



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 13 October 2009 (15.10)
(OR. el,en)**

14443/09

PECHE 278

NOTE

from : Cypriot delegation

to : Council

No. prev. doc. : 14015/09 PECHE 258

Subject : Renewal of fishing fleet under the EFF Regulation

Delegations will find attached a document submitted by the Cypriot delegation, to be dealt with under "Any other business" at the Council (Agriculture and Fisheries) on 19-20 October 2009.

Agriculture and Fisheries Council
(19-20 October 2009)

AOB item 8: Lithuanian request for renewal of the fishing fleet under the
Regulation on the European Fisheries Fund

Note from the Cypriot delegation

As a new member of the EU having joined in May 2004, Cyprus, along with other Member States who joined the EU at the same time or later, was not able to benefit from Community structural aid for fisheries for the renewal of its fishing fleet. As we know, provisions of the relevant Community legislation allowed for co-financing for the construction of new vessels until 2004, while the Regulation currently in force, Regulation (EC) No 1198/2006 on the European Fisheries Fund (the EFF), does not include such provisions.

The Cypriot fishing fleet is particularly old (40 % of trawlers are over 44 years old and 60 % over 29 years old, while 30 % of polyvalent vessels are over 30 years old and 25 % of coastal fishing vessels (vessels <12m in length) are over 31 years old).

It should be noted that, as is the case for Lithuania, Cypriot fishermen have not been especially keen either to replace engines or otherwise substantially modernise their vessels since costs are so high and co-financing for replacements so low. Cypriot vessels aged 30 to 40 years cannot possibly be economically viable and cannot compete with other Member States' modern vessels fishing in the international waters of the Eastern and Central Mediterranean.

The ecological footprint left by the activities of fishing vessels and the economic viability of the vessels themselves are directly related to their condition. It is not possible for 30 and 40 year old vessels with old-technology, high-emission engines to meet modern environmental standards. Economic viability, climate change and energy efficiency are fundamental principles of the Green Paper on the Common Fisheries Policy. It is not possible for 30-40 year old vessels to guarantee the safety of those working on them and to cope with modern systems for the conservation and storage of fish products.

We therefore welcome and wholeheartedly support the Lithuanian initiative regarding the renewal of the fishing fleets of Member States which have not had the opportunity to benefit from any Community measures for co-financing the construction of new vessels through the European Fisheries Fund, and we hope that the EU Member States and Commission will show understanding when dealing with this very serious issue.

We propose that a provision be included in Regulation (EC) No 1198/2006 of 27 July 2006 on the European Fisheries Fund granting Member States the right to use EFF funds, without increasing fishing capacity of the State concerned, for purchasing new fishing vessels up to 40 metres in length. The engine power of a newly purchased vessel could be twice that of the old one, and the Member State concerned undertakes not to increase the reference level of fishing capacity (total capacity in GT and total engine power).
