

European Association of Fish Producers Organisations
Association Européenne des Organisations de Producteurs dans le secteur de la pêche



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EAPO Position Paper on the European Commission Proposal for a New EMFF

The EAPO has analysed COM(2018) 390 final, resulting in the following listing of general issues and proposals for amendments.

General Issues

1. In order to avoid an overlapping between programming periods, the EAPO would like to highlight the importance of ensuring that all the legal basis for the implementation of the next fund is in place and sorted out in advance.
2. The EAPO believes it is essential to aim at a greater simplification of its implementation at all levels. The red tape is especially heavy for the applications for funding of small projects, which should be made easier in terms of bureaucratic burden than large projects
3. Ensuring the downsizing of the administrative burden for both beneficiaries and administrations both at EU and national level is essential.
4. The EAPO would like to encourage the use of other modern financial instruments such as loans, bank guarantees and insurances as public support foreseen in Operational Programmes, rather than just confining the financial support to grants or procurement.
5. The EAPO firmly believes that modernisation and renewal contributes substantially to the objectives of the CFP. Therefore the EMFF should not obstruct in any way the Member States to (co-)finance more sustainable fisheries.

EAPO Proposal for Amendments

Article 4 – Priorities

- (2) Contributing to food security in the Union through competitive and sustainable *fisheries*, aquaculture and markets;

Narrative: The EAPO misses a reference to fisheries in this particular priority, as the way it is drafted it seems to be suggesting that only aquaculture and markets contribute to food security. Although the relevance of sustainable fisheries is set out in priority 1, the EAPO believes it is fundamental to stress that fisheries also contribute to food security.

Article 13 – Ineligible operations

~~(i) — market intervention mechanisms aiming to temporarily or permanently withdraw fishery or aquaculture products from the market with a view to reducing supply in order to prevent price decline or drive up prices; by extension, storage operations in a logistics chain that would produce the same effects either intentionally or unintentionally;~~

Narrative: The EAPO would like to stress here that storage aids have long been among the range of tools available to Producer Organizations.

The Regulation on the Common Market Organisation 1379/2013 provides the conditions of use of this mechanism, while stating that it must "promote a better stability of the market". This idea is reflected in Article 7.1(c) – 'Objectives of producer organisations - stabilising the markets'.

The storage aid has regularly prevented or mitigated price collapses, by allowing excess quantities to be carried forward over time, when the marketing conditions of certain products were degraded.

In the current EMFF Regulation 508/2014 the co-legislators decided to stop financing such schemes as from 2018, while limiting the intervention capacities of POs over the period 2014-2018. This entails the impossibility to assess the consequences of this decision before 2019.

Given all the above, the MAC wishes to propose the reintroduction of this tool within the measures that can be financed under the new EMFF and under the conditions provided by the current EMFF Regulation. Despite all efforts to plan, structure and promote fishery products through the CFP, it will never be possible to avoid crisis situations, particularly with regards to parameters outside of the producers' control (imports, embargos, rough weather conditions...).

In order to limit the socio-economic consequences of such exceptional situations, the MAC wishes to reintroduce the funding of such tools, as provided for in the CMO Regulation.

(j) investments on board *of* fishing vessels necessary to comply with the requirements under Union or *derived* national law, including requirements under the Union's obligations in the context of regional fisheries management organisations, *except when the application for support for those investments has been logged on a collective basis within 2 years after they became mandatory under [Union law]/[Union law or derived national law], and when those investments serve the objectives of the CFP;*

Narrative: To reflect the above General Issue 5.

(k) investments on board of fishing vessels that have carried out activities at sea for less than 60 days in each of the two calendar years preceding the year of submission of the application for support, *except when such vessel is replacing one that fulfils this condition without exceeding the capacity of the replaced vessel.*

Narrative: To reflect the above General Issue 5.

Article 24 – Marketing of fishery and aquaculture products

The EMFF may support actions contributing to the achievement of the objectives of the common organisation of the markets in fishery and aquaculture products as provided for in Article 35 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013 and further specified in Regulation (EU) No 1379/2013 *including the*

preparation and implementation of production and marketing plans. It may also support actions promoting the marketing, the quality and the value added of fishery and aquaculture products.

Narrative: The Regulation on the Common Market Organization 1379/2013 has notably changed the role and means of the Producer Organisations concerning the marketing conditions for fishery products. Overall, the European institutions then decided to put an end to most financial engineering mechanisms using public money, in favour of a better structuring of the offer, organized by the Producer Organisations. This transformation was based on the implementation of the Production and Marketing Plans, deployed by the POs.

As real toolboxes, these Plans have contributed significantly to organizing the supply to the market, and have aimed at the achievement of several objectives set within the CFP, in particular Article 35. As such, the EMFF, via Article 66 Support for Production and Marketing Plans, accompanies POs in the implementation of actions promoting the viability and sustainability of fishing activities in accordance with the objectives set in Articles 3 and 7 of the CMO.

In order to harmonize the implementation of these Plans at European level, and in addition to Implementing Regulation 1418/2013, EAPO contributed in 2018 to the MAC Guidelines and Good Practices in Drafting and Implementing the Production and Marketing Plans.

The EAPO is therefore surprised to see that the PMPs are no longer specifically mentioned for funding under the new EMFF proposal formulated by the Commission for the period 2021 - 2027, probably in an attempt from the European Commission to simplify the regulation.

The EAPO understands these plans as fundamental to support the organisation of the marketing of fish products in Europe, therefore the EAPO wishes to include in this article the funding of these Plans together with a cross reference to article 28 of the CMO:

1. *Each producer organisation shall submit a production and marketing plan for, at least, its main marketed species to its competent national authorities for approval. Such production and marketing plans shall have the aim of achieving the objectives laid down in Articles 3 and 7.*
2. *Producer organisations shall receive financial support for the preparation and implementation of production and marketing plans in accordance with a future Union legal act establishing the conditions for the financial support for maritime and fisheries policy for the period 2014–2020.*

Article 54 – Repeal

1. *Without prejudice to the provisions of Article 55(2), Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 is repealed with effect from 1 January 2021.*
2. ~~*References to the repealed Regulation shall be construed as references to this Regulation.*~~

Article 55 – Transitional provisions

4. *Regulation (EC) No 508/2014 or any other act applicable to the 2014-2020 programming period shall continue to apply to programmes and operations supported by the EMFF during that period.*

(EAPO – 11 January 2019)