



## Recreational Fisheries gain momentum: European Parliament backs greater inclusion in EU Fisheries Policy

In the context of the ongoing evaluation of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and the early discussions on the forthcoming Ocean's Pact, the European Parliament Recreational Fisheries and Aquatic Environment Forum yesterday hosted a high-level event dedicated to the role of recreational fisheries in the EU's fisheries management framework.

Five Members of the European Parliament from across the political spectrum—MEPs **André Rodrigues**, who was chairing the event, and **Sakis Arnaoutoglou** (S&D), MEPs **Isabelle Le Callennec** and **Niclas Herbst** (EPP), and MEP **Cynthia Ní Mhurchú** (Renew Europe)—participated in the event and expressed strong support for the formal involvement of the recreational fisheries sector in EU fisheries governance.

Mr **Stylianos Mitolidis**, Director at the European Commission in charge of the ongoing evaluation of the CFP, also attended the event and took note of the contributions made by stakeholders.

**MEP Mr André Rodrigues**, underlined that *“the EU’s angling community is a true guardian of our aquatic environment and the recreational fisheries sector contributes heavily to local communities and the EU’s Blue economy”*. He further added that *“the knowledge of those engaged in recreational fisheries should be integrated in EU policies which will benefit people and nature.”*

The recreational fisheries sector is indeed directly impacted by key management decisions—such as TACs and quotas, control regulations, and technical measures— yet it currently lacks formal representation in advisory and decision-making bodies.

**MEP Mr Niclas Herbst**, member of the PECH Committee, stated that *“in terms of its impact on the socio-economic sustainability of coastal communities, the recreational fisheries sector is not considered at all at the moment when taking management decisions: no consideration in impact assessments, no data collection.” “this is unfair for the thousands of businesses that rely on the possibility of anglers to have fishing rights”*, he added.

As the European Union evaluates its current fisheries policy and prepares the foundations of a new vision for ocean governance through the Ocean's Pact, the event served as a timely reminder that this low-impact & high-added value sector must be appropriately considered in the decision-making process.

The recreational fisheries sector stands ready to contribute constructively to a more inclusive, sustainable, and effective EU fisheries governance framework.

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### Note to the editor:

#### About the event:

You can read more about the event on [this page](#). The agenda of the event can be downloaded [here](#). The panellists' presentations and the report of the event will be published on that page.

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**Up to 10 million Europeans go fishing recreationally at sea every year**, generating an annual [total economic impact](#) of **10.5 billion euro** and supporting **100,000 jobs in Europe**. Angling provides many **social and health benefits** and **income diversification** for Europe's coastal and remote communities. It also increases the **knowledge of the marine environment** and the **commitment to protect it**. As a selective fishing activity, it can contribute to achieve the objectives of the [Common Fisheries Policy \(CFP\)](#).

In 2018, the European Parliament adopted a [resolution](#) on the state of play of recreational fisheries in the EU, which urged the Commission to **collect data relating to the socio-economic impact** of the sector and to **evaluate the role of recreational fisheries in the future CFP**.

Despite all this, **the CFP does not consider it as a distinct sector**, alongside aquaculture and commercial fisheries.

**This event comes at an important time**, as the European Commission is conducting [an evaluation of the Common Fisheries Policy \(CFP\)](#) and developing a [European Ocean's Pact](#). This RecFishing Forum event explained why the recreational fisheries sector should be included as a full stakeholder in EU Fisheries policies. The event also highlighted the benefits of integrating marine recreational fisheries into the CFP and showcase successful examples from other countries (e.g. the UK).

#### About the Forum:

The Forum on Recreational Fisheries and Aquatic Environment (RecFishing Forum) was created in 2014, at the beginning of the previous European Parliament legislature. **By providing a cross-party discussion platform**, the Forum has been an essential tool for the **Members of the European Parliament to establish a direct connection with the recreational fishing community, its network of scientists, in-house experts and other representatives of the sector** in order to gather knowledge, information and data on the topics that were discussed in the European Parliament.

More information about the Forum [here](#).

#### About EAA and EFTTA:

The **Secretariat of the Forum is provided by two associations working together**: the [European Anglers Alliance](#) (EAA) and the [European Fishing Tackle Trade Association](#) (EFTTA). The EAA and the EFTTA work at the EU level and beyond to improve the aquatic environment, to achieve sustainable management of the fish stocks and to protect and promote recreational angling (rod and line fishing) in Europe. They also advocate for recreational fisheries to be managed in a fair and equitable way with respect to the other fisheries sectors.

The **European Anglers Alliance (EAA)** is a pan-European organisation for recreational angling, which defends European recreational anglers' interests at the European level and beyond. EAA was launched in Brussels in 1994. There are about 3 million affiliated members to EAA's 11 member organisations and affiliates from 15 European countries.

The **European Fishing Tackle Trade Association** was established in London in 1981 with a clear purpose: to support the European sportfishing tackle sector – the manufacturers and wholesalers, the importers and exporters. Every year, EFTTA organises EFTTEX, the leading European Fishing Tackle Trade Exhibition.