

Following the invitation to contribute to the Review of the Regional Aid Guidelines (RAG) 2014-2020, the County of Västernorrland has the following statements:

Our main concern is regarding the increased population base, almost doubling the population targeted by the regional aid. The widened scope suggested in the RAG, pointing at not predefined areas, threatens to undermine activities in sparsely populated regions. The effects from this diluted funding could increase problems of depopulation and reduction in economic activity in the least-favoured areas.

We also see that the Fishing- and Aquaculture sector still fall outside the regulations. It would be of importance to separate traditional Fishing and environmentally questionable operations (e.g. open-water Fish farms) from sustainable and circular production such as land-based aquaponic fish-farms or cultivation of algae.

*Best regards,*

REGION VÄSTERNORRLAND