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To:	Delegations
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Subject:	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 - <i>Opinion of the European Committee of the Regions</i>

Delegations will find attached a copy of the above-mentioned opinion.

This opinion is available in all language versions on the following website:

[The Common Fisheries Policy, the European Ocean Pact and the Union's maritime and aquaculture policy | European Committee of the Regions](#)



**European Committee
of the Regions**

NAT/VIII-014

172nd plenary session, 1 and 2 July 2026

DRAFT OPINION

The Common Fisheries Policy, the European Ocean Pact and the Union's maritime and aquaculture policy

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

Deadline for tabling amendments:

15:00 (Brussels time) **on 16 June 2026**. Amendments must be submitted using the online tool for tabling amendments (available through the Members' Portal at <https://mempportal.cor.europa.eu/>).

Number of signatures required: 32

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](#)

Draft opinion of the European Committee of the Regions – The Common Fisheries Policy, the European Ocean Pact and the Union’s maritime and aquaculture policy

I. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AMENDMENTS

COM(2025) 559 final

Amendment 1

Preamble, Recital 8

<i>Text proposed by the European Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
<i><u>It should be possible to support</u></i> 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.	<i><u>Support shall be given to</u></i> 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 <i>protection and restoration of marine ecosystems</i> , and the energy transition for all sectors.

<i>Reason</i>
Regenerative marine economy is already part of the blue economy.

Amendment 2

Preamble, Recital 10

<i>Text proposed by the European Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
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 <i>and local and regional authorities</i> should be supported to implement EU corresponding legislation and ensure activities in these areas are planned.

<i>Reason</i>
This EU instrument should also help to support capacity building at local and regional level.

Amendment 3

Article 1(1)

<i>Text proposed by the European Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
[...] 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. [...]

<i>Reason</i>
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

Article 2(1)

<i>Text proposed by the European Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
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].	

<i>Reason</i>
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 5

Article 3(1)

Add a new point before point 1.

<i>Text proposed by the European Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
	Member States, together with local and regional authorities, shall take into account in their NRP Plan the general and specific objectives and

	<i>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].</i>
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<i>Reason</i>
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 6

Article 3(1)

<i>Text proposed by the European Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
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].

<i>Reason</i>
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 7

Article 3(2)

<i>Text proposed by the European Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
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 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.	Member States shall systematically include in their NRP Plan the contribution to environmental, economic and social sustainability of fishing operations and the balance between the fishing capacity of the fleets and the long-term available fishing opportunities, in regard to species, livestock and biodiversity protection , as reported annually by Member States in accordance with Article 22(2) of Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013.

<i>Reason</i>
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 8

Article 3(3)

<i>Text proposed by the European Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
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, <i>together with local and regional authorities</i> , 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 <i>and fishing in outermost regions as well as for other duly justified operations, contributing to environmental, economic and social sustainability</i> , Member States may grant a maximum 100 % aid intensity rate.

<i>Reason</i>
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 9

Article 4(1)

<i>Text proposed by the European Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
Support to fishing fleet or operators that does not comply with <i>the WTO agreement on fisheries subsidies and with</i> 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.

<i>Reason</i>
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 10

Article 4(4)

<i>Text proposed by the European Commission</i>	<i>CoR amendment</i>
Deep sea mining shall not be supported.	Deep sea mining <i>and other activities causing scientifically demonstrated significant harm to marine ecosystems</i> shall not be supported.

II. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS (CoR):

1. draws attention to the approach taken by this opinion: the opinion covers all funding priorities for fisheries and aquaculture as well as the European Ocean Pact within the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), but the amendments tabled tackle the CFP Regulation only;
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 renewal¹ 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;
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

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](#).

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;

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, 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;

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 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, 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. 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, ...

III. PROCEDURE

Title	The common fisheries policy, the European Ocean Pact and the Union's maritime and aquaculture policy
Reference(s)	COM(2025)559 final
Legal basis	Mandatory referral: Article 307(1) TFEU
Procedural basis	Rule 41(a) of the Rules of Procedure
Date of Council/EP referral / Date of Commission letter	
Date of Bureau/President's decision	23/9/2025
Commission responsible	Commission for Natural Resources (NAT)
Rapporteur	Thibaut GUIGNARD (FR/PPE)
Discussed in commission	21/4/2026
Date adopted by commission	21/4/2026
Result of the vote in commission (majority/unanimity)	Unanimity
Date adopted in plenary	1 or 2 July 2026
Previous Committee opinions	• Outlook opinion on the European Oceans Pact • The Common Fisheries Policy on the ground: towards sustainable and resilient coastal communities in the EU. • European Maritime and Fisheries Fund • Technical measures in fisheries • The Future of European Aquaculture
Subsidiarity reference	Not applicable