



Oostende, 15 October 2018

PRESS RELEASE: EAPO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

PIM VISSER RE-ELECTED AS PRESIDENT FOR A CHALLENGING PERIOD FOR EUROPEAN FISHERIES PRODUCERS ORGANISATIONS

The European Association of Fish Producers Organisations held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Sopot, Poland. The Polish membership of EAPO hosted the event. After the opening of the meeting by President Pim Visser, the members were welcomed to his Gdansk constituency by MEP Jaroslaw Walesa, vice-chairman of the fisheries committee. In his opening address he focussed on brexit with the view that separate legal frameworks should not lead to ending the cooperation in the fisheries sector.

European Commissioner Karmenu Vella provided a video message to the EAPO membership in which he praised the POs for their role in achieving good results for the sector. In that respect he made reference to the POsqProduction and Marketing Plans and the presence of the POs in the Markets Advisory Council (MAC). Commissioner Vella also mentioned that the EU sustainability objectives are paying off, which leads to a very positive outlook for the future of European fisheries.

For each of the positions in the Bureau of the organisation there was one candidate for a bi-annual term. Pim Visser was accordingly unanimously nominated as President, Thomas Wenzel Kruse as Treasurer and José Antonio Suarez Llanos as Secretary. The Belgian PO Rederscentrale will continue as EAPO secretariat with its Chief Executive Emiel Brouckaert retaining the role of EAPO Secretary-General.

Before these nominations and the approval of the annual report, President Pim Visser gave an overview of the activities of the association. He reminded the members that the work of EAPO is about fishermen and their families and about supplying proteins for a growing population. Therefore there have been and there will be activities relating to sourcing and markets, with the key question of how to arrange this around the Common Fisheries Policy objectives (CFP) and around the brexit.

The different EAPO Working Groups (Markets, Northern Pelagic, North Sea, North Western Waters and South Western Waters) reported on their work on TAC and quotas 2019, the regional Multi-Annual Plans and the legislative process for the Technical Measures, European Maritime and Fisheries Fund II and Control regulations. The Markets Working Group in addition addressed the POsqProduction and Marketing Plans guidelines, the Autonomous Tariff Quota regulation and the potential review of the Marketing Standards regulations. On all these topics and on the POsqwork around the CFP and Common Market Organisation objectives there was an interesting discussion with Ms. Chiara Bacci representing the European Commission.

After the meeting re-elected EAPO President Pim Visser said: *First of all congratulations to our Polish members for the impeccable organisation of a successful General Assembly and the activities around it in both Sopot and Gdansk. I am grateful for the faith the EAPO membership expressed by re-electing me as their President. At our 5 October meeting, some important decisions were taken which gives me the confidence that EAPO will continue to positively contribute to taking on the many challenges for the European fisheries sector.*

The activities organised by the North Atlantic PO included visits to the local Coldstore and the European Solidarity Centre museum. The annual EAPO golf tournament tradition in the vicinity of the venue of the General Assembly was maintained. This year the EAPO challenge cup was won by Fridi Magnusen, the chairman of the Danish Pelagic PO.

===== Ends =====

The EAPO represents 39 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 Ö3 billion.

Contact :

**Emiel Brouckaert (Secretary-General) Æ Tel: + 32 59 43 20 05 Æ e-mail : info@eapo.com
Mobile: +32 473 78 11 04**