



ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS
OF FISHING ENTERPRISES IN THE EU

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EU Court annuls EU Fisheries agreement with Morocco

- For immediate release -

Today, the Court of Justice of the European Union issued a ruling confirming the invalidity of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement (SFPA) between the EU and Morocco. This decision has significant implications for the future of EU fleet operations and investments in the region.

The EU-Morocco agreements have played a crucial role in ensuring the sustainable, science-based management of fish stocks. These fisheries have been vital in supplying millions of healthy, affordable meals daily to regions with the greatest need.

While Europêche respects the Court's decision, the sector is deeply disappointed that this ruling halts effectively managed fishing operations that meet EU sustainability standards in this key part of West African waters. Losing access to such essential fishing grounds is very worrisome for the sector, especially giving the shrinking fishing opportunities and diminishing fishing grounds accessible to the EU fleet.

According to Javier Garat, President of Europêche: *'The current EU-Morocco Fisheries Agreement has contributed to improve the sustainable management of fish resources in these rich fishing grounds and was crucial for the activity of up to 128 European vessels, 700 fishermen and 3.500 workers ashore. Now that the agreement is annulled, several scenarios must be contemplated, including fishing operations under direct authorisations. In any case, we are ready to urgently work with all parties involved so that business and fisheries cooperation between Morocco and the EU can continue in the future.'*

Europêche Vice-President, Tim Heddema responded to the ruling, stating: *'Our priority remains the responsible and sustainable provision of fish, ensuring healthy, affordable meals continue to reach global markets. The EU-Mauritania Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement will now be an even more important alternative for EU pelagic fishing, but only if it becomes commercially viable. For example, a rapid recovery of stocks overfished by non-EU fleets will be key to a return of more EU operators to Mauritanian waters. This requires appropriate action by the Mauritanian government. It is good news that first steps are taken on the basis of a new management plan.'*

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