



European Social Partners in the fisheries sector meet Commissioner Kadis to put fishers at the heart of the European fisheries agenda

- Press Release -

Brussels, 6 November 2025

Fishers took centre stage yesterday as Commissioner Costas Kadis met with the European Social Partners — ETF, Europêche, and Cogeca— to shape the future of Europe’s fisheries. The discussion focused on ensuring fair jobs, economic resilience and social sustainability in the sector, while addressing key EU policy priorities including the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2028–2034, the European Oceans Pact and Vision for Fisheries 2040, and the evaluation of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP).

The Social Partners stressed that a strong, dedicated fisheries fund — supporting fleet modernisation, decarbonisation, generational renewal, and enhanced safety, training, and working conditions — is the recipe for a thriving EU fisheries sector.

The Commissioner reiterated the European Commission’s commitment to sustainable, competitive and resilient fisheries, confirming that the ongoing evaluation of the CFP will be published in spring 2026, and that the upcoming Vision for Fisheries 2040 will place strong emphasis on the social dimension, safety, and skills of the workforce. He also recognised the role of the Social Dialogue Committee in ensuring that the human element of fisheries remains at the forefront of EU policymaking.

Looking ahead to fishing opportunities for 2026, the discussion focused on balancing resource conservation with the livelihoods of fishers. Social Partners warned that heavy quota cuts and area closures are threatening jobs, incomes, and the sector’s appeal to younger generations — particularly in the already strained Mediterranean. The Committee reiterated the need to integrate socio-economic considerations in setting fishing limits, while stressing that fishers need some fresh air from Brussels to stay in business.

The meeting also addressed the EU’s external fisheries policy, underlining the Commission’s ongoing efforts to ensure that European fleets operate on a level playing field globally. Social Partners stressed the importance of promoting decent work and labour standards beyond EU waters, recalling that the European Commission must refrain from promoting labour standards below C188 in any international fora.

Cor Blonk, Chair of the Committee, stated: *‘Today’s meeting reaffirmed the importance of constructive social dialogue between workers, employers and the European Commission. Our message is clear: to achieve sustainability, Europe needs viable and competitive fleets, decent jobs, and policies that reflect the realities of our sector. We*

also call for harmonised training and mobility across the EU through a dedicated Directive — so that fishers can work safely and confidently anywhere in Europe.’

Mr Juan Manuel Trujillo, ETF Fisheries Section Chair, declared ‘*We welcome the Commissioner’s commitment to keep the social dimension of fisheries at the centre of EU policy. However, the proposed changes to the MFF risk leaving our workers without the necessary support to make the sector safer, fairer, and more attractive for young people. Fishing is not a sector of the past – it must be part of Europe’s sustainable future.*’

The Committee welcomed the substantial work presented during the meeting by the STECF to develop both quantitative indicators and qualitative data—such as the National Fisheries Profiles¹—on the social dimension of the fisheries sector. This represents a significant first step towards ensuring that social impact assessments are systematically embedded and duly considered in all EU fisheries initiatives.

EU Social Partners look forward to continuing working closely with Commissioner Kadis and his team to ensure that the EU’s Vision for Fisheries 2040 delivers balance between people, planet and profit, the three pillars of sustainability.

¹ <https://shorturl.at/FsaEh>