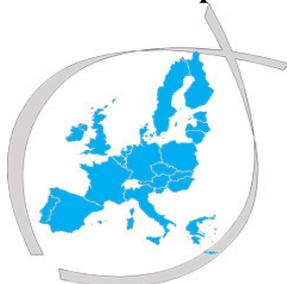


**European Association of Fish Producers Organisations**  
**Association Européenne des Organisations de Producteurs dans le secteur de la pêche**



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**PRESS RELEASE**

**FISHING INDUSTRIES GET TOGETHER UNDER THE EAPO UMBRELLA TO SOLVE  
PROBLEMS WITH HAKE**

Fishing industry representatives from France and Spain with an interest in the Atlantic hake production got together in Bilbao on Friday 15 April in a meeting chaired by the EAPO President Sean O'Donoghue. The agenda for this meeting covered a comprehensive analysis of the European hake market; a discussion on the causes of low first sale prices; a debate on joint sustainability objectives and on the means to reach these objectives.

Sean O'Donoghue commented: "The overall hake market in the EU is very large with in the region of 450,000 tonnes consumed annually however only about 20% is coming from EU production. Given the low Community production it is very difficult to understand why the price has significantly decreased over the last number of years particularly as the North Atlantic hake fisheries deliver a high quality product coming from a sustainably managed stock." He added: "This meeting with the two main Community producers (France and Spain) proved to be very worthwhile in identifying the main causes for such low prices and in putting forward concrete solutions. I am pleased that we achieved a common understanding of the problem and agreed on a set of joint future actions that will amongst other things highlight the high quality of the Northern hake fisheries coming from a sustainably managed fishery. Working together I am confident these actions will have a positive effect on the price paid to Community producers for Northern hake."

EAPO has planned a future meeting in June that will involve not only France and Spain but also other Community producers such as UK and Irish members of EAPO with an interest in North Atlantic hake fisheries. The focus of this meeting will be to agree the detail and the timetable for implementation of the set of collective actions identified at the Bilbao meeting. "The targeted outcome of this initiative is the consumer's awareness of our product", concluded one of the attendants. "The meeting clearly established that this outcome can be achieved through co-operation within EAPO."

**===== Ends =====**

The EAPO represents 30 Producers Organisations from 10 EU Member States, with approximately 10,000 vessels, 3.5 million tonnes of landings and a first sale value of € 3 billion.

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