'guardians of the sea' and providers of services of public interest; POINTS OUT the opportunities for innovative arrangements that these professions offer, such as linking production to direct sales or tourism, in particular for small-scale coastal fisheries and aquaculture, **while recognising that such opportunities still need to be precisely assessed;**

15. **RECOGNISES the importance of avoiding the overregulation of the fisheries and aquaculture sectors in order to ensure their attractiveness;** AGREES to enhance and increase the importance and the presence of women throughout the EU **fishery, aquaculture and processing sector**~~seafood value chain~~, contributing both to the generation of wealth and employment and to the sustainable use and conservation of aquatic resources; **REQUESTS that public institutions play a key role in the recognition of fishers and marine aquaculture farmers, and EMPHASISES the need for awareness-raising in civil society, through campaigns and education, to improve the image of the fishing industry;**
16. ACKNOWLEDGES that EU fisheries and fishing fleets must reduce their operational energy costs to ensure the sector's long-term profitability and resilience, thus becoming more efficient while maintaining long-term sustainability objectives **and reducing their environmental impact;** ENCOURAGES measures to improve the aquaculture sector's competitiveness **and social acceptability** by further diversifying ~~its~~ production, **ensuring a healthy business environment** and ensuring added value for its products as well as reducing its reliance on fossil fuels **and energy consumption;**
17. SUPPORTS the work of the Commission to ensure high standards for fishers' safety and working conditions, notably on the international stage through the ratification and implementation of the revised international Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel (STCW-F) and of International Labour Organization (ILO) and International Maritime Organization (IMO) conventions; **LOOKS FORWARD TO a proposal for a Directive to ensure the correct implementation of STCW-F in the EU legal order;** **STRONGLY** ENCOURAGES the accelerated ratification of the ~~International Labour Organization~~ (ILO) and ~~International Maritime Organization~~ (IMO) conventions;

18. UNDERLINES the roles of producer organisations and inter-branch organisations to better structure the value chain and improve market conditions through the collective management of their members' activities and the mutualisation of resources;
19. DEEMS IT NECESSARY to strengthen socio-economic resilience in the context of fossil fuel dependency, increased and volatile energy prices, the need for greater energy efficiency and sustainability of the sector and the goal of reaching climate neutrality in the EU by 2050; **RECALLS the Union's position on fuel detaxation in the context of the WTO negotiations on fisheries subsidies and UNDERLINES the importance of maintaining the current detaxation regime for marine fuel to protect the vulnerable small-scale fisheries sector;** WELCOMES the actions proposed by the Commission regarding stakeholder cooperation, knowledge and innovation, as well as the strengthening of workforce skills, ~~but;~~
20. CALLS ON the Commission to provide better guidance on financing options, **feasibility studies** and impact assessments, **as well as an evaluation of fleet capacity management** to support the energy transition in the EU fisheries and aquaculture sector;
21. WELCOMES the launching of the EU-wide participatory foresight project 'Fishers of the Future' aimed at forecasting the crucial role of fishers in society beyond the provision of high-quality seafood with a relatively low carbon footprint; EMPHASISES the need to better identify the trends, opportunities and threats that determine the attractiveness of the fishing sector;

22. RECOGNISES the importance of up-to-date education and vocational training systems to improve employment opportunities for workers and the sector's attractiveness to newcomers in order to address skills shortages, in particular in relation to the transition to renewable and low-carbon alternative energy sources and low-impact fishing gears and techniques; ENCOURAGES, in this regard, the setting-up of large-scale skills partnerships;
23. SUPPORTS the use of a bottom-up approach, as of 2023, enabling local fishing and aquaculture communities to address socio-economic challenges and needs through community-led local development under the 2021-2027 EMFAF programmes;
24. ~~WELCOMES the ongoing work of~~ **URGES** the Commission and scientific bodies **to accelerate the ongoing work** to further develop social indicators for the analysis of socio-economic reports; ~~ACKNOWLEDGES~~ **RECOGNISES** that ~~scientific~~ **advice and** management measures already take into account socio-economic impacts, but ~~ENCOURAGES~~ **CALLS FOR** further development in this regard to reinforce informed management decisions, **taking also into account the territorial impacts, into the most vulnerable regions and the outermost regions;**

