



2022/0212(BUD)

2.9.2022

OPINION

of the Committee on Fisheries

for the Committee on Budgets

on General budget of the European Union for the financial year 2023 - all sections
(2022/0212(BUD))

Rapporteur for opinion: Pierre Karleskind

PA_NonLeg

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Fisheries calls on the Committee on Budgets, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Recalls the economic, social and environmental aspects of fisheries, aquaculture and maritime affairs; stresses their vital role in ensuring global food safety and resilience of food systems, but also in boosting the development of the sustainable blue economy and their contribution to developing and revitalising coastal areas, especially in the outermost regions, which are constrained by their remoteness, insularity, small size, difficult topography and climate and the economic dependence on a few products; Takes the view that maintaining the competitive position of the fisheries and aquaculture sectors must go hand in hand with achieving social, environmental and economic objectives set out in the CFP as well as in the Green Deal and subsequent strategies respecting the outcome of impact assessments and stakeholder consultations;
2. Points out that Russia's military aggression against Ukraine has impacted fisheries from several perspectives, notably disrupting fishing activities in the Black Sea, with temporary bans set up for security reasons in certain Member States' waters, such as in the Romanian waters bordering Ukraine in Danube Delta, with similar disruptions occurring, especially in the Mediterranean, as a result of the increased cost of fuel occasioned by the conflict; and severely affecting the viability of fishing and aquaculture operations all over Europe and especially in the outermost regions;
3. Stresses that Russia's military aggression has led to significant disruptions in trade flows and an increase in energy prices, which has hit small-scale fisheries particularly hard, requiring the use of European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) crisis measures; calls on the Commission to further increase such efforts with the aim of compensating the sharp increase of fuel prices and other additional costs with a maximum of flexibility, which since March 2022 have doubled compared to the average price in 2021; welcomes the amending of the EMFF regulation¹ aiming at alleviating the consequences of the war on the sector and on the markets; calls on Member States to fully and swiftly utilise the support provided;
4. Warns, therefore, of the continuing difficulties facing the fisheries sector, which have now been aggravated by the significant rise in fuel prices;
5. Considers that the EMFAF must facilitate specific support for small-scale fisheries in the form of fuel subsidies;
6. Warns of the high average age of small-scale fishing fleets, necessitating a programme to renew and update them in order to improve safety and on-board living conditions, energy efficiency and environmental sustainability, while ensuring the social and economic resilience of the communities that depend on them;
7. Considers, therefore, that the EMFAF must facilitate funding for the renewal, upgrading or even resizing of small-scale coastal and artisanal fleets; reiterates that fleet renewal

¹ COM(2022)179 final

must not be confused with fleet expansion or increased fishing capacity;

8. Calls on the Commission once more to facilitate EMFAF support for storage, freezing and refrigeration as a decisive step towards enabling full advantage to be taken of fisheries resources – without destroying or depleting stocks – and ensuring regular supplies to consumers and the food processing industry;
9. Invites the Commission to expedite a strategy increasing the global share of sustainable EU aquaculture production which contributes to food supply and food security, especially against the backdrop of the Ukrainian crisis; calls on the Commission to make full use of the available financing resources of the European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF), as this is the funding instrument specifically dedicated to the objectives of EU fisheries and aquaculture management; urges Member States to earmark sufficient funding under the Recovery and Resilience Facility to support the innovation, sustainability and resilience of EU aquaculture sector;
10. Welcomes the adopted Temporary Crisis Framework², which allows Member States to set up schemes to grant aid for companies active in the production, processing and marketing of fisheries and aquaculture products affected by the crisis; calls on Member States to fully and swiftly make use of these possibilities; however believes that the Commission must provide further flexibilities in order to counter the negative effects of the current crisis;
11. Recalls that, as a result of the Brexit, the EU fishing sector is still suffering considerable economic loss; considers therefore, as a matter of priority, that the Commission secures compensation commensurate with the damage suffered by the sector and the fishing communities, taking into account all consequences, direct and indirect, of the Agreement; highlights the difficulties for the sector to obtain fishing authorisations in the 6-12 nautical miles and in Guernsey and Jersey waters; urges the Member States, in this regard, to fully use all of the resources under the Brexit Adjustment Reserve;
12. Stresses the importance of fixing the economic and social damage caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has hit the entire fisheries and aquaculture sector hard, and from which the sector is still recovering; calls on the Commission, therefore, to effectively support the most distressed fishing areas, such as the Western Mediterranean, which is also reeling from the impact of a 6% reduction in the 2022 fishing effort for demersal stocks;
13. Welcomes the approvals by the Commission of Member States recovery plans; stresses out the importance of Member States using these resources to ensure sustainable recovery of the fishing and aquaculture sector when implementing their recovery plans;
14. Draws attention to the potential of sustainable European aquaculture, including in terms of food security and health benefits in the context of the Ukraine crisis; calls on the Commission to foster the sustainable growth of this sector above the actual 2% of global aquaculture production with specific, acceptable and shared targets for 2030;

