



CHARTING THE COMMON FISHERIES POLICY REFORM TO SECURE THE FUTURE OF EUROPE'S FISHERIES AND COASTAL COMMUNITIES

The ongoing reflection on the assessment of the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) Basic Regulation, the negotiations on the post-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework, and the forth-coming publication of the Vision 2040 for fisheries and aquaculture will collectively shape the direction of EU policy for decades to come. In this context, CPMR Member Regions reiterate their commitment to a sustainable, competitive and resilient fisheries and aquaculture sector that continues to support Europe's coastal communities, maritime economies and food security.

Building on their longstanding advocacy for a place-based and regionally responsive approach to fisheries governance, CPMR Member Regions call on European policymakers to consider the following priorities:

1 TIME TO REVIEW THE CFP. CPMR Member Regions recognise that **the CFP has delivered significant environmental progress over the past decade**, notably in improving the sustainability of European fisheries and supporting the recovery of fish stocks. **These achievements have been made possible also by the considerable efforts and commitment of fishers, producers, public authorities and all stakeholders across the sector.** However, today the context has changed profoundly. Climate change, growing competition for maritime space, geopolitical uncertainty and the need to strengthen Europe's food security call for a policy framework that is fit for future challenges. **CPMR Member Regions therefore call on the co-legislators to review and modernise the CFP Basic Regulation.**

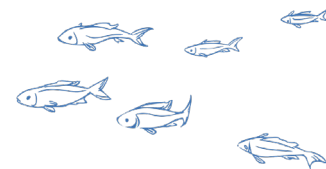
2 PLACE EQUAL WEIGHT ON THE THREE PILLARS OF SUSTAINABILITY. The future CFP **must deliver a better balance between environmental, economic and social objectives**, recognising that healthy marine ecosystems, viable fisheries and businesses and thriving coastal communities are inseparable pillars of long-term sustainability.

3 DELIVER A STRONGER REGIONALISED CFP. CPMR Member Regions call on the co-legislators to **further strengthen the regionalisation of the CFP.** While the current framework has enabled greater adaptation of management measures to regional circumstances, significant scope remains to ensure that fisheries governance better reflects the diversity of Europe's sea basins and fisheries. **The future CFP should recognise that fisheries are shaped by distinct ecological, economic and social realities across maritime regions and sub-basins.** A more place-based approach is therefore needed to design effective, proportionate and widely supported

management measures. **CPMR Member Regions also call for a stronger role for regional authorities in the implementation of the CFP.** Strengthening regional involvement alongside Member States would improve ownership, legitimacy and responsiveness, ultimately supporting a more resilient and better-adapted fisheries policy.

4 RETHINK THE LANDING OBLIGATION. CPMR Member Regions call on the co-legislators to undertake a thorough review of the provision on Landing Obligation of the CFP's basic regulation. **While the objective of reducing unwanted catches remains fully valid, years of implementation have demonstrated the limited effectiveness and disproportionate complexity of the current approach.** In many fisheries, discards are largely the consequence of highly prescriptive management rules rather than poor fishing practices. Addressing the root causes of unwanted catches therefore requires a more pragmatic and science-based approach than the blanket obligation to land all catches. **The future CFP should place greater emphasis on prevention rather than correction. Increasing gear selectivity, supporting innovation and improving scientific knowledge through enhanced data collection should become the primary tools for reducing discards at sea.** CPMR Member Regions believe that these measures offer a more effective, credible and widely supported pathway towards sustainable fisheries management than the current Landing Obligation framework.

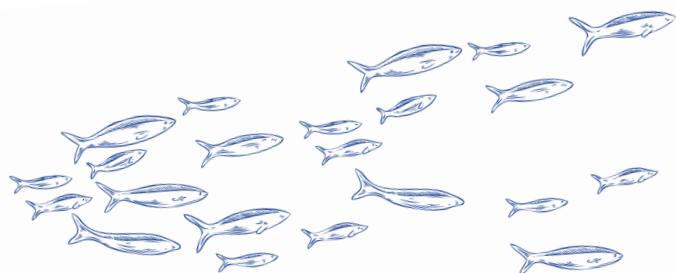




5 ACCELERATE FLEET MODERNISATION AND THE ENERGY TRANSITION. CPMR Member Regions call on the co-legislators to place the decarbonisation and modernisation of the fishing fleet at the heart of the future CFP. Achieving climate neutrality will require substantial investment in vessel renewal, energy efficiency, alternative fuels, port infrastructure and innovative propulsion technologies. **The current approach to fishing capacity should be fundamentally revisited, as it too often acts as a barrier to fleet renewal.** The future CFP should clearly distinguish between increasing fishing effort and enabling investment in safer, more efficient, lower-emission and technologically advanced vessels.

6 INVEST IN PEOPLE AND SKILLS. CPMR Member Regions call on the co-legislators to place human capital at the heart of the future CFP. Across Europe, fisheries and aquaculture are facing growing labour shortages, an ageing workforce and increasing difficulties in attracting new entrants. **Targeted measures are needed to facilitate generational renewal, improve training opportunities and enhance the image and attractiveness of fisheries careers.** Special attention should be given to strengthening the role of women across the fisheries and aquaculture value chain, recognising their contribution to the social, economic and cultural vitality of coastal communities.

7 EMPOWER SMALL-SCALE FISHERIES AND COASTAL COMMUNITIES. CPMR Member Regions call on the co-legislators to strengthen the support provided to small-scale fisheries, recognising their vital contribution to employment, local economies, food security and the cultural identity of Europe's coastal and island communities. **The future CFP should ensure that management measures, funding opportunities and access to resources better reflect the specific characteristics and needs of small-scale fisheries.**



8 SECURE A FAIR PLACE FOR FISHERIES AT SEA. CPMR Member Regions call on the co-legislators to ensure that fisheries and aquaculture are fully recognised as strategic activities in the governance of Europe's maritime space. Increasing competition for sea space from offshore renewable energy, marine protected areas, shipping routes and other uses, is placing growing pressure on traditional fishing grounds. **The future CFP and Maritime Spatial Planning Directive framework must guarantee genuine coexistence between maritime activities, based on balanced decisions, early and meaningful involvement of the fisheries sector.** In line with the position of the European Parliament, CPMR Member Regions stress that fisheries must be granted a fair and secure place in planning processes, reflecting their contribution to food security, coastal economies and maritime heritage.

9 A STRONG AND FIT-FOR-PURPOSE EU BUDGET FOR THE FUTURE CFP. CPMR Member Regions call on the co-legislators to ensure that the next Multiannual Financial Framework 2028–2034 provides a robust, predictable and dedicated financial framework for the CFP. **The future financial architecture must preserve a strong and identifiable role for fisheries within EU funding instruments, ensuring continuity and visibility for the sector.** Ambitious resources are essential to accompany the energy transition, fleet modernisation, skills development, innovation and the resilience of coastal communities. **EU Funding mechanisms in favour of fisheries and aquaculture should remain stable, accessible and adapted to the specific needs of maritime, island and outermost regions.**

10 STRENGTHEN THE EXTERNAL DIMENSION AND ENSURE A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD. CPMR Member Regions call on the co-legislators to reinforce the external dimension of the Common Fisheries Policy to safeguard the integrity and competitiveness of the EU market. European fisheries operate under some of the highest environmental, social and sanitary standards globally, and these must not be undermined by imports that do not fully comply with equivalent requirements. **A stronger enforcement of sustainability, traceability and social standards for imported seafood is essential to ensure fair competition and consumer confidence.** The CFP should be complemented by trade and market measures that prevent regulatory asymmetries and uphold a genuine level playing field for EU producers.