
PRESS RELEASE

Recreational Fishing Included For The First Time As MEPs Vote For Radical CFP Reform

Angling Organisations across Europe survived a tense vote by MEPs on reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) yesterday after it became apparent that Europe's Greens were attempting to block the inclusion of "*recreational fishing opportunities*" from the final resolution.

In the end the reference was included when the Parliament voted by 502 to 137 in favour of sweeping reforms of the Common Fisheries Policy which will see, amongst other measures; an end to discarding of fish; a move to restoring depleted stocks and harvesting fish at maximum sustainable yield (the maximum amount of fish that can be harvested without depleting the stock) by 2015; more long term management plans which will hopefully end the political horse trading that takes place in Brussels every December as Ministers ignore the scientific advice on how much can be harvested sustainably.

European anglers have been lobbying hard over recent years for recreational fishing to be recognised with specific reference in the reformed CFP after being invisible stakeholders in Europe's fisheries policy ever since its introduction in 1983.

More recently recreational fishing has come under the spotlight for the perceived impact it has on commercial fishing opportunities without considering the huge socio-economic contribution recreational fishing (angling) makes to Europe and its extremely low environmental impact.

Late last year anglers' efforts were rewarded when the European Parliament's Fisheries Committee included an amendment to the basic regulation text which would mean that the reformed CFP ensures that fishing activities are managed in a way that contributes to recreational fishing opportunities.

Jan Kappel, Secretary General of the European Anglers Alliance (EAA), representing approximately three million affiliated members across Europe, said, "*I would like to congratulate all 502 MEPs who voted in favour of the final text. There will now be tough negotiations with the Council (the Member States) who will try and water down the reform measures voted through by the parliament. The explicit mention of recreational fishing in the CFP is great news. We expect the Council and Commission to accept the parliament's opinion on this issue. Recreational fishers, like commercial fishers, are stakeholders in European fish stocks generating jobs and money. In many coastal areas recreational sea angling is by far the most important segment of the fisheries sector.*"

Mike Heylin, Chairman of EAA's Sea Sub-Group said, "*Finally we have recognition of the needs of recreational anglers within the Common Fisheries Policy; that will mean that stocks have to be managed to suit anglers as well as commercial fishing. This is very welcome. New threats to recreational sea anglers' access and their right to fishing are just around the corner. Recreational sea angling probably won't be treated fairly without this clear mention in the CFP as suggested by the parliament. I'll urge the Council to do as the parliament did, give recreational fishing an explicit mention in the CFP's Article 2.*"

Ends.

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. Web: www.eaa-europe.eu
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