



ASSOCIATION DES ORGANISATIONS NATIONALES
D'ENTREPRISES DE PÊCHE DE L'UE

EP(14)6final

Brussels, 5 February 2013

Mrs. Maria DAMANAKI
Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
European Commission
1049 Brussels

Re: Postponement of EU-Norway consultations on fishing opportunities for 2014

Dear Commissioner Damanaki,

The most recent three-day round of mackerel negotiations held in Bergen (Norway) ended on 31 January 2014 with no agreement, lessening the chance of an imminent quota agreement between Norway, the European Union, the Faroes and Iceland.

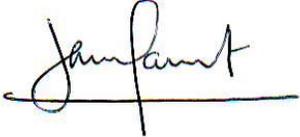
Europepeche acknowledges the significant efforts made by the Commission and the Coastal States in order to reach a balanced and fair deal between the Coastal States on the management of mackerel in the North East Atlantic. The talks, nevertheless, have been once again postponed. In a recent press release, the Commission considers that “there is a very small percentage share difference in the positions of the Parties, which should be possible to overcome”.

The significance of a fair and balanced deal on NE Atlantic mackerel is fully understood. However, the Commission will also be aware that **the postponement of bilateral consultations EU-Norway is of great concern for the EU ship-owners and fishermen who have not had access to fish in Norwegian waters since 31st December 2013**. In fact, in the short-term it will have a negative impact for the EU fishing industry, as some of the important fishing on key stocks in Norwegian waters takes place in the first 2 months of the year. It also **leads to a considerable increase in fishing pressure in EU waters** as the vessels are forced to fish elsewhere.

Therefore Europepeche urges the Commission to do its utmost to **reach a bilateral agreement with Norway without delay**, irrespective of the progress in the coastal states negotiations.

Last but not least, regardless of a formal agreement between the EU and Norway, the Commission must do whatever is necessary to ensure EU fishermen and fleets operating both north and south of 62°N access to fishing and quotas in Norwegian waters. Thus, a short-term solution could be found in an eventual **provisional arrangement with Norway** which would be of benefit for both parties.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Javier Garat', with a horizontal line underneath.

Javier Garat
President of Europepêche

Copy: Mrs. Evans, Correia, Messrs. Depypere, Du Rietz, Cesari, Berck, Friess