



Council of the
European Union

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PECHE 541

NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Council

Subject: Budget flexibility within the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund 2014–2020
- Information from the Czech delegation

Delegations will find attached a non-paper received from the Czech delegation on the above-mentioned subject to be dealt with under "Any Other Business" at the session of the Council (Agriculture and Fisheries) on 17 December 2019.

Budget flexibility within the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund 2014–2020

Information from the Czech [...] delegation

With a view of forthcoming closure of the current programming period, the above mentioned delegations believe that it is essential to focus on effective use of financial resources remaining in the current European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) while delivering the results at the same time.

The need to strengthen certain measures and ensure their implementation by Member States was taken into account when setting the allocations in the EMFF Regulation. For this purpose, the financial allocations for certain Union Priorities were ring-fenced without giving a flexibility for the whole programming period. In addition, these Union Priorities have been included in the performance framework, and possible financial correction was established in case the indicators would not be met on a sufficient level.

Unfortunately, this was done without a proper assessment of Member States needs and without envisaging actions to avoid an implementation failure. The existing practice has already shown that ring-fenced allocations can lead to number of obstacles in successful implementation of national Operational Programmes. Some Member States face budget surpluses because they cannot utilise or transfer unused ring-fenced allocations to other Union Priorities. Others would appreciate to increase their ring-fenced allocations.

The delegations believe that effective management of the financial resources should remain one of the main objectives for Member States, European Parliament and the European Commission in order to justify the added value of EMFF. Unfortunately, current legislation does not provide the necessary flexibility for ring-fenced allocations. Therefore, we would like to call upon the European Commission to consider an appropriate amendment of current legislation as soon as possible in order to allow allocation flexibility between Union Priorities under the EMFF. We are also ready to discuss other solutions that could enable the sound financial management of programmes for which the Members States are responsible.