

CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES
Parliamentary Committees Office

Opinion on the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Regulation (EU) n. 508/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council (COM(2018)390).

The Committee on European Union Policies of Italy's Chamber of Deputies,

having examined the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Regulation (EU) n. 508/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council (COM(2018)390).

Considering that the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council aims to establish the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) for the period 2021-2027, whose purpose is to allocate, in a targeted fashion, the funds earmarked by the EU budget to support the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), the EU's maritime policy, and the EU's commitments to international ocean governance, particularly within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development;

considering that this financial support constitutes an essential tool to ensure sustainable fishing activities and the conservation of marine biological resources, food security through the supply of seafood products, the growth of a sustainable blue economy, and seas and oceans that are healthy, safe, protected, clean, and managed sustainably;

noting that such support will be complemented by specific funding for the European Fisheries Control Agency, the sustainable fisheries partnership agreements (SFPAs) and the Union's membership of regional fisheries management organisations (RFMOs) and other international organisations, which also contribute to the enforcement of the Union's policies in the fisheries and maritime sectors.

considering that article 12, paragraph 4 of the proposed Regulation, with regard to the eligibility of applications, empowers the Commission to adopt delegated acts in accordance with Article 52 concerning, in particular, the identification of the threshold triggering inadmissibility and the length of the relevant period of time;

stressing the need that these measures should be adopted quickly and take full account of the relative seriousness of the infringements for the purpose of eligibility;

in light of the necessity to provide for simplifications in the management of the fund to facilitate faster payments to the eligible applicants;

taking into account the hearing that took place in the joint session of the Agriculture and European Union Policies Committees of the Chamber and Senate with the Italian members of the European Parliament's Committee on Fisheries;

stressing the need that this opinion, together with the final document issued by the Committee responsible by subject matter, be forwarded to the relevant European Institutions,

expresses a

FAVOURABLE OPINION

with the following qualifications:

that the Committee responsible by subject-matter should consider pointing out to the competent European authorities:

- a)* the need to increase the resources to be allotted to the Member States, with a consequent increase in resources on a national basis;
- b)* the need to maintain a degree of continuity in the planning and management aspects of EMFF 2014-2020, while maintaining a positive view of the approach towards greater simplification and flexibility concerning rules, also as a way to reduce bureaucracy;
- c)* the need to simplify further in order to ensure faster payments to beneficiaries;
- d)* introducing the possibility for individual Member States – as opposed to the Commission – to manage the funds earmarked for the blue economy, in accordance with the subsidiarity and regionalisation principles set out in the Common Fisheries Policy;
- e)* including the ability to introduce specific compensation and environmental protection measures as part of the priority “fostering sustainable fisheries and the conservation of marine biological resources”, with an eye towards limiting the use of plastic in fishing and aquaculture and as an instrument to fight climate change;
- f)* the advisability that the European Commission rapidly adopt the delegated acts discussed under article 12, paragraph, 4, of the proposed regulation, so as to give operators a certain framework, while defining a complete hierarchy of infringements for the purpose of the eligibility of applications.