III. CONTRIBUTING TO THE PROTECTION OF THE PLANET

25. ~~EMPHASISES~~ **CONFIRMS** the importance of sustainability principles in fisheries management and REITERATES the need to take into account ~~the~~ **all** three pillars of the CFP, i.e. economic, environmental and social sustainability;
26. REMAINS FULLY COMMITTED to safeguarding biodiversity and **conserving, protecting and restoring and sustainably using** ~~the~~ marine ecosystems upon which healthy fish stocks that ~~can~~ contribute to food security and a viable fishing sector within the EU depend;

27. EXPRESSES ~~the-its~~ willingness to protect biodiversity, specifically ~~the~~-sensitive species affected by fishing activity among others, including through the use of existing sustainable fishing gears and the implementation of new innovative gears designed for this purpose, based on the best scientific information available;
28. RECALLS that the objective of the CFP is to ensure that fishing and aquaculture activities are environmentally sustainable in the long term and are managed in a way that is consistent with the objectives of achieving economic, social and employment benefits, and of contributing to the availability of food supplies and, IN THIS REGARD, REITERATES the importance of consistency between EU environmental legislation and the CFP, each within the scope of their respective competences and objectives;
29. NOTES the ongoing work on threshold values for the maximum allowable mortality rate from incidental catches of sensitive species, and for the maximum allowable extent of seabed that can be lost or adversely affected by human pressure, as part of the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive; EMPHASISES the need to have a robust scientific knowledge of the marine ecosystem with a common methodology between member states to build those threshold values;
30. ACKNOWLEDGES that the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 is a key initiative of the European Green Deal, which aims to protect, restore and sustainably use marine biodiversity;

31. RECALLS the forthcoming adoption of the legally binding Agreement for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ), which recognises that marine protected areas (MPAs) are designated and managed in such a way as to achieve specific long-term biodiversity conservation objectives and may allow, where appropriate, sustainable use provided it is consistent with the conservation objectives; UNDERLINES that the use of gears such as bottom-contacting fishing in MPAs should therefore be in line with the best available science for the conservation objectives of each MPA, and take into account the actual environmental impact of the different fishing gears and methods on the various benthic habitats and species depending on the particular conservation objectives of each MPA;
32. REGRETS that no impact study has been carried out to support the Commission's proposals and calls for action, although the socio-economic impact of the proposed measures is very important, especially as regards mobile bottom fishing fleets;
33. UNDERLINES that a general ban of mobile bottom gears in MPAs by 2030 would be in contradiction with the existing Commission's guidance for the designation of MPAs. HIGHLIGHTS that sustainable fisheries are compatible with the existence of MPAs; RECALLS that political initiatives with a potentially major impact on the fishing sector and on coastal communities as well as concrete restrictions for fishermen should only be undertaken on the basis of a legislative proposal;
34. INSISTS on the fact that the EU's food sovereignty must improve, while working towards a level playing field with imported products from third countries and taking into account that external dependency exceeds 70 %;

35. ~~RECOGNISES the objectives set out in the proposed action plan on marine ecosystems in contributing to the EU 2030 biodiversity strategy~~ NOTES the need for further contributions to the EU 2030 biodiversity strategy; HIGHLIGHTS the need to boost the effective implementation of EU nature legislation and to better align the CFP with the objectives of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and the Natura 2000 Directives, but CALLS FOR a comprehensive impact assessment of the proposed action plan based on the best available science as a basis for the operational and proportional applicability of the proposed actions and their implementation periods, with regard to their benefits for healthy marine ecosystems in relation to the conservation objectives and taking into account regional specificities, including the most vulnerable regions and the outermost regions, as well as financial, ~~and~~ socio-economic and socio-cultural implications;
36. IS COMMITTED to contributing to the objective of creating a coherent network of well-managed ~~protected areas~~ MPAs and to protecting a minimum of 30 % of the EU's ~~marine sea areas~~, one third of which is strictly protected; EMPHASISES that this is an objective to be reached collectively by Member States, ~~collectively~~ based on the Natura 2000 Directives and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. ~~Natura 2000 network and~~ ~~€~~ Therefore EMPHASISES RECOGNISES the importance of introducing fisheries measures among other measures that are necessary in order to for the purpose of complying with these objectives; ~~UNDERLINES that the use of gears such as contact bottom fishing in marine protected areas (MPAs) should be in line with the best available science for the conservation objectives of each MPA~~; NOTES that the CFP and Technical Measures Regulations empower Member States, via regionalisation, to propose joint recommendations for necessary conservation measures based on scientific evidence ~~in MPAs~~ and that such work is ongoing;

