

To
Address

December 10 2021

Object : Letter from Business Organizations and Workers' Organisations of the sector to the Ministers of Fisheries of France, Italy and Spain

Madam Minister / Minister,

In view of the Council of Ministers of December 12th and 13th, the undersigned Organizations call on their respective governments not to support the European Commission's proposal for fishing opportunities in the western Mediterranean for 2022, in particular a reduction in the annual fishing days of the trawler sector, the main supplier of the three countries' fish markets, the establishment and reduction of an effort quota for longliners as well as the strengthening of various other technical measures and fishery restricted areas.

The obstinate application of the multiannual management plan on the western Mediterranean, which has already reduced trawler fishing activity by 17.5% over the past two years (actually exceeding 20%) accompanied by new technical measures, drives most businesses below their breakeven point. Faced with further reductions, the latter will only be able to stop and disembark the crews, with serious consequences on the entire chain and the supply chain.

The Mediterranean Fishing Sector has been applying, on its own initiative and for years, sustainability measures, always seeking the collaboration and support of the responsible Administrations and scientific teams, and expresses its desire to continue collaborating in a management that allows guarantee the sustainability of the resource and, also, of professional fishing and all related activities that depend on it. The undersigned organizations also recall the significant efforts made to apply the measures of the management plan (reduction of the fishing effort of trawlers, spatio-temporal closures). There are also encouraging first signs of the recovery of fish stocks. For example, the spatio-temporal closures implemented in the Gulf of Lion, coupled with an initial reduction in the fishing effort of trawlers by 10%, have proven their effectiveness with decrease in catches of juveniles up to 55% from hake achieved in 2020 compared to the average over the period 2015-2017, for an initial target of 20%. Positive results are also observed for spatio-temporal closures around the Italian coasts.

The undersigned organisations request the respective governments that the Mediterranean fisheries have the possibility of living by giving it more time (the multi annual plan for the Adriatic Sea has benefited from five additional years), by assessing the impacts of measures already implemented on resources but especially on the sector, and by supporting it through accompanying measures.

Please accept, Madam Minister/Minister, the expression of our highest consideration.

Signatory Professional & Workers Organizations:

France: CNPMEM, CRPMEM Occitanie,
CRPMEM PACA, CRPMEM Corse, OP DU
SUD, SATHOAN, OP du Levant

Italie: Agci AGRITAL, Federcoopesca,
Legacoop Agroalimentare, Federpesca, Coldiretti,
UNCI Agroalimentare, UE.COOP

Espagne: UNACOMAR, FACOPE, FNCP,
FNCCP, CESPECA, ASOPESCA,
COINCOPESCA, Federación Balear de
Cofradías de Pescadores, Federación Murciana de
Cofradías de Pescadores

Europe: ETF