

Conclusions of the 9th ARVI International Conference on the Future of Fisheries (July 6th and 7th, 2022)

The summary of the main conclusions of the 9th ARVI International Conference on the Future of Fisheries is arranged by the two main topics that occupied the two sessions of the conference:

- **TOPIC I: The need for a new CFP**

- The 2013 Common Fisheries Policy has had rigid, overly ambitious and environmentalist objectives, based on political premises:
 - It has neglected the necessary social and economic aspects of EU fisheries.
 - During its implementation an absurd scenario has emerged, the seed of the current growing disaffection of fishermen towards EU decisions: the European Commission as a Euroscepticism machine.
 - The European Commission's actions are increasingly jeopardising the future guarantee of food security and food sovereignty in the EU.
 - After years of implementation, some measures, such as the Landing Obligation, have proved to be impossible to apply *sensu stricto*, hence the need to reform the CFP.
- The CFP review is necessary to lead to:
 - Ensure food security in line with the Sustainable Development Goals and thus advance the food sovereignty of the European Union.
 - Ensuring socio-economic objectives: a social CFP for the future.
 - Promoting generational succession.
 - Fisheries and Aquaculture as part of EU Governance.
 - Promote the Level Playing Field in the international context and in cohesion with other trade policies.
 - Advice from the Galician Fisheries Council: open and pro-European statement of intent.
 - The CFP review must ensure that fishermen, business profitability and the health of fish stocks are restored.
 - Only parts related to:
 - Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY), Landing Obligation and Control Regulation.

- The need for a CFP based more on science and socio-economic impact.
- The need to change the concept of “volume” to enable new, more environmentally and socio-economically sustainable fishing vessels.

- **TOPIC II: The new EMFAF**

- Spain lost funds due to lack of implementation of the EMFF 2014-2020:
 - There is a need to learn from the past and improvement the management of this funds.
 - The administrative burden must be reduced, both for administrations and citizens.
- Spain has submitted to the EC the Operational Programme of the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) and the distribution of funds between the different lines of aid:
 - 1.12 billion euros are available for distribution among the Autonomous Communities at the Sectoral Conference.
 - What was not executed would be distributed *a posteriori* among the others.
 - The EMFAF will promote:
 - Climate neutrality, circular economy and social sustainability.
 - In the new EMFAF, where everything NOT forbidden is permitted:
 - Temporary and permanent stoppages are envisaged, despite the loss of fishing capacity, jobs and the economy.
 - Local Fisheries Action Groups (FLAGs) and the participation of the fisheries sector are encouraged.
 - More flexible funding between aid lines.
 - Homogeneous management criteria will be sought.
 - Avoid micro-projects and involve small-scale fisheries (low level of actions in EMFAF).
- Galicia will have a Sub-Directorate General for the Verification of Funds and will develop the Agenda for a Sustainable Blue Economy:
 - FLAGs: major players in public and private fundraising.
 - Dynamisation through *ad hoc* offices all over Galicia to:
 - Support operators in administrative matters.
 - Stimulate the use of the EMFAF.
- The sector's "Shopping List" includes:
 - Fleet restructuring plan. Painful but necessary measure to:

- Improve the operation of vessels that remain active and strengthen the Sea-Industry complex, reducing IUU induced fishing and the knock-on effects of insolvencies.
 - The economic imbalance due to fuel prices and rising operating costs is generally observed for all segments, complemented by other causes of imbalance in each sub-sector.
- Aid for investments in fisheries should:
- Promote the reduction of impact on the marine environment and protection of species, improve the working conditions, safety and health of crew members, increase the added value of catches, and enhance investments in energy efficiency and climate change mitigation.
 - Administrative simplification, correction of requirements and unification of criteria between Autonomous Regions are needed.
- In the Production and Marketing Plans of the POs:
- Apply the aid granting scheme analogous to ID+i.
 - To finance at real cost the working hours of POs staff in projects of the Production and Marketing Plans.
 - Maintaining and extending the policy of advance payments of the Production and Marketing Plans.
- In the Innovation grants:
- Maintain and strengthen the PLEAMAR programme of the Fundación Biodiversidad.
 - Promote strategic projects equivalent to those of other European lines.
 - Enable with EMFAF funds lines analogous to those of the Next Generation funds.
 - Boosting effective lines of aid for innovation projects by the Autonomous Regions.

The EMFAF fund is a positive challenge for the Sea-Industry complex and its application, agile and focused on its needs in the defined strategic lines, will form a tool that could be the basis of a strategic sector for the food sovereignty of the Union and to promote the economy and social consolidation of those regions most dependent on fishing.

Vigo, July 2022