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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Delegations

Subject: Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council (EMFF) - Partial General Approach

Delegations will find here attached the SE, EE, PL, as well as a joint LV and LT Statement on the EMFF partial General Approach presented in the AGRIFISH Council on 18 June 2019.

Courtesy translation

Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Regulation (EU) No 508/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council (EMFF)

The proposal's text includes the possibility to finance capacity-enhancing measures at the same time it more than doubles the total amount Member States can allocate to capacity-related measures. The proposal lacks adequate conditions to prevent overcapacity, which can lead to overfishing. The Presidency compromise goes therefore on the opposite direction as compared to the goals of the Common Fisheries Policy and the transition to sustainable fisheries as well as EU's international commitments within the framework of Agenda 2030. Sweden therefore votes against the Presidency compromise text.

Regulation on European Maritime and Fisheries Fund

Statement by Estonia

Estonia considers the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) as an important tool for achieving the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy. Estonia can generally support the direction of the Presidency compromise on the regulation of the EMFF for the Partial General Approach (PGA). However, we find that financial instruments have not been addressed well in the PGA.

Estonia strongly finds that in relation to financial instruments, the list of eligible activities should be less restrictive. Financial instruments should be treated as a tool to ensure equal competition rather than means of direct support. This is very important for Estonia, where the relatively small fisheries sector finds it increasingly difficult to guarantee suitable conditions for loans from financial institutions. Therefore, we consider it necessary that derogation from certain non-eligible costs listed in Article 13 of the EMFF should be established for financial instruments. Financial instruments differ from grant support and it is common in the Multiannual Financial Framework that while the financial instruments need to contribute to overcoming existing market barriers, the list of eligible activities is less restrictive in the case of financial instruments than in case of grant support.

One possible solution would be to add the following paragraph to the EMFF regulation:

“Article 15 new

Conditions for the Financial Instruments

The non eligible costs listed in points (a) and (b) of Article 13 shall not apply to the support granted in form of Financial Instruments when provided to final recipient and without gross grant equivalent of aid.

The non eligible costs listed in points (f), (h), (j), (k), (l) of Article 13 shall not apply to the support granted in form of Financial Instruments.”

In conclusion, we consider it necessary to address this issue during proceeding discussions in trilogues, as this is an important matter for Estonia for the future implementing the Fund.

Statement by Lithuania and Latvia

Regulation on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund

Council of the European Union (Agriculture and Fisheries) meeting 18 June 2019

European Maritime and Fisheries Fund should adequately support the fishing fleet in the next programming period and we consider provisions of the draft regulation insufficient in this regard. The foreseen support for innovations and investments on board does not address the reality of the technically obsolete EU fishing vessels and is economically questionable.

Part of the European Union fishing fleet is technically obsolete, equipped with highly fuel-consuming and CO2 emitting engines. The vessel construction itself makes impossible to modernise or innovate and it is extremely costly to ensure proper working and fish handling conditions on board.

In our view, the possibility for the fishing fleet renewal under the future fund needs to be consistent with the latest amendment to the Guidelines for the examination of State aid to the fishery and aquaculture sector, which allows for the aid for the renewal of the fishing fleet in outermost regions.

We suggest extending possibility for the fishing fleet renewal under the future fund by envisaging possibility to support replacement of old vessels with the newer ones, not exceeding the fishing capacity ceilings of Member State.

Therefore, Lithuania and Latvia propose to introduce a new Article dealing with the fishing fleet renewal under the future fund, namely allowing support for replacement of old vessels with newer ones.

Article 15 new
Replacement of a fishing vessel

By way of derogation from Article 13 (b), support to achieve the specific objective in Article 14 (1)(a) for the replacement of a fishing vessel by a newer one shall comply with the following conditions:

a) the replaceable vessel belongs to a fleet segment for which the latest report on fishing capacity, referred to in Article 22(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, has shown a balance with the fishing opportunities available to that segment;

b) the replacement does not result in exceeding the fishing capacity ceilings of Member State, set out in Annex II of the Regulation No 1380/2013;

c) the replaceable fishing vessel is older than 25 years at the date of submission of the application for support;

d) the acquired vessel has been registered in the fleet register for at least 3 calendar years preceding the year of submission of the application for support;

e) the replaced and the acquired fishing vessels are not longer than 40 meters in length overall.

