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Mr. Bernhard Friess
Director Maritime Policy and Blue Economy
DG MARE European Commission
1049 BRUSSELS

EAPO20-12 / EP(20)24

Ostend / Brussels, 30 March 2020

Dear Mr. Friess,

Subject: *The impact of the COVID19-pandemic on the EU fishing industry*

The representatives of the EU fishing industry would like to draw your attention to the acute issues endured by the sector across the Union in relation to the COVID19 pandemic. The unprecedented crisis and health measures for containment have affected demand, market prices, free movement of workers and goods, port operations and disrupted the entire chain of production. This has led to severe socio-economic consequences for fisheries but also poses a threat for the supply of seafood, particularly fresh fish.

The fishing industry is committed to continue providing healthy sustainable food for EU citizens. For this to be possible, it requires urgent support and swift actions at the appropriate scale from public authorities. Therefore, we strongly encourage DG MARE to create a dedicated team who can fully concentrate on the design, implementation and monitoring of mitigating measures on COVID19 related issues.

Indeed, a broad range of policy areas need to be effectively coordinated among national, regional and European administrations to tackle the health crisis. A strong and fast response is crucial to match the emergency of the situation. This includes the need for an emergency package with retroactive effect, to the extent possible, helping those that continue fishing and supporting those who had to cease operations. Equally important is to find solutions to ensure

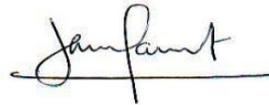
free movement of crews, promotion of fish consumption and implementation of socio-economic measures.

We thank you in advance for your efforts and remain available for further discussion and reflection on adequate solutions to overcome this crisis.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Pim Visser', with the name 'PIM VISSER' written in small capital letters below the signature.

Pim Visser
President of the European Association
of Fish Producers Organisations (EAPO)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Javier Garat', written in a cursive style.

Javier Garat
President of the Association of National
Organisations of Fishing Enterprises in the EU