

## Recommendation 76

### **Impact of the next Multiannual Financial Framework on the fisheries sector of the Outermost Regions**

In view of the ongoing debates on the preparation of the European Union's next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), as well as the concerns expressed about the possible reduction in funding for the fisheries sector, the Advisory Council for the Outermost Regions (CCRUP) hereby expresses its opinion, complementing the positions already expressed by the Advisory Councils in the context of [the joint letter on the future of the MFF](#):

The Outermost Regions (ORs) of *Saint-Martin, Guadeloupe, Martinique*, French Guiana, Azores, Madeira, Canary Islands, *Mayotte* and *La Réunion* face permanent structural constraints, such as their remoteness, insularity, territorial fragmentation, small size of markets, dependence on the maritime sector and greater exposure to economic and environmental shocks. These factors provide to the ORs an increased vulnerability to eventual reductions in the European funding, particularly in the fisheries sector.

In the recent years, the fisheries sector in the ORs has been faced with an accumulated set of challenges of environmental, economic and social nature s that jeopardise its medium and long-term viability. Among these challenges, the reduction of quotas for species of high economic importance, the appearance and proliferation of invasive species with negative impacts on ecosystems and local biodiversity, as well as the increasing frequency and intensity of extreme weather events stands out.

To these factors are added the reduction in fishing grounds, particularly as a result of the implementation of marine protected areas, which, despite their environmental importance, have direct repercussions on the fishing sector's income and in many cases lack adequate, fair and proportionate compensation mechanisms. At the same time, there are changes in the migratory patterns of commercially relevant species, such as tuna, which affect the predictability and stability of fishing activities.

The increase in operating costs, particularly fuel costs, as well as the growing difficulty in ensuring generational renewal for the sector, further aggravate the pressure on small-scale [fishing in the ORs](#), which constitutes the economic, social and cultural basis of many of our coastal communities.

In this context, the fisheries sector plays a central role in the economic, social and territorial cohesion of the ORs, ensuring direct and indirect employment, food security, local economic dynamism and the preservation of a deeply rooted cultural heritage. Any reduction or reconfiguration of the European financial support that does not fully take these realities into account, could have significant impacts on the ORs.

The Common Fisheries Policy recognises the need for a differentiated approach for the ORs, and this should be reflected in the European Union's financial instruments, namely in the next MFF. A failure considering this, could compromise the effective application of the CFP in our territories and contradict to the principles of economic, social and territorial cohesion enshrined in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

In this context, the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) foresees, under the terms of Article 5 of [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/1139](#), minimum financial allocations for operations in the outermost regions: "For operations located in the outermost regions, each Member State concerned shall allocate, within its Union financial support set out in Annex V, at least: EUR 102 000 000 for the Azores and Madeira; EUR 82 000 000 for the Canary Islands; EUR 131 000 000 for Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Martinique, Mayotte, Réunion and Saint-Martin."

The CCRUP reaffirms its willingness to continue contributing to the process of reflection on the future of the MFF, with a view to ensuring equitable solutions that safeguard the sustainability of marine resources, the economic viability of the fisheries sector and the future of the fishing communities of the Outermost Regions.

The CCRUP therefore **recommends to the European Commission:**

**1. The realisation of studies on the potential socio-economic impacts of the budgetary options foreseen in the next MFF on the fishing communities of the ORs, to substantiate political decisions adjusted to the reality of our territories;**

**2. Maintaining the current predicted budget allocation for the Ors, under Article 5 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1139, guaranteeing the continuity of the specific support for the fisheries sector in our Regions;**

**3. In the remit of the preparation of the next Multiannual Financial Framework, the re-evaluation of the budgetary proposal for the fisheries sector, ensuring adequate financial resources, that safeguard the economic and social sustainability of the sector, with particular attention to the Outermost Regions.**

We also recommend **to the Member States concerned:**

- 1. Advocate with the European Commission and the competent European institutions, the reinforcement of the financial allocations for the artisanal fisheries of the ORs' in the next MFF, guaranteeing adequate compensation mechanisms;**
- 2. Promote financial policies for the sustainable equity and socio-economic viability of the fishing communities of the ORs, ensuring the continuity of artisanal fishing and the preservation of the cultural heritage associated to the sector.**