



A SHARED VISION FOR SUSTAINABLE EUROPEAN FISHERIES

REFORMING EUROPEAN FISHERIES TO BENEFIT FISH, FISHERMEN & FISHING INDUSTRIES

One of today's great challenges in crafting a sustainable EU food policy is to ensure there is an adequate supply of food across Europe that is available now, while still meeting the needs of future generations. Natural renewable resources such as fish from European waters have the potential to meet a key part of Europe's current and future food supply needs, but only if they are managed sustainably.

Europe is currently reforming its Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and the Commission has published its proposals for the new CFP, which are now being reviewed by the European Parliament and Council of Ministers for adoption. The European associations from the processing, trading, consumer co-operative and retail sectors as well as chefs and WWF welcome this once-in-a-decade opportunity to transform the way EU fisheries are managed. We call for a CFP reform that delivers a workable, sustainable EU fisheries management policy.

In response to the European Commission's reform proposals we believe it is essential that the reform delivers the following:



MANDATORY MULTIANNUAL PLANS FOR ALL EU FISHERIES BY 2015

The Commission's proposals set Multiannual Plans (MAPs) at the heart of the Basic Regulation, establishing them as the means of achieving centrally agreed targets. We strongly support this, but vital elements including a clear timeframe for delivery and how effective stakeholder engagement

can be assured, need to be specified by the Regulation in order to support sound fisheries management decisions.

It is essential that MAPs are required for each fishery, are based on rigorous scientific advice and follow the ecosystem and precautionary approach. This approach will provide a more stable course towards long-term recovery of fish stocks and healthy seas.

EFFECTIVE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

All stakeholders, including Member States, fishermen, industry, scientists, consumer and environmental interests, must be at the heart of the decision making process. Our vision is that fisheries (and in some cases regional) level management plans are developed and co-

managed by stakeholder groups once the objectives of the plans are agreed. In the Commission's proposals it remains unclear how fishermen and other stakeholders become accountable in the decision making process.

Local fishing communities often have a wealth of knowledge, about their fisheries, about the seasonality and variety of available fish species. It is vital that this knowledge as well as that of other parts of the marketing chain, is utilised in management and supply chain related decisions.

We believe the requirement for stakeholder co-management must be clearly established in the Basic Regulation. This is essential for the design and implementation of workable and effective fisheries management strategies.

To ensure that the right decisions are taken at the right level the establishment of an advisory body at EU level to address horizontal issues such as markets will be useful.



TACKLING DISCARDS ALONGSIDE A COHERENT COMMON MARKETS ORGANISATION

The current proposal promotes a species based discard ban focused on fish stocks subject to catch limits, accompanied by the option to commercialise undersized fish and fish caught in excess of quotas. We do not believe this is the right solution for this major and complex problem. The primary focus when tackling discards should be on avoiding unwanted catches before finding a mechanism to deal with them after they have been caught. The CFP needs to take a more holistic approach and establish accountability for what is caught and a clear process that leads to the adoption of selective catching techniques to reduce the number of unwanted species being caught in the first instance. Thus, elimination of discards and by-catch should be tackled on a fishery-by-fishery level with an emphasis on the adoption of more selective practices within the framework of a Multiannual Plan.



The reform of the Common Markets Organisation (CMO) needs to ensure that new legislation on consumer information, such as changes to labelling, is effective and consistent with the objectives of the CFP as well as new rules being introduced such as the Horizontal Food Information Regulation and the Fisheries Control Regulation. Better linkages and integrated policies across the supply chain, and a clear focus on efficiency and added value at all stages, will further minimise wasteful practices.

SECURING A LONG-TERM SUPPLY OF SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD

The CFP needs to take greater account of consumer concerns by delivering sustainable seafood, whether it is sourced from within or beyond the EU. In order to secure a long-term supply of a wide variety of sustainable seafood products it is essential to make EU waters more biologically productive. To this end the Basic Regulation needs to commit to applying the precautionary approach to fisheries management, and ensuring that populations of harvested species are above biomass levels which can produce the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) by 2015.

Additionally, as the seafood market is a global one and the EU is the world's largest market for seafood products, imports coming from sustainable and legal sources are essential. Effective enforcement of existing European legislation, such as the Regulation on Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, is vital to ensure that we do not export the problem of unsustainable practices.

A SUSTAINABLE POLICY FOR THE EXTERNAL FLEET

The Commission's proposals include a strong commitment to ensure that European vessels fishing outside Union waters do so in line with the basic principles of the CFP. We urge Member States and Parliamentarians to defend these commitments and to support detailed and legally binding mechanisms to operationalise them following the reform process. Extension of comparable commitments to all fishing vessels, including non-EU vessels, should be actively promoted by the EU, for example through pro-active engagement within Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs).

DELIVERING SUSTAINABLE AQUACULTURE

We recognise the importance of aquaculture, in conjunction with well managed fisheries, to meet increasing seafood demand in the EU. In this respect, we welcome the inclusion of aquaculture in the Basic Regulation and the proposal to set up an Advisory Council for aquaculture. However, the proposals need to ensure that aquaculture is developed sustainably and that any managerial aspect of the CFP is founded on environmental responsibility, minimising impacts on biodiversity. Aquaculture products must be responsibly sourced, whether they are from within or beyond the EU, to ensure a level playing field.

SMART SPENDING

Successful reform should seek to maximise the benefits for society through the sustainable management of fisheries - a vital and renewable resource for future food security. The efficient use of resources has to be a fundamental principle of CFP reform. To date, the CFP has failed to effectively create a clear connection between responsibility for the conservation of stocks and their exploitation, which has also negatively affected the economic viability of much fishing activity in Europe. Therefore, any future funds provided to the fisheries sector should focus on transforming the sector to rebuild and maintain fish stocks and marine habitats and achieve long-term economic, social and environmental sustainability. Especially in the current economic climate, EU funds have to be effectively targeted to achieve CFP objectives in order to help strengthen and provide sustainable livelihoods to the sector.



Unlike some other policy areas, fisheries management is one where real solutions are available. Our shared vision for sustainable fisheries is achievable - if the right political decisions are made during this critical reform.

THE ALLIANCE FOR COMMON FISHERIES POLICY REFORM ARE:



AIPCE-CEP is the EU Fish Processors and Traders Association representing 130,000 employees, 4,000 enterprises and a production value of around €20 billion.

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EUROCOMMERCE represents the retail, wholesale and international trade sectors in Europe. Its membership includes commerce federations in 31 countries, European and national associations representing specific commerce sectors and individual companies.

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EURO COOP or the European Community of Consumer Co-operatives represents the interests of the EU's consumer cooperatives, which have 300,000 employees, 30,000 points of sale and 29 million consumer-members across 17 countries.

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EURO-TOQUES INTERNATIONAL, the European Community of Cooks, is a pan-European organisation established in 1986 which represents over 2,000 chefs and cooks, with national branches in 17 European countries.

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WWF is one of the world's largest and most respected independent conservation organisations, with almost 5 million supporters and a global network active in over 100 countries.

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