Official Journal
of the European Union

EN
C series

C/2026/5140

26.10.2026

Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions – The Common Fisheries Policy, the European Ocean Pact and the Union's maritime and aquaculture policy

(C/2026/5140)

Rapporteur: Thibaut GUIGNARD (FR/EPP), Mayor of Plœuc-l'Hermitage

Reference document: Proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the conditions for the implementation of the Union support to the Common Fisheries Policy, to the European Ocean Pact and of the Union's maritime and aquaculture policy as part of the National and Regional Partnership Fund set out in Regulation (EU) […] [NRP Fund] for the period from 2028 to 2034

COM(2025) 559 final

I. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AMENDMENTS

COM(2025) 559 final

Amendment 1

Preamble, recital 8

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
It should be possible to support actions related to fisheries, aquaculture and blue economy that contribute to the achievement of the environmental and climate change mitigation and adaptation objectives of the Union, including the energy transition for all sectors.	***Support shall be given to*** actions related to fisheries, aquaculture and blue economy that contribute to the achievement of the environmental and climate change mitigation and adaptation objectives of the Union, including ***protection and restoration of marine ecosystems,*** and the energy transition for all sectors.

Reason

Regenerative marine economy is already part of the blue economy.

Amendment 2

Preamble, recital 10

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
The Common Fisheries Policy is based on science-based decision making and the fulfilment of adequate controls and no tolerance for illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. Member States should be supported to implement EU corresponding legislation and ensure activities in these areas are planned.	The Common Fisheries Policy is based on science-based decision making and the fulfilment of adequate controls and no tolerance for illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. Member States ***and local and regional authorities*** should be supported to implement EU corresponding legislation and ensure activities in these areas are planned.

Reason

This EU instrument should also help to support capacity building at local and regional level.

Amendment 3

Article 1(1)

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
[...] The Union support shall contribute to the activities as set out in the European Ocean Pact ***and to the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy***.	[...] ***In accordance with Articles 38 to 40 TFEU, Union support shall contribute primarily*** **to the** ***implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy, including the common organisation of the markets in fishery and aquaculture products***. The Union support shall ***also*** contribute to the activities as set out in the European Ocean Pact.
[...]	[...]

Reason

The TFEU defines the Common Fisheries Policy. EU support should be directed primarily towards the CFP and those policies that are intrinsically linked to it and anchored in EU legislation. Any support for the European Ocean Pact should therefore be complementary, without prejudice to the primacy of the CFP.

Amendment 4

new Article 1(2)(a)

Definitions

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
	'small-scale coastal fishing' means fishing activities carried out by: (1) a small-scale coastal vessel: a catching vessel with at least three of the five following characteristics: a) overall length of less than 12 metres, b) the vessel fishes exclusively inside the waters under the jurisdiction of the flag Member State, c) the duration of fishing trips is less than 24 hours, d) the maximum number of crew members is established at four persons, e) the vessel fishes using techniques which are selective and have a reduced environmental impact; (2) fishers on foot, including shellfish and seaweed gatherers;

Reason

To align with the Council proposal on transferring fisheries provisions from the NRPP. The definition is in line with ICCAT Recommendation 19-04 amending Recommendation 18-02 establishing a multi-annual management plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean.

Amendment 5

new Article 1(2)(b)

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
	'fisher' means any natural or legal person engaging in commercial fishing activities, as recognised by the Member State concerned;

Reason

To align with the Council proposal on transferring fisheries provisions from the NRPP. The definition of 'fisher' is updated to include all existing arrangements.

Amendment 6

new Article 1(2)(c)

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
	'fishing' means any commercial fishing activity, as recognised by the Member State concerned;

Reason

To align with the Council proposal on transferring fisheries provisions from the NRPP. Correction of the error in the definition of fishing in the NRPP.

Amendment 7

new Article 1(2)(d)

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
	'sustainable blue economy' means all sectoral and cross-sectoral economic activities throughout the internal market relating to oceans, seas, coasts and inland waters, covering the Union's insular and outermost regions and landlocked countries, including emerging sectors and non-market goods and services, aimed at ensuring environmental, social and economic sustainability in the long term and which are consistent with the SDGs, and in particular SDG 14, and with Union environmental legislation;

Reason

To align with the Council proposal on transferring fisheries provisions from the NRPP. Reference will have to be made to the Fisheries Regulation in the context of the EU Facility in order to preserve its funding.