37. AGREES that there is an urgent need to improve the status of the critically endangered eel population. ENCOURAGES the sharing of best practices between Member States and discussions at expert level to help find the most appropriate measures to take immediate and effective action at EU level;
38. ~~CONSIDERS that the planning of activities is essential to allow all interested stakeholders to contribute to the implementation of the Marine Action Plan and NOTES the proposed concept of individual Member States roadmaps;~~
39. ACKNOWLEDGES that achieving maximum sustainable yield levels for commercially exploited fish stocks is a key principle of the Common Fisheries Policy ~~and contributes to the good environmental status of commercial fish populations~~; UNDERLINES that fish stocks are also affected by other human activities ~~iesy~~ as well as environmental factors such as climate change and predators and therefore SUPPORTS the ~~improvement~~development of ecosystem-based and multi-species scientific advice, for instance taking into account the impact of species such as cetaceans, seals and cormorants ~~for on~~ the achievement of maximum sustainable yield for affected stocks as well as the impact of other economic activities on marine ecosystems and the seabed;
40. STRESSES that piscivorous predators have a negative impact on the competitiveness and long-term sustainability of European aquaculture. CALLS on the Commission to adopt an EU-wide solution for the management of stocks of certain species, such as the great cormorant and river otter in particular;
41. EMPHASISES the importance of the landing obligation for keeping fishing below the levels of maximum sustainable yield, and the need for an effective and proportionate control of its implementation;

42. HIGHLIGHTS the importance of innovative solutions in fishing techniques as well as fishing techniques already in practice to minimise the environmental impact and carbon footprint, ~~and to~~ increase selectivity and ~~to~~ ensure that fishers minimise unwanted bycatch and incidental catches of sensitive marine species as much as possible ~~only catch targeted species~~ and comply with the landing obligation;
43. WELCOMES the Commission's intention to conduct an evaluation of the effectiveness, efficiency and relevance of current EU legislation on the landing obligation pertaining to the conservation of commercial fish stocks; Considering the difficulties in the implementation of the landing obligation, despite extensive work by Member States, CALLS ON the Commission to start this evaluation as soon as possible, making use of the extensive research information and data made available by Member States and stakeholders;
44. EMPHASISES that an increased ~~use~~inclusion of the ecosystem approach ~~to~~in scientific assessments is needed in fisheries management to factor in environmental, ~~and~~ climate change and ~~other~~ human activity impacts as well as predators that affect fish stocks. Such an approach will ~~provide for~~result in a holistic and integrated fisheries governance framework that tackles the trade-offs between ecological, social (including cultural and institutional) and economic sustainability criteria;
45. REAFFIRMS ~~the~~that need for the EU and its Member States ~~to~~will continue to apply zero tolerance towards illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, including by third countries, and promote sustainable fisheries combatting overfishing and reducing by-catch of threatened and unwanted species at regional and international level; RECALLS the need to adopt the new implementing acts under the Technical Measures Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2019/1241) and to include the specifications of the turtle excluder device;

46. REITERATES the importance of encouraging the use of innovative techniques in compliance with CFP objectives; AGREES that innovation should be supported financially and through specific incentives; and RECALLS that this is even more relevant for small-scale coastal fisheries and aquaculture operators with low profit margins;
47. EMPHASISES the need to ensure **coherence and** mutual supportiveness with all initiatives under the European Green Deal and with EU and Member States' objectives related to, inter alia, food security, health, climate change, environment and the sustainable use of terrestrial and marine natural resources, ~~especially sustainable agriculture and food systems, sustainable fisheries and the sustainable management of forests;~~
48. **HIGHLIGHTS the importance of the EMFAF and LIFE programmes in achieving the objectives of the Natura 2000 Directives, the Water Framework Directive and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive;**
49. REITERATES the importance of **regionalisation through the adoption of** ~~adopting~~ joint recommendations **at regional levels, through regionalisation** in order to contribute to the implementation of EU **fisheries and** environmental legislation **with respect to fisheries measures and its promotion at an international level to encourage third countries to follow the EU's ambition;**
50. IS AWARE of the importance of the sustainable development of the aquaculture sector in the EU and of the current and outstanding challenges to the growth of this sector, **including existing barriers that hinder investment in the EU's aquaculture sector;** LOOKS FORWARD to **the** guidance documents that the Commission intends to issue to support the implementation of its 'Strategic guidelines adopted by the Commission in 2021 for a more sustainable and competitive EU aquaculture for the period 2021 to 2030'; SUPPORTS the clear vision of the objectives and challenges to be taken into account and of the concrete actions needed for this sector to reach its potential in terms of sustainable food supply, economic development and the creation of employment in ~~coastal and rural~~ **and coastal** areas across the EU;

