

Brussels, 24 September 2014

EAA position on proposed EU drift netting ban

EAA supports the European Commission proposal for a driftnet ban in all EU waters.

However, some small scale driftnet fisheries should be allowed exemptions on a case-by-case basis, where it can be shown that a small scale driftnet fishery is sustainable, has adequate monitoring and a managed by-catch. All compliant drift net fisheries should comply with the discard ban/landing provisions and other CFP requirements and all vessels involved in a drift net fishery should have electronic log books to record and report catches.

Funding should be made available from the EMFF to change from driftnet to other gears and fleet segment which can absorb the increase in fishing efforts without reducing the sustainability of the fishery. Public funds made available for this purpose should be monitored and prosecuted to prevent and sanction misuse.

EAA believes that a total ban without exemptions would be disproportionate because there are arguably drift net fisheries which are sustainable. However, all Member states must put in place control, monitor and carry out scientific assessment of their drift net fisheries in order to prove that they are sustainable and do not contravene other conservation objectives, before issuing any derogation.

EAA believes that control and enforcement of existing regulations should be improved to deal with IUU drift net fishing.

EAA believes that, as in the Baltic, any derogation should be agreed at Regional or at fishery level within the fishery management plans.

EAA believes that drift net fishing in mixed stock fisheries is inherently unsustainable and should be banned or phased out.

EAA believes that any new framework for technical measures within the CFP should include provisions to manage drift net fisheries better (length of net, soak times, mesh sizes, time/spatial closures).

- ENDS -

Notes and references:

- The European Commission's proposed drift net ban of 15 May 2014, legal text:
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2014:265:FIN>
- The European Commission's MEMO of 15 May 2014 "Questions and answers on full driftnet ban":
http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-351_en.htm
- *This EAA position:*
 - a) - reiterates our statement of 26 May, that: "EAA supports a total driftnet ban in the Mediterranean Sea",
www.eaa-europe.org/news/7231/eaa-supports-a-total-driftnet-ban-in-the-mediterranean-sea.html
 - b) - follows up on and concludes our considerations in our release of 28 May, that:
"EAA considers Commission's proposed total driftnet ban - EU Atlantic waters",
www.eaa-europe.org/news/7230/eaa-considers-commission-s-proposed-total-driftnet-ban-eu-atlantic-waters.html

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