Amendment 8

new Article 1(2)(e)

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
	'maritime policy' means Union policy that aims to foster integrated and coherent decision making to maximise the sustainable development, economic growth and social cohesion of the Union, particularly of the coastal and insular areas and of the outermost regions, and of the sustainable blue economy sectors, through coherent maritime-related policies and relevant international cooperation;

Reason

To align with the Council proposal on transferring fisheries provisions from the NRPP. Reference will have to be made to the Fisheries Regulation in the context of the EU Facility in order to preserve its funding.

Amendment 9

new Article 1(2)(f)

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
	'maritime security and surveillance' means activities carried out in order to understand, prevent wherever applicable and manage in a comprehensive way all the events and actions related to the maritime domain which would impact the areas of maritime safety and security, law enforcement, defence, border control, protection of the marine environment, fisheries control, trade and economic interest of the Union;

Reason

To align with the Council proposal on transferring fisheries provisions from the NRPP.

Amendment 10

Article 2(1)

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
Support to the Common Fisheries Policy, to the European Ocean Pact and of the Union's maritime and aquaculture policy ***Support to the Common Fisheries Policy, to the European Ocean Pact and of the Union's maritime and aquaculture policy shall support the general objectives set out in Article 2 (d) of [the NRP regulation].***	

Reason

The title of Article 2 is identical to that of Article 3 [Translator's note: almost identical in English]. For the sake of clarity, it is merged and supplemented in the following amendment.

Amendment 11

Article 3(1)

Add a new point before point 1.

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
	Member States, together with local and regional authorities, shall take into account in their NRP Plan the general and specific objectives and definitions related to fishing, aquaculture and coastal communities, in line with Article 2(d), Article 3(d)(iv) and Article 4(26) to (34) of [the NRP regulation].

Reason

Given the complexity of the new proposal and in order to ensure consistency and legal certainty, a reference to all provisions of the NRP Regulation relating to fisheries and aquaculture should be included, including objectives, specific objectives and definitions.

Amendment 12

Article 3(1)

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
Member States shall take into account in their NRP Plan the specific ***needs*** of fisheries, aquaculture and coastal communities and in particular of small-scale coastal fishing in line with Article 22 (2)(i) of [the NRP regulation].	Member States***, together with local and regional authorities,*** shall take into account in their NRP Plan the specific ***requirements*** of fisheries, aquaculture and coastal communities and in particular of small-scale coastal fishing in line with Article 22 (2)***(g)***(i) ***and (iii)*** of [the NRP regulation].

Reason

Article 6 of the NRP Regulation stipulates that 'regional, local, urban, rural and other public authorities or associations representing such authorities' must be involved in the partnership with the Member States. Article 22 lays down various requirements, all of which are legally binding.

Amendment 13

Article 3(2)

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
Member States shall ***take into account*** in their NRP Plan the contribution to environmental, economic and social sustainability of fishing operations and the balance between	Member States shall ***systematically include*** in their NRP Plan the contribution to environmental, economic and social sustainability of fishing operations and the balance

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
the fishing capacity of the fleets and the available fishing opportunities as reported annually by Member States in accordance with Article 22(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013.	between the fishing capacity of the fleets and the ***long-term*** available fishing opportunities***, in regard to species, lifestock and biodiversity protection,*** as reported annually by Member States in accordance with Article 22(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013.

Reason

A stricter reference explicitly requiring that environmental considerations be taken into account is needed to ensure that this practice is adopted as a matter of course.

Amendment 14

Article 3(3)

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
Member States shall set out in their NRP Plan the maximum aid intensity rates for the different categories of operations supported under the NRP Plan. For operations related to small-scale coastal fishing, Member States may grant a maximum 100 % aid intensity rate.	Member States***, together with local and regional authorities,*** shall set out in their NRP Plan the maximum aid intensity rates for the different categories of operations supported under the NRP Plan. For operations related to small-scale coastal fishing ***and fishing in outermost regions as well as for other duly justified operations, contributing to environmental, economic and social sustainability,*** Member States may grant a maximum 100 % aid intensity rate.

Reason

The Regulation should provide for the possibility of granting maximum aid intensity in order to support small-scale fishing, address the specific constraints of the outermost regions and cover other duly justified needs, particularly during crises.

