

# THE FUTURE COMMON FISHERIES POLICY (CFP)

The situation facing the European fisheries sector is very worrying, despite the significant fishery potential in this sector of the immense exclusive economic zone available to Member states (almost 24 M km<sup>2</sup> in total, o/w over a third for our country). In fact, annual production is constantly diminishing: we are therefore consuming more and more imported products, and the sector's trade deficit is constantly growing, whereas food self-sufficiency is one of the objectives of the CFP. At the same time, the number of fishermen is also falling, despite there being around 150,000 at a community level, generating almost 900,000 jobs in total.

**European fishing 6%**  
*(France just 1%)*  
**of catches worldwide**

**The EU imports 80%  
of the seafood it consumes**

*(the French trade deficit for the sector has doubled in  
30 years: €770 M today)*

The future CFP, as envisaged by the Commission, should focus on six major priorities: sustainability; the future of the (fishing and fish farming) sector and its jobs; meeting the needs and expectations of consumers; better governance via regionalisation; better targeted and more effective financing and finally the dissemination of the principles of the CFP

at an international level. There can be no doubt as to the relevance and balanced nature of such a platform. On the other hand, the specific measures envisaged and their respective weighting, based on the conviction that the excess fishing capacity of fleets is the essential cause of the problems being encountered, give rise to legitimate questions and concerns. In fact, its main provisions: achieving maximum sustainable yield (MSY) for all species by 2015, the total prohibition on discarding fish ("zero discards") or even the establishment of a system for transferable fishing concessions seem difficult to reconcile with the future survival of a fishing sector which is both socially, economically and ecologically sustainable, including in overseas regions. Nevertheless, other proposals such as the setting up of long term management plans, more regionalised governance methods and the development of fish farming are undoubtedly steps forward, even though their implementation methods are yet to be specified.

The ESEC considers that the future CFP should focus on three main priorities: developing knowledge of the state of fishing resources in order to better protect and manage them, improving the economic profitability of the sector and, finally, preserving jobs, improving working conditions and foreseeing the social consequences of any reform. Furthermore, special attention should be paid to the status of Outermost Regions as well as overseas countries and territories which are not part of the EU.

**The number of fisherman  
has halved  
in France over 30 years**

*(23,000, of which more than 40%  
for small scale coastal fishing)*



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# THE PROPOSALS OF THE ESEC

## 1. Developing knowledge of resources, protecting and managing them

- **Analysing** the status and evolution of stocks within the framework of an eco-systemic approach
  - Creating a European body for coordinating research structures
  - Mapping fishing resources and marine environments
  - Strengthening partnerships between scientists and professionals
- **Adapting** methods for attaining maximum sustainable yield (MSY)
  - Envisaging methodologies and schedules differentiated by species and by zone
  - Establishing ancillary measures during the transitional phase
- **Aiming** for « zero discard »
  - Prioritising the selectivity of techniques
  - Temporarily exploiting discards in the existing system
  - Encouraging fishermen and their professional associations to be more responsible
- **Encouraging** an eco-systemic approach
  - Developing Protected Marine Areas
  - Ensuring consistency between the different uses of coastal zones
- **Strengthening** controls
  - Guaranteeing the resources to carry out controls and improving coordination in the matter
  - Encouraging self inspection and certification measures
- **Making Europe** a model for the fight against IUU fishing
  - Keeping European observers in international fishing areas
  - Making the awarding of public support conditional on respect for regulations
  - Evaluating the impact of recreational fishing and, if necessary, better managing it

## 2. Improving the economic profitability of the sector

- **Organising** and managing the market
  - Prioritizing the « carry over » pricing system rather than the « withdrawal » pricing system for « community » areas
  - Encouraging the consumption of sustainable fishing products via a European label
- **Encouraging** socially and ecologically responsible investment
  - Supporting the modernisation of the fleet, by reviewing the tonnage criterion and the « *de minimis* » rule
- **Instituting** long term, administrative and regional management of quotas, involving professionals
  - Making fishing rights non marketable
  - Decentralising their management and fixing the priorities for their allocation
- **Developing** integrated and ecologically sustainable fish farming

## 3. Preserving jobs, improving working conditions and foreseeing the social consequences of the CFP

- **Harmonising** social regulations at a higher level
  - Ratifying and applying international conventions
- **Rejecting** the transferrable nature of fishing concessions
- **Improving** safety for mariners
- **Developing** training
- **Supporting** the necessary re-training

## 4. Promoting and making the best use of the exceptional potential of overseas territories (OD/RUP outermost regions (OR))

- **Strengthening** the representativeness of OR
- **Maintaining** the POSEI program
- **Developing** local fleets
- **Developing** Concerted Management and Operation Units (UEGC in French)
- **Supporting** regionalised international cooperation and taking OCTs into account
- **The special case of Mayotte**

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(in French) on  
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