



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

AGRICULTURE & FISHERIES



15.05.09

Fisheries

COM (2009) 213 COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ON EXPENDITURE INCURRED BY MEMBER STATES AND CO-FINANCED BY THE COMMUNITY IMPLEMENTING MONITORING AND CONTROL SYSTEMS APPLICABLE TO THE COMMON FISHERIES POLICY FOR THE PERIOD 2001-2006

In spite the fact that the positive impact of Community aid on fisheries control was analysed, the report also identifies room for improvement, which translates into the following practical measures:

The Commission should:

- keep on subjecting the increasing number of projects concerning the construction and modernisation of vessels and aircraft to a critical examination as regards their necessity;
- prioritise in future financing decisions co-finance related to automation and management of data, e-log books and VMS, as well as to training courses and exchange programmes, particularly in the area of illegal fishing;
- conclude Memoranda of Understanding with Members States which have not yet signed one. These agreements will aim at defining improvement needs in the national control systems in the context of Community financial aid for fisheries control. They will put in place a framework for strategic risk analysis and define benchmarks for these improvements. These benchmarks will cover all subjects related to inspection, from national legal frameworks to inspection means and procedures or use of VMS and other data. They will also indicate improvements to be brought in the administrative control area, the national organisational structure and the follow-up of infringements.



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

The Member States should:

- limit the extent of the annual control programmes so that implementation of all projects is feasible;
- (EU-10) not hesitate to invest in training courses and exchange programmes of control staff;
- increase awareness in the administration of the possibility of co-finance for expenditure categories that have so far not had much take-up in Member States' control programmes. Especially efforts to set up a system to assess expenditure are appreciable, since such a system might help Member States reaching the above-stipulated target of more selective annual control programmes;
- ensure that their non-execution rate is further reduced. In this respect, the Member States benefiting from an above-average maximum contribution have a special responsibility and should produce a below-average non-execution rate;
- ensure that the staff responsible for the implementation of the programmes are fully aware of the eligibility rules for expenditure and thereby reduce the risk of claimed expenditure being considered ineligible by the Commission;
- ensure the implementation of the Memoranda of Understanding concluded in agreement with the Commission;
- closely adhere to the prescribed format and the deadlines concerning the annual assessment reports.

Commissioner Joe Borg in Australia to strengthen EU-Australia ties – 11/05/2009

European Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Joe Borg, begins a week-long visit to Australia, starting in Canberra. Mr Borg will be meeting Australian political and business leaders to explore avenues for enhanced cooperation on a wide range of issues. For instance, discussions:

- on how to strengthen and develop topics ranging from international maritime governance,
- regional fisheries management and
- trade to illegal fishing practices and piracy.

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Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

COM (2009) 224 COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION Consultation on Fishing Opportunities for 2010

The European Commission presented its views on how to set fishing possibilities in EU waters for 2010. A consultation document sets out the approach the Commission intends to take when setting the Total Allowable Catches (TACs) and the fishing effort limitations for the coming year. The Commission points out that slow progress has been made in stock recovery since the 2002 reform of the Common Fisheries Policy. One of the reasons for this is that fishing opportunities consistently have been set at levels which were too high for the fish stocks to sustain. As a result, more than 80% of EU stocks are now overfished, compared with a global average of 28%. The Communication goes on to explain that the contribution of EU fisheries to the European economy and food supply is far smaller today than it used to be in the past. Even more worryingly, the status of some 59% of stocks is unknown to scientists, largely due to inaccurate catch reporting. However, this approach is being revised.

On the other hand, several long-term plans have been implemented successfully, generating signs of stock recovery. The Commission is therefore proposing greater flexibility in changing TACs from year to year, to enable more effective recovery measures for overexploited stocks.

Furthermore, in the paper the Commission restates its intention to phase out discards. Follow-up measures are proposed for 2010. TACs and quotas must also respect the EU's international commitments and the provisions of long-term management plans. With today's Communication, the Commission wants to facilitate an informed debate with stakeholders on the basic principles which should underpin the Commission's proposals on fishing opportunities for next year.

Member States and stakeholders are invited to present their views on the Commission's approach by **31 July 2009**. In the meantime, a discussion at political level with Member States is foreseen to take place at the Fisheries Council on the 22-23 June. The Commission will then make formal proposals in the autumn to be adopted by Council before the end of the year.

Agriculture and Rural Development

CAP: Call for tender for a project: "Evaluation of direct aid in the beef and veal sector" - 13/05/2009



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

This evaluation, launched by the European Commission, will examine the impact of direct aid in the beef and veal sector applied since entering into force of the 2003 CAP reform, in particular the transition to the Single Payment Scheme and the different forms of coupled aid granted in this sector. The evaluation should compare the different ways of implementing the 2003 reform in the beef and veal sector in the individual Member States and identify effects on production, competitiveness and farm income in the sector. Moreover, it should assess to what extent the direct payments applied in the sector contributed to maintenance of extensive production systems and landscape. Efficiency and coherence with the principles of the 2003 reform of CAP and with overall EU objectives should be also examined. The maximum budget attributed to this project is € 500 000. The deadline for submitting offers expires on 7 August 2009. The Commission intends to award the contract during the second semester of 2009, following the evaluation of the offers received. The contractor will have to carry out the study within 10 months from the signature of the contract. For further info [click here](#)