



Europepeche urges immediate emergency action as fuel price crisis forces fleet tie-ups

- For immediate release -

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Europepeche, the representative body for the European fishing industry, met today with Commissioner Kadis to address the escalating fuel price crisis, warning of an urgent and rapidly deteriorating situation across the EU fleet.

During the meeting, the sector highlighted that fuel prices have surged by more than 70% within days, peaking at around €1.3 per litre in many EU ports, compared to previous averages of around €0.5. Combined with rising logistical costs, including sharp increases in freight and disruptions to crew changes, operational expenses are now exceeding revenues for many fishing businesses.

‘This is no longer a risk — it is a reality,’ stated Javier Garat, President of Europepeche. *‘We are witnessing immediate fleet tie-ups, disruption of seafood supply chains and severe income losses for fishers and crews.’*

While recognising the efforts of a few Member States to quickly introduce emergency support measures, the sector emphasised that responses remain fragmented, insufficient and short-term, and in some cases even require EU authorisation. A coordinated EU-level response is therefore critical.

Key requests to the European Commission

The sector called on the Commission to urgently deploy a comprehensive package of emergency measures, including:

- **Activation of an EU Temporary Crisis Framework**, similar to the 2022 Ukraine response, to allow rapid and flexible state aid deployment.
- **Adaptation of state aid rules**, including setting aid ceilings per vessel rather than per company, with a proposed ceiling of €400,000 over a three-year period.
- **Mobilisation of European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) — reinforced by additional budget allocations** — to enable effective compensation for income losses linked to fuel price increases, with simplified and accelerated procedures.
- **Additional fisheries measures**, such as increased interannual quota flexibility and storage aid.
- **EU-coordinated fiscal and social measures**, including reductions in social security contributions and suspension of specific sector-related charges and/or taxes.

Call for immediate EU action

The fishing sector underscored the gravity and urgency of the situation, stressing that in line with EU Parliamentary calls, this crisis requires a response matching the speed and ambition of previous EU actions during the COVID-19 pandemic and the Ukraine crisis. *‘We need emergency tools now to keep vessels at sea, maintaining jobs and supplying seafood to our markets. For fishers, cost increases of this magnitude simply cannot be passed on to consumers’*, stressed Garat.

The sector recognised the Commission’s efforts to trigger support under the EMFAF¹, but emphasised that this must be accompanied by additional budget allocations, as well as greater flexibility for Member States to reallocate financial resources swiftly.

On the basis of the meeting, Europeche expects concrete measures to be put forward without delay, particularly in view of the upcoming AGRIFISH Council next week. In this context, the sector stressed the importance of the Commissioner taking a leading role with Member States in advancing the adoption of emergency measures, as well as ensuring swift coordination with other Commissioners to address constraints related to state aid rules, including through both horizontal and sector-specific solutions.

Finally, the sector expects DG MARE to urgently reassess and closely monitor the socio-economic situation of the fleet on a daily basis, in order to enable swift and responsive action.

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Press contact: Daniel Voces, Europeche Managing Director, daniel.voces@europeche.org +32 489 26 81 07

¹ In particular under Article 26.2 for exceptional events causing a significant disruption of markets.