Amendment 15

Article 3

new paragraph 5

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
	Types of interventions
	Interventions of the Common Fisheries Policy include: (a) support for sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources, energy transition of fisheries and aquaculture as well as actions improving safety; (b) support for the innovation for more selective fishing activities and for the conservation, protection and restoration of aquatic biodiversity and ecosystems; (c) support for the Common Market Organisation (CMO); (d) support to fishers or aquaculture producers for the compensation to operators of the fishery and aquaculture sector for their income foregone or additional costs and compensation to recognised producer organisations and associations of

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
	producer organisations which store fishery products listed in Annex II to Regulation (EU) No 1379/2013, provided that those products are stored in accordance with Articles 30 and 31 of that Regulation; (e) enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas, and fostering the development of fishing and aquaculture communities, including ports and auction halls; (f) promoting marketing, quality and added value of fishery and aquaculture products, as well as processing of those products.

Reason

To align with the Council proposal on transferring fisheries provisions from the NRPP. To add objectives from the EMFAF: particularly from Article 3(3) and the specific objective in Article 26(1)(b), and to include ports and auction halls, which are not mentioned.

Amendment 16

Article 4(1)

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
Support to fishing fleet or operators that does not comply with ***the WTO agreement on fisheries subsidies and with*** the objectives of the CFP as referred to in Article 43(2) TFEU, and Article 2 of the CFP Regulation shall not be supported.	Support to fishing fleet or operators that does not comply with the objectives of the CFP as referred to in Article 43(2) TFEU, and Article 2 of the CFP Regulation shall not be supported.

Reason

References should be made solely to EU standards and rules which are currently in force. International rules, once approved and incorporated into EU law, will be applicable anyway, and so there is no need to mention them.

Amendment 17

Article 4(4)

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
Deep sea mining shall not be supported.	Deep sea mining ***and other activities that fail to comply with the 'do no significant harm' principle as defined in Regulation (EU) 2020/852*** shall not be supported.

Amendment 18

new Article 4a

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
	Control system for the common fisheries policy
	1. Member States shall as part of the controls referred to in Article 58 [Responsibilities of Member States] verify the compliance of beneficiaries with the requirements of Regulation (EU) 202X/XXXX [CFP Regulation].
	2. Member States shall make use of their control and enforcement systems in the areas of climate and environment, public health, plant health and animal welfare, social and employment legislation, applicable labour standards, fisheries and aquaculture to ensure that beneficiaries of the support comply with the requirements set out in the first paragraph.
	3. The managing authority or paying agency shall be notified where relevant at least once a year of cases of non-compliance where enforceable decisions in that respect have been made under the applicable control and enforcement systems referred to in paragraph 2. That notification shall include an assessment and grading of the severity, extent, permanence or reoccurrence and intentionality of the non-compliance concerned.
	4. In case of non-compliance with Article XX of Regulation (EU) XX [Common Fisheries Policy], the support paid to the beneficiary shall be recovered and an application for support submitted by a beneficiary shall be inadmissible for a specified period of time laid down pursuant to paragraph 8 of this Article, if it has been determined through a final decision by the competent authority concerned that the beneficiary has committed fraud.
	5. Where a case as listed in Article XX of Regulation (EU) XX [Common Fisheries Policy] occurs between the period of application and five years after the end date of the project, the support paid to the beneficiary shall be recovered. The recovery shall be proportionate to the nature, gravity, duration and repetition of the serious infringements or offences by the beneficiary concerned and the importance of support to the economic activity of that beneficiary.
	6. In order to ensure a level playing field among Member States and the effectiveness, proportionality and dissuasive effect of the penalties referred to in paragraph 5 and recoveries and inadmissibility referred to in Article XX of Regulation EU XX [Common Fisheries Policy], and in paragraph 6 and 7 of this Article, the Commission is empowered to adopt delegated acts in accordance with Article 86 supplementing this Regulation with (a)

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
	detailed rules on the application and calculation of the penalties; (b) the identification of the threshold triggering, and the period of time of, the inadmissibility as well as the arrangements for recovering the support granted, including thresholds triggering it.

Reason

To align with the Council proposal on transferring fisheries provisions from the NRPP. To incorporate rules applicable under the CFP.

