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Ms. Ursula von der Leyen,
President
European Commission

Mr. Raffaele Fitto
Executive Vice-President for Cohesion and Reforms

Mr. Costas Kadis,
Commissioner for Fisheries and Oceans

Mr. Apostolos Tzitzikostas,
Commissioner for Sustainable Transport and Tourism

30/04/2025, Brussels – Belgium

Re: Inclusion of the recreational fisheries sector as a full stakeholder in the Common Fisheries Policy

Dear President of the European Commission, Dear Executive Vice-President of the European Commission, Dear Commissioners,

As the European Commission undertakes the evaluation of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), we, the undersigned Members of the European Parliament, wish to draw the Commission's attention to the need to recognise the recreational fisheries sector as a full stakeholder of this policy.

As the 2023 Communication on “EU Action Plan: Protecting and restoring marine ecosystems for sustainable and resilient fisheries” rightly reads, “*well-managed recreational fishing*” can provide “*additional or alternative livelihoods for local fishing communities*”¹. The recreational fishers' activities generate indeed high-value and sustainable touristic activities in many EU coastal regions, contributing significantly income-diversification and the extension of the tourism season. Annually, up to 10 million Europeans engage in recreational sea fishing, generating a total economic impact of 10.5 billion euros and supporting 100,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs across Europe². It is important to note that this data is from 2017 and that no further EU overview on this sector is available. Given the increased popularity of angling over the past years, we believe it is imperative for the European Commission to reassess the socio-economic importance of recreational fisheries and guarantee the fairness and sustainability of EU fisheries management policies.

¹ EU Action Plan: Protecting and restoring marine ecosystems for sustainable and resilient fisheries COM (2023) 102

² [European Parliament resolution of 03 May 2022 toward a sustainable blue economy in the EU: the role of the fisheries and aquaculture sectors \(2021/2188\(INI\)\)](#)



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Some of the key EU fisheries management policy tools —such as the TAC and quotas’ decisions or the Fisheries Control regulation — already foresee measures directly applicable to this sector. Yet, these decisions are taken without the appropriate socio-economic knowledge and impact assessment that could inform policy-makers on their consequences.

Recreational fisheries activities are characterized by their sustainability and high selectivity. In some locations, the recreational fishers’ expenses can generate an economic impact that is comparable to that of the EU’s commercial fisheries sector³ with a consequently reduced environmental impact on EU fish stocks.

In alignment with our arguments, we wish to emphasize that EU civil society, market operators, and other stakeholders have backed this request for several years. In this regard, the EU’s advisory councils—the Baltic Sea Advisory Council (BSAC)⁴, the North Sea Advisory Council (NSAC), and the North Western Waters Advisory Council (NWWAC)⁵— which are stakeholder-led organizations officially established by the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), advocate for a level playing field in fisheries policy. They assert that the recreational fisheries sector, as an important part of the catching sector, should be included in the CFP. They also highlight the current lack of consistent, robust data on the motivations and behaviours of recreational fishers, as well as on the socio-economic contributions of recreational fishing. These positions underline that the inclusion of this sector in the EU’s Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) would generate opportunities for coastal and remote communities.

Given the aforementioned considerations, we respectfully urge the European Commission to take our points into account and ensure that the EU’s recreational fisheries sector receives the full recognition and representation it deserves in the future EU policies. This includes, but is not limited to, the ongoing evaluation of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and the EU Agenda for Tourism 2030.

Yours truly,

Nina Carberry,
Benoît Cassart,
Johan Danielsson,
Sofie Eriksson,
Niclas Herbst,
Karin Karlsbro,
Ciaran Mullooly,
Michał Wiezik

³ [Insitut Català de Recerca per la Governança del Mart \(ICATMAR\). Diagnosis of Marine Recreational Fishing in Catalonia 2019 \(ICATMAR, 20-04\) 25 pp, Barcelona](#)

⁴ [White Paper - Implementation and revision of the CFP with a Baltic perspective \(2022\) - BSAC](#)

⁵ [NSAC/NWWAC Advice on recreational fisheries \(2023\)](#)