







Coordinadora Ecoloxista d'Asturies



Members of the
European Parliament
60, rue Wiertz
1047 Brussels
Belgium

RE: Maintaining the EU ban on subsidies for the construction of fishing vessels

Brussels, 16th March 2017

Dear Member of the European Parliament,

On 22 March, the European Parliament Fisheries Committee will vote on its draft own-initiative report on the “Management of the fishing fleets in the outermost regions”¹. This report will subsequently be voted on in the plenary on 28 April. **We, the undersigned organisations, ask you to express your support for the 2014 Parliament position that maintained the ban on subsidies for the construction of new fishing vessels, which has existed in the EU since 2004. We therefore ask you to oppose attempts to re-introduce subsidies for the construction of fishing vessels in this draft Parliament report.**

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal on the ocean and seas (SDG 14)² calls explicitly for the elimination of subsidies that contribute to overfishing by 2020. And rightly so: it is estimated that taxpayers spend some US\$30 billion a year on fisheries subsidies around the world, 60% of which directly encourage unsustainable, destructive and even illegal practices.³ That is why the EU successfully phased out aid for the construction of new vessels over a decade ago and is actively advocating in the negotiations in the World Trade Organization to prohibit fisheries subsidies that contribute to over-capacity and overfishing.

Attempts to reintroduce subsidies for the construction of new vessels, even if small scale or located in remote areas, undermine the objectives of the reformed Common Fisheries Policy to end overfishing, and send the wrong political signal from the EU to leaders around the world. We therefore urge you to honour the Common Fisheries Policy, particularly the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund Regulation, and oppose any attempt to reintroduce subsidies for the construction of new fishing vessels.

Civil Society will be watching closely to see how the Parliament votes on this issue and in view of the public interest in this matter we will be making this letter available to the media in the coming days.

We wish to thank you in advance for your support for sustainable fisheries and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Yours sincerely,

¹ 2016/2016(INI) Management of the fishing fleets in the outermost regions

² Resolution adopted by the United National General Assembly on 25 September 2015: “*Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*” Goal 14 “*Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development*”.

³ Sumaila et. al (2016) “Global fisheries subsidies: An updated estimate” in Marine Policy.

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