Amendment 19

new Article 4b

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
	State aid 1. Save as otherwise provided for in this Article, Articles 107, 108 and 109 TFEU shall apply to aid granted by Member States to undertakings in the Union fishery and aquaculture sector. 2. Articles 107, 108 and 109 TFEU shall not apply to support paid by Member States pursuant to and in accordance with this Regulation or to aid granted by Member States to undertakings in the Union fishery and aquaculture sector falling within the scope of Article 42 TFEU. 3. Support provided by Member States referred to in paragraph 1 in relation to operations falling within the scope of Article 42 TFEU that is intended to provide additional financing for interventions referred to in Article [XX] of this Regulation for which Union support is granted at any time during the Plan period may only be made if it complies with this Regulation, and Regulation (EU) No 1379/2013 and set out in the NRP Plan. 5. For the fishery and aquaculture products covered by Annex I to the TFEU, to which Articles 107, 108 and 109 thereof apply, the Commission may authorise, in accordance with Article 108 TFEU, operating aid in the sectors producing, processing and marketing those products, with a view to alleviating the specific constraints on fisheries and aquaculture production in the outermost regions as a result of their isolation, insularity, small size and extreme remoteness. Member States may grant additional financing for the implementation of interventions in outermost regions and smaller Aegean islands pursuant to this Regulation. In such cases, the Member States shall notify the additional financing to the Commission and the Commission may approve it in accordance with this Regulation as part of the Plans. Thus, aid notified shall be regarded as notified within the meaning of the first sentence of Article 108(3) TFEU.

Reason

To align with the Council proposal on transferring fisheries provisions from the NRPP. To incorporate State aid rules applicable under the CFP.

Amendment 20

new Article 4c

Text proposed by the European Commission	CoR amendment
	Crisis payments following natural disasters, adverse climatic events and catastrophic events
	1. Member States may provide crisis payments to operators in the fisheries and aquaculture sector affected by natural disasters, adverse climatic events or catastrophic events. Those payments shall aim at ensuring business continuity and shall be subject to the conditions set out in this Article and as further specified by the Member States.
	2. Support under this Article shall be subject to the formal recognition by the competent authority of the Member State that a natural disaster, adverse climatic event or catastrophic event, as defined by the Member State, has occurred and that these events, or measures adopted in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/2031 to eradicate or contain a plant disease or pest, or measures adopted to prevent or eradicate animal diseases listed in the Annex to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/1882 or measures adopted regarding an emerging disease in accordance with Article 6(3) and Article 259 of Regulation (EU) 2016/429 have directly caused damage.
	3. The losses shall be calculated either at the level of the undertaking or vessel as appropriate, at the level of the undertaking's activity in the sector concerned or in relation to the specific area concerned.
	4. Member States shall establish the applicable support rates for compensating the loss of production. Indexes may be used for calculating the loss of production.
	5. When granting support under this Article, Member States shall ensure that overcompensation as a result of the combination of this support with other national or Union support instruments or private insurance schemes is avoided.

Reason

To align with the Council proposal on transferring fisheries provisions from the NRPP. To incorporate rules applicable under the CFP.

II. **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS (COR):

1. draws attention to the approach taken by this opinion: the opinion puts forward recommendations regarding all of the funding priorities for fisheries and aquaculture as well as the European Ocean Pact. The amendments tabled focus on the text of the Commission proposal on fisheries funding, and on the transfer to that draft CFP Regulation of fisheries provisions contained in the Regulation on the National and Regional Partnership Plans. The aim of this exercise is to illustrate the need for coherence between all of the legislative instruments in order to ensure more effective and coherent funding for the EU fisheries sector in the next programming period;

2. considers that the CFP has improved the management of fish stocks in a large number of sea basins, even if certain difficulties remain. The successive structural funds dedicated to fisheries have supported change and helped to improve the sustainability of fishing and aquaculture. Public funding should contribute to avoiding irreversible damage to marine ecosystems, the depletion of fish stocks, and the long-term decline of coastal communities, rather than addressing the consequences of unsustainable practices after they occur;

3. calls, however, for the CFP to be revised to take better account of pressing challenges such as climate change, maritime biodiversity loss and pollution, and generational renewal ([1]) and stresses that all fisheries and maritime measures should contribute directly to restoring marine ecosystems, reducing pollution at source and achieving good environmental status across EU sea basins, in line with the objectives of the Nature Restoration Law and the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, and supporting the energy transition and a just transition for sustainable livelihoods and the socio-economic resilience of coastal, island and outermost communities;

4. stresses that seas, marine biodiversity and fish stocks, as well as non-polluted marine bodies, are common goods that must remain under strong public governance and democratic control;

5. notes that the European Union is more than 70 % dependent on imports of seafood and aquaculture products from third countries, where production standards may not be equivalent to those in place in the EU, potentially leading to unfair competition. With a view to European food sovereignty, the Committee of the Regions believes that strengthening European strategic autonomy is essential for enhancing resilience for Europeans, and should include a geopolitical strategy across all basins; stresses that food sovereignty must be pursued in ways that are consistent with the sustainable management of global fish stocks and the EU's international commitments under the Paris Agreement and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework; emphasises that increasing EU self-sufficiency must not lead to intensified exploitation of marine resources, but should instead focus on restoring fish stocks, promoting sustainable aquaculture with low environmental impact, and reducing food waste;

