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Answer given by Mr Sinkevičius
on behalf of the European Commission
(8.8.2023)

The condition¹ set by Article 18(2)(d) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1139² was introduced by the legislator in order to reflect the specific objective under the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) of ‘increasing energy efficiency and reducing CO₂’. This objective is in line with the ambition set by the European Green Deal of reaching climate neutrality by 2050.

Article 18 sets out the methodology for measuring whether the 20% reduction in CO₂ emissions may be considered to be achieved. This methodology is based first and foremost on information certified by the manufacturer of the engine. However, it allows for alternative systems of measurement to be used where the information certified by the manufacturer does not allow the CO₂ emissions or fuel consumption of the old and new engines to be compared. This gives Member States flexibility in how they assess the situation, according to the existing technology and fuel.

The Commission therefore considers that Article 18 offers the requisite flexibility to implement support under the EMFAF for replacing or modernising fishing vessel engines and to achieve the objective of reducing CO₂ emissions. Consequently, the Commission does not intend to propose that amendments are made to Regulation (EU) 2021/1139.

To accelerate the energy transition in EU fisheries and aquaculture, the Commission has adopted a Communication³ for improving access to additional EU funding opportunities⁴ and has launched the Energy Transition Partnership for fisheries and aquaculture⁵ which will provide a platform for knowledge sharing⁶.

¹ I.e. that ‘the new or modernised engine [...] emits at least 20% less CO₂ compared to the current engine’.

² Regulation (EU) 2021/1139 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2021 establishing the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund. Article 18 ‘Replacement or modernisation of a main or ancillary engine’.

³ https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/publications/communication-commission-energy-transition-eu-fisheries-and-aquaculture-sector_en

⁴ The Commission has initially launched a technical and economic study into the types and costs of different technologies for the energy transition in the sector. The results are expected in December 2023.

⁵ https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/news/sustainable-fisheries-launch-energy-transition-partnership-eu-fisheries-and-aquaculture-2023-06-16_fr

⁶ Including in terms of funding opportunities and technology.