



NGO statement on the A Coruña statement on the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy

We, the undersigning NGOs, consider the reform of the EU's Common Fisheries Policy crucially important: a once-in-a-decade opportunity to correct the management failures that have caused the unprecedented depletion of fisheries resources, destruction of marine ecosystems and precarious situation of fishing dependent communities and their livelihoods we see today.

We welcomed the openness of the European Commission on the possibilities of a new governance structure, more responsive to regions, but in other areas we are concerned that the Commission and the Spanish Presidency came with preconceived ideas, in particular a European wide market for tradable individual quotas, and pushed them hard in defiance of opposition from the stakeholders.

We call on the EU to put in place a new Common Fisheries Policy that ensures the recovery and long-term viability of fish populations, the protection of marine ecosystems and the promotion of equitable and sustainable fishing practices. The reform of the EU's fisheries should promote a shift from subsidised, capital-intensive, destructive practices, to a system based on appropriately-scaled, community-based fisheries, using ecologically responsible, selective fishing technology and practices. The new policy must serve particularly those fishers who work in small-scale, sustainable coastal and artisanal fisheries, and benefit European citizens, who demand healthy seas full of marine life.

To this effect, we support a different Declaration from La Coruna to the Ministers: on Friday, 30th April over 70 organisations, including organisations of artisanal fishers and NGOs, signed a declaration calling on the EU Commissioner for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, the EU Fisheries Ministers and the Members of the European Parliament to ensure inter alia that:

- a functional marine environment and a steady return to healthy fish stocks are achieved as a precondition for sustainable fisheries;
- Priority access to fish resources is provided to those who fish in the most environmentally and socially sustainable way ; and
- Sustainable artisanal coastal fisheries are placed at the heart of the CFP reform.

The EU must save our seas and fisheries, if it is to give current and future generations the possibility to catch and eat fish: without fish, there can be no fishing!