

JOINT PRESS RELEASE

Europêche, ETF, EFFAT and Copa-Cogeca call for an urgent revision of the Common Fisheries Policy

The four organisations urge the European Commission to include concrete legislative action in its Vision for Fisheries and Aquaculture 2040 and its 2027 Work Programme.

Brussels, 16 October 2026 – Europêche, the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF), the European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions (EFFAT) and Copa-Cogeca are calling on the European Commission to commit to an urgent targeted revision of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). Their call comes ahead of the publication of the Commission's Vision for Fisheries and Aquaculture 2040, expected on 20 October.

The organisations warn that strategies and long-term ambitions will not secure the future of the sector without changes to the policy framework and adequate funding. The EU fleet is facing structural decline: employment fell by 31% between 2013 and 2023, while the number of active vessels is falling to the lowest level in history.

Livia Spera, Secretary General of ETF, said:

'The future of fisheries depends on people and coastal communities. As fleets shrink, jobs disappear and local economies suffer. We urgently need a CFP revision that gives priority to its long-neglected social dimension. Supporting fleet renewal, improving safety at sea, and modernising working conditions are essential to making fishing careers attractive again. If we want to secure and expand EU fishing jobs, we must provide the sector with a clear, long-term vision—and the European Commission has a responsibility to deliver.'

Javier Garat, President of Europêche, said:

'Without a revision of the CFP, the Vision for 2040 will fail to address the challenges facing the sector. For Europe's fishing fleets, failing to revise the policy would amount to a death sentence. It would also deepen social tensions. The large-scale demonstrations seen in recent years show the frustration that builds when food-producing sectors feel ignored and unsupported. That frustration is fuelling anti-EU sentiment. The Commission must take urgent legislative action to offer a future to the sector.'

Elli Tsiforou, Secretary General of Copa-Cogeca, said:

'Europe cannot strengthen its food security while overlooking fisheries, aquaculture and seafood. A competitive and sustainable primary sector needs the right conditions to invest, adapt and contribute to Europe's food production. This requires a clear policy direction and a CFP fit for purpose, capable of addressing the sector's current challenges and supporting its long-term sustainability and competitiveness.'

Enrico Somaglia, Secretary General of EFFAT, said:

“The sector requires a clear, robust legislative framework and a long-term vision that aligns economic, social, and environmental considerations, and strengthens European aquaculture production. The upcoming Vision and a fit-for-purpose CFP should prioritise improving working conditions, encouraging social dialogue, developing skills, ensuring fair competition and facilitating a just transition to a sustainable seafood supply system, so that the sector can fulfil its potential in sustaining and creating quality jobs and economic development in disadvantaged coastal areas.”

The organisations urge the Commission to set out a clear commitment to CFP revision in the Vision for 2040 and include it in its 2027 Work Programme, with a defined timeline. They call for reform that better balances environmental, economic and social sustainability, enables fleet renewal and investment, reduces administrative bottlenecks, eliminate obstacles to attractiveness of fisheries jobs and supports a competitive, resilient and sustainable European fisheries and seafood supply chain.

The EU seafood supply chain, the Council and the European Parliament have all called for action. The organisations say the Commission should respond with concrete proposals to address the challenges identified in its evaluation of the current CFP.

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