

Integrating gender

The European Network of Women in Fisheries and Aquaculture in Europe (AKTEA) urges the Office of the Commissioner for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries to integrate gender into all aspects of European fishing policy

From <http://akteaplatform.eu/letter-from-commissioner-sinkevicius/> and <http://akteaplatform.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Letter-from-Commissioner-Sinkevicius.pdf>. Accessed on May 25, 2021

On 8 March International Women's Day, AKTEA wrote a letter to Commissioner Virginijus Sinkevičius, Commissioner for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, and to all the Members of European Parliament belonging to the fisheries commission urging for gender inclusivity in European fisheries. The text of the letter ran as follows:

"AKTEA, the European Network of Women in Fisheries and Aquaculture in Europe, calls for a better integration of the principle of equality and women's rights in all European fisheries policies. Women contribute in many ways to the production and distribution of seafood. They are entrepreneurs, crewmembers and workers. They prepare fishing gear, transport fish to auctions, sell and process sea products, develop tourism-related activities, manage businesses, manage logistics for vessels, etc. Women are also involved in the production and distribution of sea products.

Women are also very present throughout the seafood processing industry as well as in the organizations that manage the sector, producer organizations, cooperatives and others. The word 'woman' was first included in the CFP in 2002. The principle of equality is enshrined in the texts of the Structural Fund for Fisheries (EMFF). However, apart from Spain, there have been very few concrete achievements. It is urgent time to give women the place they deserve in the European fisheries policy and in the structural fund. When will there be recognition that translates into their effective access to decision-making, subsidies, rights and resources?



"For AKTEA, European decision-makers must radically rethink fisheries policy to translate the principle of equality and women's rights into action."

So far, the only response has been from the Office

of the Commissioner for the Environment, Oceans and Fisheries. The text of this reply is reproduced below:

"Thank you for the message of AKTEA at the occasion of the International Day of Women's Rights on 8 March 2021.

"Your message is an important reminder of the need to increase the recognition of the role of women in fisheries and give them the place they deserve in decision-making.

"As I have underlined in my video-address to your meeting that took place in February 2020 ('AKTEA, Revive, Renew and Relaunch the European Network of Women in Fisheries and Aquaculture', EESC, Brussels 24-26 February 2020), the Commission is working in various ways to ensure a better position for women in EU fisheries.

On the policy side, we are enhancing the collection of social data, including data on the role of women, for instance in non-remunerated jobs. These social data will in particular provide an input to the 2022 report on the functioning of the Common Fisheries Policy and pave the way towards a better assessing of social impacts of fisheries management measures.

"The recent adoption of the new European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) ensures the continuation of funding for measures to support women in fisheries and aquaculture. As you know, the Fisheries Local Action Groups (FLAGs) play and will continue to play a key role in this regard. They provide a support network for women entrepreneurship and often foresee a central role for women in governance. Since member states are currently preparing their programming for the upcoming seven years, I would call upon your national members to contribute to that process.

"Finally, I can inform you that, as announced in the EU Gender Equality Strategy ('COM(2020)152 of 5.03.2020'), DG MARE will launch in 2022 a new call dedicated to women in the "blue economy" under the EMFAF.

"I thank you once again for your message of 8 March 2021 and look forward to our continued cooperation." ❖