



## **Europêche calls for meaningful inclusion of fisheries in EU's *Vision for Agriculture & Food***

**Brussels, 21 February 2025 - Europêche, the leading representative body for the fishing industry in Europe, welcomes the European Commission's efforts in presenting its *Vision for Agriculture and Food*, which aims to ensure a competitive, resilient and sustainable future for European farming and food production. However, Europêche strongly urges the Commission to recognize the vital role of fisheries in EU food autonomy by explicitly including the sector in the policy reforms proposed by the strategic roadmap. Europêche calls for an ambitious Action Plan for Blue Foods.**

As the EU aspires to strengthen food sovereignty, Europêche underscores that fisheries is a critical pillar of Europe's food production system. EU fisheries contributes to healthy diets, economic stability in coastal communities and reduced dependence on imported proteins. In this context, Europêche calls for the meaningful inclusion of fisheries in the *Vision for Agriculture and Food* and the announced legislative proposals therein to ensure a truly comprehensive strategy for a stable, resilient and self-sufficient food supply.

Daniel Voces, Managing Director of Europêche, stated: *'Fishers and farmers face the same challenges—securing food supply in an increasingly competitive and highly regulated environment. While we welcome the Commission's commitment to fair incomes, reduced bureaucracy and generational renewal for farmers, it is crucial to recognize that fisheries are just as essential to Europe's food security. Our fishers face similar struggles with rising operational costs, complex regulations and the urgent need to attract young generations into the profession. They deserve the same level of support and recognition as part of the food production chain.'*

Europêche calls on the European Commissioner for Agriculture and Food to expand its *Vision* to fully integrate fisheries. Simplification packages for farmers and food businesses should also extend to fisheries, ensuring a level playing field globally and reducing bureaucratic burdens. This effort must go beyond the Common Fisheries Policy review to encompass all relevant environmental and fisheries policies, such as the *Nature Restoration Law* and *Control Regulation*. Additionally, fisheries should be fully included in the *Generational Renewal Strategy* set for 2025, with dedicated financial incentives, innovation, and training—just as proposed for farmers—to attract and support the next generation of fishers.

### **Call for an EU Action Plan for Blue Foods**

Beyond inclusion in the Commission's *Vision*, Europêche is calling for the development of an **EU Action Plan for Blue Foods by 2026** to boost the supply and consumption of sustainable seafood. This plan should:

- ✔ **Promote nutritious, healthy, low-carbon blue foods** through sustainable fisheries and ocean-friendly innovations.
- ✔ **Be backed by dedicated EU funding** to enhance seafood production and market access.
- ✔ **Ensure the integration of blue foods** into key EU ocean and food strategies, making it a central pillar of both the *EU Oceans' Pact* and the *Vision for the Future of Agriculture and Food*.
- ✔ **Support public awareness campaigns** on the health, environmental, and socio-economic benefits of increasing seafood consumption.

Europêche also calls on Commissioner Hansen to include Europêche as a member of the '*High-Level Group on Agriculture and Food*', noting that no fishing organization has been accepted to join this expert group. *Mr Voces concluded: 'The future of food in Europe depends on a holistic approach that integrates both land-based and marine food production. Fishers deserve the same recognition and support as farmers in shaping a sustainable and competitive food sector for future generations.'*

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