

## PRESS RELEASE

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### EU Common Fisheries Policy Reform - Recreational Angling Left out in the Cold?

Today and tomorrow the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers will enter the last round of negotiations on the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) reform text.

In February the European Parliament voted by 502 to 137 in favour of a text, which includes this piece:

"The Common Fisheries Policy shall 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, of **contributing to** the availability of food supplies and **recreational fishing opportunities**, and of allowing for processing industries and land-based activities directly linked to fishing activities, while taking into account the interests of both consumers and producers."

So far the Council has been against this modest, positive inclusion of recreational fishing. Instead the Council has suggested making it explicit only, that "recreational fisheries can have a significant impact on fish resources..."

It is, of course, undeniable that recreational fishing has an impact on fish stocks. However, the seriousness of this impact should be measured against the fish stock itself, not against the desire of other stock exploiters for access to more fish. To put this into perspective: If recreational fishing was the only fish exploitation allowed in Europe, with no commercial fishing, then no fish stock in Europe would be in trouble today. The same cannot be said the other way around. Overall, recreational fishing is thought to be responsible for ca. 3% of the harvests vs. commercial and semi-commercial fishing 97%.

To avoid recreational angling being stigmatised in public and within the CFP fisheries management policy for the wrong reasons we must insist that some of the positives, which recreational angling provides to society are explicitly mentioned 'somewhere' in the CFP text.

Recreational angling in Europe creates and sustains more than 100,000 jobs – often in rural and remote areas - and generates economic activity worth several billion euros. Per fish exploited recreational angling provides far more economic impact and jobs than any other fish exploiting sector.

This CFP reform aims at, among other things, boosting the aquaculture sector and positively discriminating in favour of the small scale fisheries sector. Both aims arguably will put the recreational fishing sector under pressure in some areas. It is vital that recreational fishing is recognised within the CFP for all its positives and not seen or treated as a nuisance among fisheries sectors, which could be the case if the Council has its way.

#### Notes to editors:

- EAA, the European Anglers Alliance is a pan-European NGO composed of key angling organisations from 14 European countries with about 3 mill members.
- In Europe there are about 25 million anglers of which 8-10 million go sea fishing.

Web: [www.eaa-europe.eu](http://www.eaa-europe.eu)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/EuropeanAnglersAlliance](https://www.facebook.com/EuropeanAnglersAlliance)

All about the CFP reform: <http://cfp-reformwatch.eu/>

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