51. WELCOMES the Commission's document 'Towards a Strong and Sustainable EU Algae Sector' and the Commission's efforts to support EU algae sector developments~~and, in particular, the adoption on 15 November 2022 of the EU Algae Initiative~~; RECOGNISES that regenerative algae farming has the potential to become a significant part of the EU's blue bioeconomy and can provide ~~opportunities to~~ EU fishers and other actors in coastal and rural areas with opportunities to diversify~~ication of~~ their economic activities; WELCOMES the Commission's initiative to establish a cross-cutting European algae stakeholder platform (EU4Algae);

IV. IMPROVING CFP GOVERNANCE

52. REAFFIRMS the crucial role of producer organisations in implementing CFP objectives for both fisheries and aquaculture, and HIGHLIGHTS their important role in balancing the conservation of marine resources and fleet competitiveness and therefore their contribution to food security; IS CONVINCED that enhancing these structures and fostering the creation of inter-branch organisations and transnational professional organisations where necessary will further strengthen the proper functioning of the value chain and contribute to achieving CFP objectives;

53. ~~WELCOMES~~TAKES NOTE of the Commission's work on marketing standards; ~~EMPHASISES~~AGREES WITH the need to ensure consistency between the rules of horizontal EU regulation on the provision of food information to consumers and the rules on consumer information in the Common Markets Organisation Regulation and AGREES that information on fishery and aquaculture product labels helps~~is essential for~~ consumers to make informed choices; RECOMMENDS increasing consumer awareness of all the benefits that fishery and aquaculture provides;

54. **UNDERLINES** the importance of the work of regional groups **within the Member States** ~~while recognising the~~ **HIGHLIGHTS** the positive contribution of such groups to the **implementation of the objectives of the CFP, including the successful rollout of the landing obligation; RECOGNISES, nonetheless, that there is a significant, additional workload for Member States** associated with regionalisation; **ENCOURAGES**, therefore, **the Commission to work with Member States to seek to streamline procedures and minimise the administrative burden, thereby allowing** all parties concerned to participate actively in this work; **STRESSES that more guidance should be given, and specific human and financial resources should be made available to Member States in this respect;** **REAFFIRMS** the important role of advisory councils in this context and within the CFP more generally;
55. **AGREES** that transparency on the allocation criteria **used for fishing quotas** ~~used~~ is important; ~~UNDERLINES~~ **STRESSES** that the definition of the criteria for allocation of fishing opportunities at national level **lies in the competence of** Member States² ~~competence~~ within the framework set by Article 17 of the CFP;
56. **RECALLS that the last three years have been a period of unprecedented upheaval for the fisheries and aquaculture sectors.** **CALLS ON** the Commission, **therefore, to foster stability by undertaking to provide a** ~~thorough~~ **impact assessments** for **all** ~~any~~ future legislative proposals **which are expected to have significant economic, environmental or social impacts,** in line with the Interinstitutional Agreement on Better Law Making, including an assessment of **the** subsidiarity and proportionality of the proposed measures **and assessing the economic, environmental and social impacts in an integrated and balanced way;** ~~CALLS ON the Commission to provide better guidance on financing options;~~
57. **HIGHLIGHTS** the role of Maritime Spatial Planning, built on an ecosystem-based management approach, in supporting the achievement of conservation and restoration targets and in mitigating and minimising the harmful impact of human activities in coastal areas and offshore, ~~and~~ not only from fisheries, as well as its contribution to a competitive and sustainable blue economy and the need for a more coordinated approach **promoting synergies** between policy areas and legislation within the Union;

