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Subject: Joint ACs advice on EMFF funding for scientific research projects
CC: Member states

Dear Mr. Friess,

In June 2018 the Commission presented its proposal 2018/0210 for a regulation on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF). Several ACs already expressed their opinion regarding the Article 40(c) of this proposal and wanted to reiterate jointly their positions on this.

The ACs are conscious that this advice is not relevant for the European Commission at this time as its proposal has already been tabled. This paper is therefore addressed to Member States, bearing in mind the long term process of co-legislation.

The EU Fisheries Advisory Councils are stakeholder led advisory bodies that advise the European Commission and relevant Member States to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy laid out in the (EU) Regulation No 1380/2013 (henceforth, CFP Regulation). The CFP Regulation fully recognises in several articles and in the preamble the value of Advisory Councils as the appropriate fora for dialogue with stakeholders. It specifically states on its recital number (65):

“Dialogue with stakeholders has proven to be essential for achieving the objectives of the CFP. Taking into account the diverse conditions throughout Union waters and the increased regionalisation of the CFP, Advisory Councils should enable the CFP to benefit from the knowledge and experience of all stakeholders.”



The EMFF is the main instrument of financial support to achieve the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy. In this regard the current EMFF Regulation addresses six Union priorities, two of which are especially relevant from the perspective of the ACs. The first priority relates to “*promoting environmentally sustainable, resource-efficient, innovative, competitive and knowledge-based fisheries*”, the second to “*fostering the implementation of the CFP*”. Both EMFF priorities have a number of specific objectives including the improvement and supply of scientific knowledge as well as the improvement of the collection and management of data.

The current EMFF Regulation states on its article 86 that “*The EMFF may support the provision of scientific deliverables, particularly applied–research projects directly linked to the provision of scientific and socio–economic opinions and advice, for the purpose of sound and efficient fisheries management decisions under the CFP.*”, and in particular “*studies and pilot projects needed for the implementation and development of the CFP, including those on alternative types of sustainable fishing and aquaculture management techniques, including within Advisory Councils;*”.

Article 40 of the Commission proposal on the implementation of the CFP (*Priority 1 Fostering sustainable fisheries and the conservation of marine biological resources, Title III, Chapter 1*) states that the future EMFF shall support the implementation of the CFP through:

(c) the functioning of Advisory Councils established in accordance with Article 43 of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013, which have an objective forming part of, and supporting, the CFP;

Article 86 is not present in the Commission proposal anymore, and article 40 (c) of the Commission proposal only provides funding to the ACs for administrative purposes. It does not provide funding for ACs to carry out research studies or projects of technical, scientific, and economic nature which might be of direct relevance to the ACs to fully enable them to fulfil its advisory role as envisaged under the CFP.

The ACs are therefore requesting that capital funding is provided under the EMFF specifically to ACs to carry out well defined costed projects of direct relevance to the ACs to adequately fulfil their advisory role under the CFP.

Thanking you in advance for your consideration of the above, and looking forward to your response.

Yours faithfully,

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