



ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS
OF FISHING ENTERPRISES IN THE EU

Spanish and French scientists debate on tropical tuna fishery's future with purse seine fleets' representatives

Brussels, 23 January 2022

The Europêche Tuna Group¹ organised on January 19th in Brussels its first meeting between industry and science stakeholders at European Level entitled: *“The future of tropical tuna purse seine fishery: which challenges for science”*. The meeting gathered 25 persons in Brussels, and 8 more online.

Scientists from the French *Institut de recherche pour le développement (IRD)*, the *Instituto español de oceanografía (IEO)* as well as from the Spanish AZTI attended and explained their needs to cope with the growing challenges of applied science on fisheries, but also their concerns. Several of them deplored that models presented in RFMOs are more and more complex, preventing them to study deeper each proposal and topic. They also regretted that their growing obligations, among which publishing in peer review journals, left little time for RFMOs stocks assessments and other tasks.

Fishing representatives also got the chance to voice their wish for technical and scientific evolutions in fisheries science. Namely, strengthened data collection and reporting processes in purse seine fisheries, deeper integration of the data gathered by purse seiners in the stock evaluations, production of ex-post evaluations of management measures in international fisheries governance bodies (RFMOs) to verify if they fulfil their initial objectives and dedication of further research to data deficient fisheries in order to improve tropical tuna stock assessments and fisheries impacts studies.

Anne-France Mattlet, director of Europêche Tuna Group is enthusiastic about the joint effort to improve ocean governance: *“This meeting allowed scientists and the sector to meet at European level, which is especially important considering the lack of physical meetings during the COVID crisis. There were interesting debates and view exchanges which I trust will help matching the needs from both parties”*. It was decided to reconduct this forum next year.

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¹ The Europêche Tuna Group is comprised of the main three tuna freezer purse-seine organisations in Europe, namely OPAGAC-AGAC, ANABAC and ORTHONGEL