² C(2022) 1890 final

15. Insists on the necessity to improve scientific and technical knowledge to ensure the most reliable research-based solutions; reiterates the importance of ensuring sufficient financial resources for the collection, management, analysis, use and exchange of data in the fisheries sector by Member States' and European scientific entities and to invest in research on selective fishing techniques;
16. Urges the Commission to publish a detailed report on the re-programming of unspent EMFF and EMFAF allocations; is alarmed by the fact that 3 513,8³ million EUR related to the EMFF programme in the period 2014 – 2020 remains to be paid or reimbursed as of 31 December 2021 and that 14% of the funds still need to be allocated; invites the Members States and the Commission to urgently adopt the operational programmes under the EMFAF and to increase the paying out and flexibility of allocating these unspent funds;
17. Stresses that, with a view to making more effective use of the EMFAF and ensuring that small-scale, coastal and artisanal fisheries have access to support, it is necessary to: (a) examine and implement measures to streamline procedures, thus reducing the red tape surrounding applications; (b) replace current funding arrangements with a system of advance payments; (c) raise the funding limits;
18. Draws attention to the international dimension of the CFP and its economic, social and environmental benefits and calls on the Commission to devote adequate resources to Oceans governance; stresses the importance of international cooperation, transparency, traceability and level playing field to achieve EU's commitments;
19. Supports the EU's zero tolerance of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, which aims in particular to eliminate illegally caught seafood from EU supply chains and to ensure a level playing field for European fishermen; notes, however, that scant human and financial resources are given over to implementing this zero-tolerance policy, even though most seafood consumed in the EU is imported and there are increasing concerns about IUU fishing in third countries, including those with Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements; calls therefore for adequate and increased funding for the EU's policy to combat IUU fishing worldwide, using all possible policy actions to that end, such as the strengthening of controls on goods at the EU's borders or development aid;
20. Stresses the importance of allocating more resources for mitigating climate change, its negative impacts, and preventing further biodiversity loss. Climate change has severe impacts on oceans and fisheries, hence the need for adequate funding for the protection and restoration of marine ecosystems that act as carbon sinks and biodiversity hotspots;
21. Stresses the importance of control in securing the objectives of the CFP;s in this regard, the increase in funding (0,8%) allocated to the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) is not even enough to match the inflation rate of the EU; hence considers that the increase is largely insufficient to ensure a level playing field and a credible combat against IUU fishing; underlines EFCA's role ensuring a level playing field for the EU

³ <https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/funds/emff>

fleet, especially in discouraging and repressing IUU fishing in European waters but also at a global level, requires a more ambitious funding in the long term, if the objectives of the CFP are to be achieved;

22. Stresses that generational renewal is one of the European fishing sector's priorities; invites Member States to draw on the EMFAF to finance the introduction of programmes specifically designed to help young people to take up careers in fisheries, to make the sector more diverse and to encourage people from under-represented groups, particularly women, to join the sector; Calls, in this regard in addition, on the Commission to support the mobilisation of budgetary resources to improve the working conditions on board fishing vessels, and for the implementation of projects to support the creation of an association of young European fishers;
23. Reiterates the need to provide substantial support for disadvantaged coastal areas and European outermost regions, on the basis of Article 349 TFEU, including for the renewal of the artisanal and traditional fishing vessels registered and operating in these regions, in order to ensure their survival and sustainable development and in compliance with the principles of differential treatment for small islands and territories mentioned in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14;
24. Points out that the future of fishing, especially small-scale, coastal and artisanal fishing, depends on specific, effective and immediate measures with adequate funding, namely through the EMFAF;
25. Regrets, therefore, the reduction in funding, particularly payment appropriations, earmarked for the EMFAF in both in the Commission proposal and in the Council's position;
26. Considers that, given the challenges facing the sector, EMFAF budget appropriations are inadequate and must be increased.

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Date adopted	1.9.2022
Result of final vote	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: flex-end; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: right; padding-right: 10px;">+:</div> <div>20</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: flex-end; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: right; padding-right: 10px;">-:</div> <div>1</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: flex-end; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: right; padding-right: 10px;">0:</div> <div>1</div> </div>
Members present for the final vote	Clara Aguilera, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Rosanna Conte, Rosa D'Amato, Anja Hazekamp, Niclas Herbst, Jan Huitema, Ladislav Ilčić, France Jamet, Pierre Karleskind, Francisco José Millán Mon, João Pimenta Lopes, Manuel Pizarro, Caroline Roose, Bert-Jan Ruissen, Peter van Dalen
Substitutes present for the final vote	Gabriel Mato, Lucia Vuolo, Emma Wiesner
Substitutes under Rule 209(7) present for the final vote	Anna-Michelle Asimakopoulou, Alessandra Basso, Camilla Laureti

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

20	+
ECR	Ladislav Ilčić, Bert-Jan Ruissen
ID	Alessandra Basso, Rosanna Conte, France Jamet
PPE	Anna-Michelle Asimakopoulou, Peter van Dalen, Niclas Herbst, Gabriel Mato, Francisco José Millán Mon, Lucia Vuolo
RENEW	Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Jan Huitema, Pierre Karleskind, Emma Wiesner
S&D	Clara Aguilera, Camilla Laureti, Manuel Pizarro
VERTS/ALE	Rosa D'Amato, Caroline Roose

1	-
THE LEFT	Anja Hazekamp

1	0
THE LEFT	João Pimenta Lopes

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention