



## There is a strong and wide support in favour of the inclusion of recreational fisheries in the CFP: Now is the time to take a step forward

On 23 March, **MEP Pierre Karleskind (France, Renew Europe Group)**, Chair of the European Parliament Fisheries Committee (PECH Committee) and **MEP Niclas Herbst (Germany, EPP Group)**, Chair of the Forum, co-chaired the European Parliament Forum on Recreational Fisheries and Aquatic Environment webinar addressing the benefits and challenges of the inclusion of marine recreational fisheries in the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP).

**David Vertegaal**, CFP Topic Owner at European Anglers Alliance (EAA), underlined that the recreational fisheries sector perfectly matches the CFP objectives. Recreational fisheries support local communities, have little impact on habitats and fit in the Biodiversity Strategy. *“We call for the full inclusion of marine recreational fisheries in the CFP, so that a level playing field will emerge for the millions of Europeans who enjoy the sustainable use of fish as a public resource.”* **Oliver Portrat**, CEO of the European Fishing Tackle Trade Association (EFTTA), also recalled the relevance of the sector in socio-economic terms, underlining that its total economic impact is estimated to € 10.5 billion including 1.5 billion euros spent in angling tackle. *“The recreational fisheries sector is too big to be ignored or mistreated by the CFP. Let’s not wait another 10 years to correct that,”* he concluded.

**MEP Pierre Karleskind**, Chair of the Fisheries Committee, added that *“fisheries are at the heart of the Common Fisheries Policy – all the fisheries. And we really need to have a comprehensive understanding of what happens at sea and on our coastlines.”* He also mentioned the ongoing revision of the Fisheries Control Regulation which is essential to better monitor recreational fisheries and *“a key step in the way the EU fisheries’ policy encompasses recreational fisheries.”*

Bringing the commercial fisheries perspective to the table, **Esben Sverdrup-Jensen**, President of the European Association of Fish Producers Organisations, noted that commercial and recreational fisheries coexist very well and share a same set of values. He argued in favour of the inclusion of recreational fisheries in the CFP and insisted on the need to clearly define the sector’s different segments.

**Harry Strehlow**, Research Associate at the Thünen Institute of Baltic Sea Fisheries, gave an academic perspective. He called for a genuine acknowledgment and management of marine recreational fisheries in the CFP, taking the example of the U.S. Fishery Conservation and Management Act which acknowledges the sector in its goal, objectives and allocation framework. He finally said that *“we cannot discuss blue economy and blue growth while ignoring the recreational fisheries sector.”*

*“The outcome of today’s discussion is very clear: the recreational fisheries sector belongs in the CFP,”* concluded **Fred Bloot**, President, European Anglers Alliance (EAA). He pointed out that this discussion should be reflected in the upcoming Fisheries Committee’s report on the future perspectives of the CFP and the Commission’s report on the functioning of the CFP, in particular the repeated requests of the European Parliament to look into the socio-economic impacts of the recreational fisheries sector.

**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.

**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 PECH Committee is currently working on a report on the CFP and future perspectives. This report will then feed into the Commission's report on the functioning of the CFP, expected to be delivered by the end of 2022.

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 17 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.