

EP(14)19

Mr. Gabriel MATO ADROVER
Chairman of the
Committee on Fisheries
of the European Parliament
Rue Wiertz 60
1047 Brussels

Brussels, 6th March 2014

Re: Key points of concern on the Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and Council on the landing obligation COM/2013/889 final - 2013/0436 (COD)

Dear Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of the European fishing industry we would like to inform you, in your capacity as *rapporteur* of this dossier, about our opinion concerning the Commission's proposal on the landing obligation.

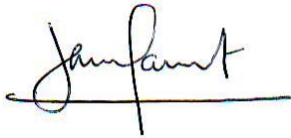
Further to our position paper (EP(14)11rev) attached to the present letter detailing the difficulties that the implementation of such a proposal will bring about, we would like to draw your attention to the **following priorities for the fishing industry** in order to make this new regulation feasible and workable in practice:

1. The proposal is intended to focus exclusively on removing immediate contradictions between existing EU fisheries regulations and the new provisions contained in the CFP while more detailed rules and practices are being developed. Further, the CFP has designed a completely new approach to fisheries management, based on a shift to a results-based focus with reduced micro-management. However, the Commission via the ordinary legislative procedure has proposed a new set of rules which will create further legal and interpretation issues without any prior input from the stakeholders. Europepeche strongly suggests **removing contradictions with CFP by way of deletion** instead of simply adding a further layer of rules.
2. Whenever deemed necessary to maintain some prescriptive **technical measures**, it should be regulated at a regional level in the coming years. This decentralised approach shall ensure an effective shift away from micro-management where Member States can work together with stakeholders determining the best technical measures for each sea area concerned. Therefore, the provisions referring to **mesh sizes and catch composition rules should be abolished** whilst **minimum conservation reference sizes (MCRS)** must be **re-evaluated** and set at a value as low as reasonably possible.
3. The fishing activity should remain a profitable activity once the new legal framework enters into force. The new **control measures** introduced by this proposal will be translated to considerable economic costs and bureaucratic red tape for the industry, as well as significant extra workload for fishers. The new control measures should not make the industry less efficient neither move unbearable costs from the control authorities to ship-owners. In this context, **remote electronic monitoring provisions should be removed** from the text as well as **lessening the obligation to record and store all catches below MCRS (Regulation EC 1224/2009)** which is unrealistic. Further, in order for the landing obligation to be pragmatic and flexible enough to make it workable, **de minimis rule** and the **survival rate system** shall be maintain fully operational for the use of the industry, particularly in mixed fisheries.

Notwithstanding, it is perhaps questionable whether changing regulations already in force for a temporary period will be advisable given that a subsequent legislative act will be necessary to change back the same regulations once the art. 15 of the EU Regulation will be fully operational in 2019. Therefore, **Europêche recommends focusing on the operational implementation of the landing obligation in 2015 for pelagic fisheries and leaving the rest of non-urgent legislation changes to a later stage.**

I trust that this position is well understood by all Members of the European Parliament during your discussion in the PECH Committee of 18 March 2014.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Javier Garat', written over a horizontal line.

Javier Garat
President

CC: Members of the Committee on Fisheries of the European Parliament