Oświadczenie Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej
w sprawie częściowego podejścia ogólnego Rady UE (10297/2019) w odniesieniu do Wniosku
Rozporządzenie Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady w sprawie Europejskiego Funduszu
Morskiego i Rybackiego oraz uchylające rozporządzenie Parlamentu Europejskiego i Rady
(UE) nr 508/2014.

(posiedzenie Rady ds. Rolnictwa i Rybołówstwa w dniu 18 czerwca 2019 r.)

Polska zwraca uwagę na fakt, iż kompromisowy tekst przyjęty przez Radę nie odpowiada w pełni na potrzeby sektora rybołówstwa w regionie Morza Bałtyckiego i wnosi o wprowadzenie podejścia regionalnego. Obecny kształt częściowego podejścia ogólnego nie pozwoli w pełni skutecznie niwelować następstw katastrofalnego stanu zasobów w Morzu Bałtyckim. Na słabnącą kondycję dorsza wschodniego Polska zwraca uwagę od roku 2015, szukając poparcia w wypracowaniu instrumentów zaradczych zarówno w Komisji Europejskiej, jak i wśród państw regionu. Obecnie proponowany kształt Europejskiego Funduszu Morskiego i Rybackiego nie przystaje do rzeczywistości. Doradztwo ICES na rok 2020 dla basenu Morza Bałtyckiego rekomenduje TAC dla stada dorsza wschodniego oraz śledzia zachodniego na poziomie „0”.

Polska od dłuższego czasu prowadzi działania mające na celu ochronę populacji dorsza w Morzu Bałtyckim, tj. utrzymanie okresów ochronnych dla tarlisk dorsza, wprowadzenie zakazu trałowania w obszarze 6 Mm (mil morskich), czy wprowadzenie kwot połowowych dla dobijaka i tobiasza. W związku z brakiem zrozumienia państw regionu, co do konieczności podjęcia działań naprawczych w odniesieniu do zasobów ryb na Morzu Bałtyckim, istnieje wysokie ryzyko dalszego pogarszania ich kondycji. Wobec takiej sytuacji, Polska sprzeciwiła się przyjęciu częściowego podejścia ogólnego w sprawie Europejskiego Funduszu Morskiego i Rybackiego w zaproponowanym brzmieniu. W związku z powyższym, Polska zaapelowała o podjęcie długofalowych działań zaradczych, które skutecznie przyczynią się do odbudowy stad na Morzu Bałtyckim z ednoczesnym uwzględnieniem negatywnych skutków społeczno-ekonomicznych.

Statement of the Republic of Poland
on partial general approach Council of the EU in relation to European Maritime Fisheries
Fund for 2021-2027
(meeting of the AGRIFISH Council on 18 of June 2019)

Poland would like to draw the attention to the fact that the compromise text as adopted by the Council on the European Maritime Fisheries Fund for 2021-2027 does not sufficiently meet the needs of the fisheries sector in the Baltic Sea region. Poland calls for introducing a regional approach in this context. Since 2015 Poland has been calling for remedial measures in order to improve the situation of the Eastern Cod in the Baltic Sea, trying to find support in the framework of regional cooperation. The current text of the compromise does not provide for solutions on the environmental nature and does not reflect the reality in the Baltic. Moreover, it will not eliminate the socioeconomic consequences due to the catastrophic status of the Eastern Cod as provided by the newest scientific advice. Poland has been taking actions on the national level aimed at protecting the cod population in the Baltic Sea for the last few years, i.e. maintaining closure periods for cod spawners, introducing the trawling ban in 6 miles zone, as well as the limiting the fishing of sandeel in the coastal area.

If no common action will be taken, there is a high risk of further deterioration of the stock in the Baltic Sea. In view of this situation, Poland opposed to the adoption of the partial general approach regarding the European Maritime and Fisheries. In connection with the abovementioned, Poland calls on the Commission to initiate a long-term action plan that will effectively contribute to the recovery of stocks in the Baltic Sea while taking into account the negative socioeconomic consequences.
