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[Press release](#) | 28.04.2015

Fisheries discards

EU discard ban totally undercut as new rules introduce crucial loopholes

The European Parliament today voted to adopt new implementing rules to the 'landing obligation' under the revised EU Common Fisheries Policy. The 'landing obligation' had been heralded as ending the controversial and wasteful practice of fisheries discards but the new rules adopted today will fundamentally undermine the intended ban. These loopholes will make the control and surveillance of the rules less effective but will also crucially allow fishermen to continue discarding masses of fish if fishermen claim they have been damaged. Commenting after the vote, Green fisheries spokesperson **Linnéa Engström** said:

"The new rules voted today would totally undercut the ban on discards and essentially give unscrupulous fishermen a carte blanche to continue with the wasteful practice. The ink is hardly dry on the EU's much-lauded reform of the Common Fisheries Policy but one of the crucial achievements is already being unpicked. This is a major setback for efforts to make our fishing industry more sustainable.

"Under these new rules, fishermen will be allowed to discard fish if they deem them to have been damaged by predators or diseased. This undermines the essence of the landing obligation, which was to make fishermen responsible for landing their catch, with a view to incentivising the choice of more selective fishing equipment. Instead fishermen will continue to be allowed to throw fish overboard and thus bypass the obligation. Other loopholes will undermine the control and surveillance of landing obligation.

"Despite this major setback, MEPs also approved a new fisheries management plan for the Baltic Sea. Under the plan approved today, the quotas for the amount of fish allowed to be caught would have to allow fish stocks to grow to abundant and sustainable levels. This would be crucial to ensuring a more sustainable approach to fisheries and we would strongly urge EU governments to follow suit and agree to the proposals adopted by the European Parliament today."

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Linnéa Engström

Member

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