

## LPO REPORT

### **The use of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) in France in relation to the protection of the marine environment and its resources**

September 2020 - Access full report [here](#)

#### Summary

By analysing the detailed list of beneficiaries of the French allocation of the European Maritime Fisheries Fund (EMFF) for 2014-2020 and of the annual implementation report for the EMFF for 2018 made it possible to learn more about the use of the EMFF in France in connection with nature protection. Out of an envelope of 588 million euros, only 254 million euros (43%) have been committed by the 3rd of December 2019. Out of these 254 million euros, 123 million are allocated to subsidies whose positive or negative impact on the environment was difficult to assess given the information available. As a result, these subsidies were not analysed in this study. Of the remaining 130 million euros of commitments, 41.6 million euros, or approximately one third, were allocated in subsidies identified as harmful to the marine environment and 88.7 million euros, or approximately two thirds, were allocated in subsidies identified as beneficial to the marine environment.

The subsidies identified as harmful consist of payments for permanent and temporary cessations of fishing activities, payments to modernise fishing vessels as well as to purchase vessels. These subsidies contribute in particular to the increase in fleet capacity and thereby contribute to the situation of overfishing in Europe. Furthermore, a large part of the French harmful subsidies is linked to reducing the operational costs of the aquaculture sector and promoting the growth of the sector without environmental considerations. These subsidies are contrary to the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP).

The subsidies identified as beneficial to the marine environment consist of knowledge acquisition, data collection, protection and monitoring and enforcement. These expenses are positive, but it is important that they are not used to offset harmful payments.

In the context of the current EMFF negotiations for 2021-2027, we must ensure that all spending conforms to the objectives of the Green Deal, the EU Biodiversity Strategy and is socially fair. To do so, it is crucial that subsidies which increase fishing capacity are prohibited, in particular permanent and temporary cessation of activity, modernisation, purchases and construction of vessels.

---

In 2015, world leaders committed under United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 14 to reach an agreement at the WTO to eliminate subsidies to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and subsidies that contribute to overfishing and overcapacity. Action 8 of the EU International Ocean Governance Agenda transformed this commitment into action by obligating the EU to “actively engaging in multilateral negotiations in the WTO to ban, by 2020, subsidies that contribute to overcapacity, overfishing and IUU fishing.” At the start of her presidency last September, President Ursula von der Leyen reiterated this mandate by tasking Commissioner Sinkevicius with cooperating with the Commissioner for Trade “to ensure that Europe leads discussions in the World Trade Organization on finding a global agreement to ban fisheries subsidies that contribute to overfishing, illegal fishing and overcapacity”.

Delivering a deal to end harmful fisheries subsidies would be a pivotal moment for the ocean. SDG14.6 is one of a handful of SDG targets due for delivery in 2020. Delivering on SDG 14.6 would demonstrate that the SDGs represent a real pathway toward a better future. Failure to deliver 14.6 would jeopardize achievement of SDG14, and indeed the entire SDG package and the 2030 agenda.