6. believes that strengthening European strategic autonomy in fisheries and aquaculture requires both investment in European production capacity and robust trade policy tools, consequently, calls for the Commission to systematically apply reciprocity conditions in trade agreements affecting the fisheries sector, ensuring that third-country operators are not able to undercut EU producers through lower environmental or labour standards;

7. points out that given their competences in areas such as economic development, innovation, training, land use, integrated coastal zone management and European fund management, local and regional authorities play a role in developing and supporting fishing and aquaculture. For many coastal communities, these activities are essential to their local identity;

([1]) Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions – The Common Fisheries Policy on the ground: towards sustainable and resilient coastal communities in the EU.

8. points out that the CFP is an exclusive EU competence. It is enshrined in the TFEU, which stipulates that a financial instrument is dedicated to the implementation of this policy, distinct from the common agricultural policy. The Treaty also supports market regulation through the common organisation of the markets in fishery and aquaculture products, which is part of the CFP;

9. believes that, given budgetary constraints, support for the European Ocean Pact should not be at the expense of Article 35(11) of the NRP Regulation, which responds directly to the CFP objectives. Support for the CFP contributes to the European Ocean Pact;

10. stresses the strategic role of the common organisation of the markets in fishery and aquaculture products. The support that it provides is crucial for the proper management of quotas, improving product quality and origin, marketing and promotion, and market regulation, particularly during crises, while also incentivising sustainable maritime activities and consumption patterns and contributing to the transition towards low-impact and resource-efficient fisheries and aquaculture, including by promoting the consumption of sustainably sourced seafood, in particular underutilised species, and raising awareness of its environmental and health benefits. Marketing and promotion plans are multiannual management tools that must be maintained, given their environmental, economic and social contributions to the implementation of the CFP;

11. finds it regrettable that the proposed budget allocation for the fishery and aquaculture sector in the next multiannual financial framework is the smallest of all EU policy allocations. The Committee calls for a guaranteed ring-fenced allocation that is at least equal to that of the current programming period, adjusted for inflation; underlines that sufficient, stable and predictable financing is essential to ensure the long-term resilience of fisheries, aquaculture and coastal communities, and calls for funding instruments to prioritise climate adaptation, ecosystem restoration, innovation and community-led initiatives delivering tangible local benefits and resilient coastal and fishing communities, while avoiding support for activities that cause significant harm to marine ecosystems; calls for targeted support for small-scale coastal fisheries and young entrants, including fleet safety/modernisation, skills and training, and diversification of income sources in fisheries dependent coastal communities;

12. notes with concern that the CFP is being divided up between a number of budget headings. Spreading the amounts allocated to fisheries and aquaculture between the NRP Plans, the EU Facility, the European Competitiveness Fund and Global Europe makes the policy invisible, limits flexibility and raises questions about the future evaluation of the CFP;

13. highlights that the key challenges and priorities for the new MFF include decarbonisation, fleet modernisation and renewal, innovation in fishing gear, and generational renewal; calls for flexible eligibility criteria when it comes to fleet capacity and renewal while maintaining the objective of balancing fishing capacity with available fishing opportunities and safeguarding fish stock sustainability, taking into account the different needs of all fleet segments across the Member States, including small-scale fleets, as well as the specific needs and geographical constraints of coastal, insular and outermost regions; notes that fleet modernisation or renewal shall only be eligible where it demonstrably reduces environmental impact, does not increase fishing effort and improves safety or working conditions;

14. proposes creating a chapter dedicated to fisheries and aquaculture in the NRP Regulation that is separate from the chapter on agriculture in order to ensure the autonomy and visibility of this common policy;

15. calls for greater coherence and synergies with Horizon Europe and the European Competitiveness Fund in order to cover research needs and innovation objectives, including fleet decarbonisation and seafood processing;

16. recognises the importance of the external dimension of the CFP under the Global Europe heading, but calls for its budget to be established with due regard for transparency and mobilised in line with the CFP's environmental and social objectives;

17. notes with concern the inadequate attention given to aquaculture, despite the fact that it plays a strategic role in food sovereignty. The Committee stresses the need to provide aquaculture with appropriate instruments in order to strengthen its resilience, sustainability, competitiveness and innovation capacity;

