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NOTE

From: Delegations of Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain

To: Council

No. Cion prop.: 17870/12 PECHE 368 CADREFIN 162 CODEC 2255 - COM(2011) 804 final

Subject: Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund [repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1198/2006 and Council Regulation(EC) No 861/2006 and Council Regulation No XXX/2011 on integrated maritime policy
- Joint proposal of Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain

Delegations will find attached a joint proposal on the EMFF submitted by the above-mentioned delegations.

**JOINT PROPOSAL OF AUSTRIA, BULGARIA, CZECH REPUBLIC, ESTONIA, FINLAND, FRANCE,
GERMANY, GREECE, HUNGARY, IRELAND, ITALY, MALTA, POLAND, PORTUGAL, ROMANIA,
SLOVAKIA, SLOVENIA AND SPAIN ON THE**

**FACILITATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE AQUACULTURE
IN THE CONTEXT OF EUROPEAN MARITIME AND FISHERIES FUND**

The Europe 2020 strategy addresses three priorities: smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The sustainable aquaculture has a potential to address all the Europe 2020 strategy's priorities and it has been rightly recognised as a priority in the reform of the CFP and its new financial instrument EMFF. The development of sustainable aquaculture is also one of the priorities in the European Union's macro-regional strategies.

In general, the proposal of EMFF regulation contains several good initiatives to support the growth of the aquaculture sector. Promotion of aquaculture with high level of environmental protection and also the facilitation of the new innovations, support of new fish farmers, facilitation of spatial planning and aquaculture stock insurance are examples of appropriate tools to support the growth of sustainable aquaculture production in Europe. However, there are some problems in current formulation which undermines the possibilities to support the development of aquaculture.

In order to boost the sustainable growth of aquaculture production in Europe, we propose following adjustments to the articles 45 and 46 in the EMFF proposal.

Article 45

Innovation

1. In order to stimulate innovation in aquaculture, the EMFF may support operations:
 - (a) *developing* new technical *innovation* or *dissemination of new organisational knowledge in aquaculture farms which reduces their impact on the environment which in particular reduces the interaction of aquaculture and the environment*, fosters a more sustainable use of resources *or facilitates new sustainable production methods with high growth potential or diversifies fisheries services. in aquaculture;*

- (b) developing or introducing in the market new or substantially improved products ~~compared to the state of art~~, ***new aquaculture species with good market potential***, new or improved processes, new or improved management and organisation systems
2. Operations under this Article must be carried out ***by a scientific body or*** in collaboration with a scientific or technical body ~~as recognised by the national law of each Member State~~ which shall validate the results of such operations.
 3. The results of operations receiving support shall be subject to adequate publicity by the Member State according to Article 143.

Justification: Globally, aquaculture has been the most rapidly growing form of primary food production in the past 30 years. At the same time industry's technological and functional development has been fast. Aquaculture has a great potential to achieve new innovations and technologically giant leaps especially in green technologies and production methods both in marine and inland areas. The EMFF should put strong emphasis on these facts and provide comprehensive tools for the crucial development work and to facilitation of new innovations.

The scope of development measures should not be restricted. On the contrary, it should cover wide range of operations such as development of feeds, new aquaculture species and production technologies and methods. In many cases the most critical phase in the introduction of new innovations or new aquaculture species is the phase of applied research, in other words the phase between basic scientific research and pilot projects. For example development work of feasible offshore techniques is a long and challenging process which requires a lot of new biological and economical knowledge before enterprises are willing to invest in the new technology which has high risk levels. The most appropriate and cost-efficient way to facilitate new promising production technologies is to carry out comprehensive development programmes which include all the crucial phases in introduction of new innovations.

However, there should be a clear separation between articles 45 and 46. The scope of article 45 should be limited to projects of developing innovation and dissemination of knowledge. Respectively, the article 46 should be directed to projects relating to productive investments and it would enable the facilitation of new innovations at farm level

Article 46

Investments in ~~off-shore and non-food aquaculture~~ sustainable aquaculture

~~1. In order to foster forms of aquaculture with high growth potential, the EMFF may support investment in the development of off-shore or non food aquaculture.~~

1. The EMFF may support productive investments in environmentally sustainable and economically viable aquaculture.

~~2. The Commission shall be empowered to adopt delegated acts in accordance with Article 150 in order to identify the type of operations and the eligible costs.~~

2. Support under paragraph 1 may especially cover investments for:

a) new innovations at farm level implementation;

b) aquaculture development consistent with national aquaculture strategies or nationally recognised maritime spatial plans or aquaculture spatial plans;

c) animal or public health improvement, or quality aquaculture product enhancement.

3. The EMFF may also support productive investments for the establishment and modernisation of, inter alia, the following forms of aquaculture:

- a) aquaculture recirculation systems;***
- b) off-shore aquaculture;***
- c) non-food aquaculture;***
- d) organic aquaculture;***
- e) freshwater aquaculture, in particular ponds, hatcheries and storage ponds;***
- f) foothill and mountain aquaculture.***
- g) extensive marine aquaculture***

Justification: This article defines eligible measures to support new production facilities and therefore it is the key measure to boost the growth of the aquaculture production in Europe. It should not be limited to only offshore and non-food aquaculture.

It should be noted that articles 51, 52 and 53 in the Commission Proposal do not cover situations where aquaculture farmers wish to build new farms or increase the production in existing units. They allow only support to either new farmer's start up (art 51) or to reducing impacts of old farms (art 52) or conversion the current production into organic farming (art. 53). In other words, the Commission Proposal doesn't enable to support investments to enlarge existing aquaculture facilities. The aim of increasing fish production in Europe requires both support to establish new production facilities and enlarge existing ones.

In Europe the consumption of fish is steadily increasing, but the growing demand of fish is satisfied by imported fish. If the EU wants to increase the self-sufficiency in seafood, it is of utmost importance that the scope of this article is wider and takes into account the current and future production technologies both in marine and inland areas. The most important factor in fostering the aquaculture production is to ensure that the growth of the production is done in sustainable manner. Therefore, this article should steer the public support to the facilitation of all sustainable aquaculture forms which have high growth potential.