

PRESS RELEASE

European Parliament Forum on Recreational Fisheries and Aquatic Environment

11.10.2023 – Brussels



Marine fisheries management decisions can only be fair and economically sustainable if they consider the recreational fisheries sector too

MEP Niclas Herbst and **MEP Ska Keller** co-chaired the latest European Parliament Forum on Recreational Fisheries and Aquatic Environment event on 11 October 2023.

Ahead of the end-of-the-year TAC & Quotas fisheries management decisions, the conference shed light on how they not only affect the commercial fisheries sector but also millions of recreational fishers at sea and the economic activities that they generate (the so-called “recreational fisheries sector”¹).

Presentations were made by **David Mitchell** (European Anglers Alliance –EAA- expert) and **Kevin Haase** from the Thünen Institute on Baltic Fisheries on how international examples and science can bring solutions to better consider the often much underestimated social, economic, and environmental impact of not taking the recreational fishers’ interests into consideration when deciding about fisheries management.

“We have a structural problem in the EU: the CFP does not recognise recreational fisheries as a fisheries management stakeholder. This should be addressed to consider the millions of EU angling citizens’ interests and the thousands of businesses depending on the sustainability of their activities.” (David Mitchell – European Anglers Alliance EAA).

“Very similar policy results can be achieved by more recreational-fishers-friendly management measures.” said Kevin Haase (Thünen Institute of Baltic Fisheries).

The EU Anglers represented by the European Anglers Alliance (EAA) and the European Fishing Tackle Trade Association (EFTTA) called for science-based, long-term focused fisheries policy choices that consider the insights from the Recreational Fisheries sector. In this light, they urged for better data to be collected at the EU level - not only about the impact of recreational fisheries on the stocks but also

¹ The term “recreational angling sector” means anglers, tackle shops and tackle manufacturers, bait suppliers, charter-boating, recreational boat builders and handlery suppliers, marina operators and specialised angling media, angling tourism and other related business and organisations as well as the whole management environment (e.g. public agencies) to varying degrees dependant on or directed at recreational angling. For more information: <https://www.eaa-europe.org/topics/what-is-recreational-fishing/>

The RecFishing Forum Secretariat is provided by [EAA](#) and [EFTTA](#)

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about the economic value that their activities generate. Only with a full overview of the consequences of their decisions can policy-makers make the fair choices for the future.

The EU anglers and the recreational fisheries sector call for their interests to be acknowledged by the European Commission and Member States when deciding about the management of fisheries in EU seas.

“The problem is loud & clear. We need to keep the debate on about the allocation of fishing opportunities because the recreational fisheries sector is an important sector with an important direct & indirect socio-economic impact.” said MEP Niclas Herbst, Chair of the Forum on Recreational Fisheries and Aquatic Environment.

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Note to the editor:

About the event:

You can read more about the event on [this page](#). The agenda of the event can be downloaded [here](#). The panellists' presentations and the report of the event will be published on that page.

Up to 10 million Europeans go fishing recreationally at sea every year, generating an annual [total economic impact](#) of **10.5 billion euro** and supporting **100,000 jobs in Europe**. Angling provides many **social and health benefits** and **income diversification** for Europe's coastal and remote communities.

About the RecFishing Forum:

The Forum on Recreational Fisheries and Aquatic Environment (RecFishing Forum) was created in 2014, at the beginning of the 8th parliamentary term of the European Parliament. **By providing a cross-party discussion platform**, the Forum has been an essential tool for the **Members of the European Parliament to establish a direct connection with the recreational fishing community, its network of scientists, in-house experts, and other representatives of the sector** to gather knowledge, information and data on the topics that were discussed in the European Parliament.

More information about the Forum [here](#).

About EAA and EFTTA:

The **Secretariat of the Forum is provided by two associations working together**: the [European Anglers Alliance \(EAA\)](#) and the [European Fishing Tackle Trade Association \(EFTTA\)](#). Both associations work at the EU level and beyond to improve the aquatic environment, to achieve sustainable

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management of the fish stocks and to protect and promote recreational angling (rod and line fishing) in Europe. They also advocate for recreational fisheries to be managed in a fair and equitable way with respect to the other fisheries sectors.

The **European Anglers Alliance (EAA)** is a pan-European organisation for recreational angling, gathering 10 angling associations from 10 European countries, which defends European recreational anglers' interests at the European level and beyond. EAA was launched in Brussels in 1994.

The **European Fishing Tackle Trade Association** was established in London in 1981 with a clear purpose: to support the European sportfishing tackle sector – the manufacturers and wholesalers, the importers and exporters. EFTTA is the voice of more than 3000 European manufacturing and wholesale companies.

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