



ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS
OF FISHING ENTERPRISES IN THE EU

Europêche welcomes landmark arbitration ruling on EU-UK Sandeel case

Brussels, 12 May 2025

Europêche welcomes the final ruling of the Arbitration Tribunal established under the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) concerning the sandeel fishery, marking a significant step forward for fair and science-based fisheries governance. Europêche expresses strong support for the Tribunal's decision, which upholds the EU's interpretation on several pivotal issues and reaffirms fundamental principles guiding fisheries management under the TCA.

The Tribunal concluded that the approach taken by the UK with regard to sandeel fishing in English waters of the North Sea did not align with the principle of proportionality embedded in the TCA. This interpretation reinforces the importance of balanced and evidence-based conservation measures, as well as the need for consistent access arrangements for both parties under the agreement.

According to Kenn Skau, board member of Europêche: *'This ruling highlights the value of proportionate, science-led fisheries management, and underscores the importance of upholding international commitments. We now hope this will pave the way for EU fishers to regain access to UK waters and to continue sustainably harvesting the vital sandeel quota.'* He continued: *'The fishery is strictly managed in accordance with scientific advice from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), which is globally recognised for its robust and evidence-based stock assessments.'*

Europêche extend its sincere appreciation to the European Commission and Members of the European Parliament for its dedication and hard work in defending EU interests in this case.

Mr Skau concluded: *'This outcome underscores the value of international dispute resolution and cooperation. We now look forward to engaging constructively with the UK to restore access and ensure the effective, sustainable management of our shared marine resources.'*

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