58. NOTES in this context the agreed long-term goals for the deployment of offshore renewable energy in EU waters to reach climate goals and the constraints this entails for the operation of fishing fleets and EMPHASISES the need in this regard to explore the potential of the co-use of windfarms, fisheries and aquaculture as a common European issue that are in line with offshore wind energy development plans, while taking into account its consequences for the protection of marine habitats;

V. THE CFP TAPPING THE POTENTIAL OF SUSTAINABLE INNOVATION AND INVESTMENT

59. WELCOMES the proposed set-up of an Energy Transition Partnership (ETP) for EU Fisheries and Aquaculture; SUGGESTS that the framework and structure of the ETP should better define its mandate in order to fulfil its objectives;
60. HIGHLIGHTS the shortage of viable options of alternative energy sources currently available and the technical, regulatory and financial barriers to developing such alternatives and EMPHASISES that fisheries and aquaculture operators should not be penalised for this;
61. AGREES that appropriate investment frameworks and funding opportunities across the value chain are key for enabling the energy transition; NOTES in this regard that the EMFAF is too limited to bridge the gap towards sustainable innovation for a sector that is highly diverse, largely dependent on fossil fuels and characterised by mostly small-scale businesses; ENCOURAGES hence the Commission to review the current EMFAF so that it can help to boost the energy transition; CALLS ON the Commission to provide guidance on and further develop financing options and financial assistance for measures targeting specifically zero emissions or low-carbon technology and investment in the EU fisheries and aquaculture sector;

62. SUPPORTS the development and use of digital technology as an opportunity tofor improve the operation of the fleet and monitor and collecting a broader range of data to inform the scientific and decision-making processes, while ensuring the respect of data protection rules and avoiding an excessive increase in administrative burden;
63. HIGHLIGHTS the importance of EMFAF in supporting innovation, digitalisation and the energy transition as well as other EU funds such as Horizon, the LIFE programme and the Recovery and Resilience Facility; ACKNOWLEDGES that enhancing Member States' cooperation in research projects is also important; CALLS ON the Commission to review financing options to support the energy transition of the EU's fishing fleet and STRESSES the need to simplify the EMFAF concerning investment aid to improve the energy efficiency of vessels, including when the segment is not in equilibrium;
64. ~~ENDORSES~~SUPPORTS therefore the Commission's initiative to develop a specific guide and comprehensive database on EU financing instruments for the energy transition in the fisheries and aquaculture sector;
65. AGREES that innovation should be rewarded and SUPPORTS the creation of an annual award for sustainable innovation in fisheries, with the support of the advisory councils;
66. NOTES the Commission's initiative to increase the flexibility of their fishing capacity management in cooperation with the sector and with EU and national financial support where eligible; POINTS OUT that fishing capacity ceilings are an obstacle for structural change towards decarbonisation of the fishing fleet and are redundant in fish stocks management systems where sustainable management of fish stocks is ensured by setting annual TACs and quotas; thereby INVITINGES the Commission to reform the calculation of the fleet capacity of Member States excluding the additional tonnage dedicated solely to decarbonisation; encourage Member States to use this as a 'decarbonisation capacity margin' to support the fleets to transition towards cleaner, renewable or low carbon energy sources and fishing methods;

67. **CALLS ON the Commission to propose the establishment of a transparent EU system to recognise and reward producers for sustainable aquaculture management that is environmentally friendly and/or enables additional ecosystem services, in order to motivate producers to achieve a higher environmental and socio-economic performance of aquaculture;**

VI. A 'FISHERIES AND OCEANS PACT' TO PAVE THE WAY FOR THE FUTURE

68. ~~SUPPORTS~~**NOTES** the Commission's 'Fisheries and Oceans Pact' to reconfirm the joint commitment to fully implementing current policy and contributing to necessary reflections and assessments of certain elements of the CFP; **CALLS FOR** the strong involvement of fisheries stakeholders and ~~of~~ the scientific community in the 'Fisheries and Oceans Pact';
69. **DEEMS IT NECESSARY TO continue work on the sustainability of fisheries as a way of protecting the oceans;**
-