**Follow up to the European Parliament non-legislative resolution on
More fish in the seas? Measures to promote stock recovery above the maximum sustainable yield (MSY), including fish recovery areas and marine protected areas**

1. **Rapporteur:** Caroline ROOSE (Greens/EFA / FR)
2. **Reference numbers:** 2019/2162 (INI) / A9-0264/2020 / P9\_TA-PROV(2021)0017
3. **Date of adoption of the resolution:** 21 January 2021
4. **Competent Parliamentary Committee:** Committee on Fisheries (PECH)
5. **Brief analysis/ assessment of the resolution and requests made in it:**

The resolution calls for the full implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) (Regulation (EU) No 1380/2013), the better implementation of Nature Directives and supports the spatial protection measures announced in the Biodiversity Strategy. It supports in particular the objective in Article 2(2) of the CFP Regulation to rebuild fish stocks above levels capable of producing maximum sustainable yield (MSY)**.** The resolution notes thatmore data and more science are needed to fix quotas in an ecosystem approach along with better survival of non-target species and better selectivity. There is a call for more support to small-scale fisheries, as well as for a better implementation of the fisheries management criteria under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (Directive 2008/56/EC). It is suggested that the Commission study indicators other than MSY to take account of species interactions, social and economic factors, climate change and pollution. The report puts forward the concept of maximum economic yield (MEY). The resolution welcomes the ambition in the Biodiversity Strategy Communication (COM/2020/380 final) to protect at least 30% of Europe’s seas and to prohibit catches and all economic activities in 10% of European waters. The Commission is urged to set strong science-based Marine Protected Areas management guidelines for the Member States. Coherence with existing nature legislation and in areas outside EU jurisdiction is stressed. The Commission should study the effects of human impacts other than fishing on the rebuilding of fish stocks with the involvement of fishers.

1. **Response to the requests and overview of the action taken, or intended to be taken, by the Commission:**

The Commission welcomes the resolution as supporting the objectives of the Common Fisheries Policy, the Habitats and Birds Directives, the European Green Deal and the Marine Strategy Framework Directive as well as the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030. The Commission reconfirms its commitment to ensure full implementation of the CFP and will, in the context of the preparation of the 2022 report on the CFP, look in particular at possible ways to lower carbon emissions and improve adaptation to climate change while reinforcing nature protection. With regard to moving to MEY the Commission considers this not compatible with the CFP objectives. With regard to the MSY objective, much progress has been made in the northern European waters in the last decades, and progress has begun in the Mediterranean Basin although much more needs to be done. The Commission agrees that marine protected areas, and in particular strictly protected areas, should be expanded and data collection and monitoring should be improved, as should the protection of sensitive species and sensitive habitats. More such areas will benefit fishers as well as nature itself. The Commission will present an Action Plan to conserve fisheries resources and to protect marine ecosystems in 2021, as announced in the Biodiversity Strategy. This Action Plan, which is also intrinsically linked to the upcoming report on the implementation of the Technical Measures Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2019/1241), will identify where action is required, such as, to address the by-catch of sensitive species and adverse impacts on seabed and on sensitive habitats, through strengthening technical measures, including area closures and local gear restrictions, gear changes (to minimize the effects of damaging gear on the seabed and on juveniles and spawning aggregations) and mitigation measures for sensitive species.