
PRESS RELEASE

Industry welcomes French government call for more socially sustainable fisheries policies

Yesterday, 28 February 2017, during a [seminar](#) organised by the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) in the framework of the European Shipping Week, Thierry Coquil, Director for Maritime Affairs in the French administration, delivered a message of the French Secretary of State for Transport Alain Vidalies, which also included concerns on fisheries.

ETF and Europêche, social partners in the Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for Fisheries (SSDC-F), warmly welcomed the approach taken by Mr Vidalies and his team.

'We have been very pleased to hear the words of Mr Vidalies today', declared **Flemming Smidt**, vice-chair of the SSDC-F and workers spokesperson. 'His speech echoed some of the elements that we, as social partners in the fisheries sector, are advocating already for many years.'

First and foremost, the full inclusion of the fisheries sector in the scope of the Integrated Maritime Policy (IMP). The IMP is not living up to the plans that had been made when it was first launched. This is especially true for fisheries. The European Commission needs to rethink the way the IMP is being implemented.

We totally agree with what Mr Vidalies declared today when he said that 'the challenges to the maritime sectors are not only economic, environmental and related to security, but also social'.

Ment van der Zwan, Europêche's spokesperson in the SSDC-F added 'France is one of the few EU countries that has ratified the ILO Work in Fishing Convention (C188) and we are aware that it is also looking very closely at the ratification of the IMO [STCW-F Convention](#).

These are two of the key tools we have available to make fisheries, in the EU and globally, more socially sustainable.

We support the French holistic and integrative approach, which aims at fully transposing the ILO C188 into community law in a way that it applies to all fishermen regardless of their employment status: both employees and self-employed.

We encourage France to take the lead in advocating this approach in the EU. We find it discriminating that EU fishermen do not benefit from the standards and values provided by the STCW-F, since a similar instrument applicable to the merchant fleet, the STCW, has been implemented into EU law.'

After having negotiated the transposition of C188 into EU law, ETF and Europêche are now promoting the ratification of the Convention by EU member states as well as to raise awareness on what is yet to be done before the Convention enters into force later this year.

At the same time, social partners are urging the European Commission to take the initiative to transpose the STCW-F Convention into EU law.

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* The [European Transport Workers' Federation](#) (ETF) represents more than 3.5 million transport workers from more than 230 transport unions and 41 European countries, in the following sectors: railways, road transport and logistics, maritime transport, inland waterways, civil aviation, ports & docks, tourism and fisheries.

[Europêche](#) represents the catching sector in Europe. In the context of the Social Dialogue, the Association comprises 15 national organisations of fishing enterprises from Iceland and the following 10 EU Member States: DE, DK, ES, FR, IT, MT, NL, LV, PL and UK.