18. stresses that the CFP must have financial resources matching the environmental challenges of ensuring healthy fish stocks and marine ecosystems; calls for funding under the NRP Plans to be subject to the 'do no significant harm' and the 'do no harm to cohesion' principles and aligned with the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030 targets, including the protection of 30 % of EU sea areas; emphasises that adequate and sustained funding for data collection is essential for sustainable fisheries management and for better integrating the impacts of climate change;

19. points out that the budget allocated to fisheries must be able to keep up a high level of control across the entire EU. A guaranteed budget for control is essential for achieving current and future objectives;

20. calls for accelerated investments in decarbonising fishing and aquaculture, especially with a view to the energy transition of fishing vessels and ports and including support for fleet renewal;

21. stresses the need to strengthen the social dimension; calls for improved living and safety conditions on board, not only through improved working and safety conditions on board vessels, but also through support for quality employment, work-life balance and access to services; calls to include mandatory social conditionality requirements to ensure that EU financial support is only granted to operators complying with applicable labour law, collective bargaining rights and international labour standards, including ILO conventions relevant to the fisheries and aquaculture sectors. Training and installation support must figure clearly among the objectives, in order to increase the attractiveness of the sector and ensure generational renewal and gender equality;

22. underlines that decent work standards in the sector should be monitored as part of the evaluation framework for EU fisheries funding;

23. calls for stronger support for economic operators in the sector, given the employment and value-added potential of fish marketing and processing companies, especially towards SMEs and local employers; demands dedicated support for young entrants and intergenerational transfer of fishing businesses in small-scale coastal communities;

24. reiterates its commitment to community-led local development under the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. The Committee considers that it is essential, including when implementing multifunds, to continue to involve stakeholders in the fishery and aquaculture sectors in local action groups established in coastal areas;

25. calls for greater account to be taken of the specific characteristics of the outermost regions in order to respond more appropriately to their needs. This includes in particular establishing plans at regional level to offset additional costs, given the structural constraints that hinder the economic and social development of the fishery and aquaculture sectors;

26. recognises small-scale coastal fishing as a sector of particular social, cultural, territorial and food heritage value that cannot be assessed solely through economic efficiency metrics; calls for the NRP Plans to include dedicated chapters for small-scale fishing with specific objectives, earmarked budget allocations and simplified access conditions; stresses that the progressive displacement of small-scale operators by industrial fishing represents a structural threat to coastal community resilience, and underlines the need for the CFP review to include specific protective measures for this segment, including priority access rights to coastal fishing zones and support for the transition to sustainable low-impact fishing methods;

27. stresses the important role played by advisory councils in involving sector representatives and regional stakeholders on a sea-basin basis in developing and implementing the CFP and EU legislation. The Committee of the Regions calls for guarantees on the budget to be allocated to them under the EU Facility and emphasises the need to ensure stable financing and broad stakeholder participation so that the advisory councils remain representative, science-based and transparent, and continues to support effective and inclusive governance;

28. stresses that local and regional authorities, coastal communities and small-scale fishing actors, including trade unions representing workers in the fishing, aquaculture and processing sectors, must be systematically involved, in line with the principles of multi-level governance, in the design, implementation and monitoring of fisheries, aquaculture and maritime policies, ensuring that measures are tailored to local specificities and benefit from the knowledge and experience of coastal communities;

29. calls for the regions that so wish to be able to act as the managing authority for financial allocations for fisheries, aquaculture and coastal areas. The NRP Plans should not be a step backwards in the efficient use of funds tailored to regional characteristics;

30. calls for a new assessment of multilevel governance. The goal is to verify that the strict preconditions set have been fulfilled, with a view to formally involving the subnational authorities competent for the policy areas covered by the PRP Plans in managing and implementing their respective plans, in accordance with each Member State's constitutional and territorial set-up;

31. calls for a new subsidiarity clause to be introduced whereby local and regional authorities could ask the Commission to refuse individual NRP Plans if they propose centralised government without properly demonstrating that the plan's objectives cannot be attained to a satisfactory extent at regional level, or if the competent subnational authorities have not been given the responsibilities that fall within their constitutional competences;

32. calls for the percentage of technical assistance to be increased to 6 % of the budget earmarked for fisheries in order to ensure that it is implemented effectively and in line with local circumstances;

33. calls for a place-based approach in determining aid intensity rates so that the plans can be adapted to the specific characteristics of sea basins, fleet segments and regions, with a particular focus on the outermost regions, small-scale coastal fishing and crisis situations.

Brussels, 1 July 2026.

The President
of the European Committee of the Regions
Kata TÜTTŐ