

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



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PRESS RELEASE

EAPO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

EAPO President: “*Throughout these challenging times, cooperation is key*”

The European Association of Fish Producers Organisations held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2020 late October. Due to the COVID-19-crisis and the ongoing travel restrictions for many European countries this occurred very late in the year and it was decided to hold it virtually. In his opening address President Pim Visser reported on the activities of the association in 2019-2020. One of the key topics at this year’s AGM was the future of EAPO. Whilst many British members decided not to retain their membership during the Brexit transition period, for some of them the 2020 AGM was actually their last meeting.

In light of the current COVID-19-crisis and the changing environment because of Brexit it was suggested and accepted to prolong the mandates of the members of the Bureau and the Executive Committee for one year. Consequently, Pim Visser maintains his position as President, Thomas Wenzel Kruse as Treasurer and Purificacion Fernandez as Secretary. The Belgian PO Rederscentrale will continue as EAPO secretariat with its Chief Executive Emiel Brouckaert retaining the role of EAPO’s Secretary-General.

The impact of Brexit and the Covid-19-crisis are some of the main challenges the European fisheries Producers Organisations (PO) will be faced with over the coming years. The many aspects of the work of POs have been discussed with the representatives of the European Commission, led by Mr. Francigos Nikolian (DG MARE, Head of Unit A4).

The chairs of the different EAPO Working Groups (Markets, Northern Pelagic, North Sea, North Western Waters and South Western Waters) reported on their activities over the past year. With new members joining, it was decided to also create a Baltic Sea Working Group.

After the meeting EAPO President Pim Visser stated: “*We as an organisation will have to make great efforts due to the many challenges ahead for the fishing sector. To tackle these in the most effective manner cooperation is key. Although the EU and the way fishermen work are changing, our seas remain the same. Therefore, we have to keep in mind that we are all working towards a common objective and this is to perpetuate a European sustainable fisheries and seafood sector in the interest of the fishers, their families and thriving fishing communities across the EU.*”.

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

The European Association of fish Producers Organisations (EAPO) represents 30 Producers Organisations (POs) from 9 EU Member States with approximately 10,000 vessels, 3.5 million tonnes of landings and € 3 billion first sale value.

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