



Zeebrugge, 27 June 2016

PRESS RELEASE: EAPO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

UNITY DESPITE UK REFERENDUM RESULT THE WEEK AFTER

The European Association of Fish Producers Organisations held its Annual General Meeting in Galicia - Spain, on 17 June hosted by the local members OPPC3 and OPPF4 and by ARVI, the local fishing vessel owners association. The UK referendum was not on the agenda and did not affect the spirit of cooperation amongst the POs from 10 EU member states.

With unanimity the EAPO Bureau was confirmed for a new two year term with Pim Visser from the Netherlands as President, Ivan Krarup Jensen from Denmark as Treasurer, José A. Suarez Llanos from Spain as Secretary and the executive head of the Belgian secretariat, Emiel Brouckaert. At the start of the meeting the President reported on the past eventful and busy year for EAPO. Subsequently the activities of the working groups – the back bone of EAPO – were presented. The landing obligation, fisheries/science partnerships, certification and multi-annual management plans were addressed in the Northern Pelagic, North & South Western Waters and North Sea Working Groups. The Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) is followed in its own Working Group and the chairman of the Markets Working Group focussed on the import rules for fishery and aquaculture products and EAPO's success to create a Markets Advisory Council under the Common Fishery Policy (CFP).

European Commissioner Karmenu Vella in a video message apologized for not being able to attend the meeting in person and addressed the importance of POs to assist in reaching the objectives of the CFP. This opened an indispensable part of the annual meeting providing the opportunity for EAPO members to discuss with representatives of the European Commission. The topics addressed during this discussion were around the POs' Production and Marketing Plans (PMP), new products and tools for improving the marketing, and the financing of these items. The ecosystem approach in the MSFD and the choke species problem coming with the landing obligation were issues that obviously could not be resolved at the EAPO General Assembly, but the debate between members and DG MARE representatives provided ideas for the further work EAPO will have to do around these themes.

After the meeting EAPO President Pim Visser said: *"Our Spanish members organised a fruitful period in Vigo, with our own General Assembly preceded by an International Conference on the Future of Fisheries on June 16th. Both meetings were very well attended by our members. I am grateful for the faith the membership expressed in my re-election at this General Assembly. Furthermore some important decisions were taken which gives me the confidence that EAPO will continue to positively contribute to resolving the issues that come with the implementation of the CFP."* Today he added: *"Like for all European organisations with an important UK membership, the Brexit will weigh on our working process. At our General Assembly which was shortly before the UK*

referendum, the unity of our entire membership in defending the interest of the fisheries we represent, was not affected. It is my intention to maintain this in our upcoming meetings at which the Brexit will have to be addressed”.

===== Ends =====

The EAPO represents 40 Producers Organisations from 10 EU Member States, with approximately 10,000 vessels of all sizes, 3.6 million tonnes of landings and a first sale value of around € 3 billion.

Contact :

Emiel Brouckaert (Secretary-General) – Tel: + 32 50 37 72 57 – e-mail : info@eapo.com

Mobile: +32 473 78 11 04