

The fishing tackle lead ban currently before the European Parliament needs improvement: A sales ban without a use ban will not deliver the environmental outcomes citizens expect.

EAA and EFTTA, the European Anglers Alliance and the European Fishing Tackle & Trade Association, want the European Commission to reinstate a use ban along the sales ban.

“Without restricting use, the regulation becomes toothless and fails to deliver the environmental protection it promises,” said Gerard Bakkenes, President of EFTTA.

In fact, a use ban was included in a previous draft of the legislative proposal but bargained away during negotiations between the Commission and Member State representatives. Strangely enough, a use ban is still in the text but only with effect for commercial fisheries, not recreational fisheries.

The European Parliament was not part of these negotiations but has until the end of July to accept or block the proposed text. The Parliament’s only way to influence the proposal at this stage is to object to the current text and invite the Commission to submit an improved proposal that includes a use ban.

We are confident that, if ministers were to take a closer interest in this issue, most environment, industry and internal market ministers would agree that a use ban is necessary.

A motion to block the Commission proposal altogether has been tabled in the European Parliament. We share the view that the proposal should be blocked at this stage, although for very different reasons. We do not want the legislative proposal off the table. We want the proposal to be improved, for reasons of environmental protection and human health, and to avoid further fragmentation of the EU single market.

A well-functioning single market and better regulation are priorities shared across the political spectrum. This is an opportunity to protect and strengthen the single market by introducing the same measures - both a sales ban and a use ban- in all 27 EU Member States.

A use ban also addresses the dangerous home smelting of lead sinkers, the continued use of old lead, and illegal import of leaded fishing tackle, which are very difficult to address otherwise.

Some arguments suppose that a use ban is impossible to control and requires expensive administration and equipment. **However**, the enforcement of a use ban can be integrated into the existing fisheries control systems. In all Member States recreational fishing licences, catches and fishing gear are subject to spot checks in the field. Enforcement of the lead restriction fits well within the existing control regime without a need for entirely new schemes. In some countries, angling organisations are directly involved with licence and catch control or help train external inspectors.

Handheld scanners can be used in the field. They have already been used in Denmark for many years as a result of the Danish ban on the sale of lead fishing tackle. Anyway, when the sales ban takes effect all EU Member States will need a certain number of handheld scanners, or other control devices/methods, to spot check for lead content in commercial and recreational fishing gear in tackle shops or elsewhere. The European Commission could help reduce the cost by coordinating a joint procurement process on behalf of some or all Member States.

—ENDS—

Links:

(1) - Better Regulation, European Commission

https://commission.europa.eu/law/law-making-process/better-regulation_en

- **D110163/04 Draft Implementing Act**

COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) .../... of XXX amending Annex XVII to Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 as regards lead in certain fishing tackle

<https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/comitology-register/screen/documents/110163/4>

- **Annex**

<https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/comitology-register/core/api/integration/ers/505728/110163/2/attachment>

- **EFTTA lead news articles:** www.eftta.com/news

About EFTTA

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The European Fishing Tackle & Trade Association (EFTTA) is the leading voice of the fishing tackle trade and recreational angling industry in Europe.

Founded in 1981 and headquartered in Brussels, EFTTA works closely with European institutions, policymakers and stakeholders to advocate for the tackle sector and ensure that the interests of the industry and the millions of Europeans who enjoy recreational fishing are reflected in EU policymaking.

EFTTA promotes sustainable recreational angling, supports nature conservation and helps protect and restore healthy aquatic environments. Through advocacy, industry cooperation and public outreach, EFTTA works to support a thriving, sustainable recreational angling sector and the businesses that depend on it across Europe.

Membership is open to manufacturers, wholesalers, distributors, agents, media and related organisations involved in the fishing tackle trade and recreational angling industry.

About EAA

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The European Anglers Alliance (EAA) is the representative body of national recreational angling organisations and their members across Europe.

Based in Brussels, EAA works closely with European institutions, policymakers and stakeholders to ensure that the interests of recreational anglers are reflected in EU policymaking. The association promotes and protects recreational angling, advocates for healthy fish populations and aquatic ecosystems, and supports sustainable fisheries management.

Through advocacy, expert engagement and cooperation with partners across Europe, EAA works to ensure that recreational angling is recognised as a valuable contributor to conservation, environmental stewardship and society.

Membership is open to national and regional recreational angling organisations across Europe.