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PRESS RELEASE

Vision 2040: EAPO welcomes the diagnosis but regrets the absence of a CFP revision and of concrete measures to unlock investment

Without a legislative timetable and matching funding, the Commission's Vision risks leaving fishers with the same rules and the same uncertainty.

The European Association of Fish Producers Organisations (EAPO) regrets that the Commission's Vision 2040 for fisheries and aquaculture does not commit to a revision of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). The Communication acknowledges that reduced fishing pressure has not translated into consistent stock rebuilding, that returns on investment remain low and that the fleet is ageing. It nevertheless limits its response to better implementation of the existing framework and "targeted initiatives", without a timeline for a legislative proposal. This falls short of the ambitious and rapid reform requested by the European Parliament and by the sector.

Where the Vision falls short. The Commission recognises that the landing obligation has not delivered the expected results, yet offers a stakeholder dialogue rather than a proposal. The energy transition roadmap relies largely on surveys, networks and annual events in its first phase. Meanwhile, it defers to a process starting in 2027 the question of how fishing capacity is measured, which today restricts fleet modernisation, and it leaves access to finance largely unchanged. On funding, the Vision refers to the proposed EUR 2 billion reserved allocation, a level that EAPO members consider far too low compared with the current EMFAF envelope. On maritime space, it promotes multi-use and the expansion of marine protected areas without concrete safeguards for traditional fishing grounds. It does not take up the EU Blue Foods Action Plan requested by EAPO and EUSEA. A fleet whose average age is close to 40 years cannot modernise on announcements.

What EAPO welcomes. EAPO acknowledges several useful elements: the recognition of the landing obligation's shortcomings, the continued work on multiannual TACs, sustainability requirements in the Autonomous Tariff Quota regime, digital traceability for EU products and imports, the intention to link the management of shared stocks to market access, support for producer organisations and the Ocean Act announced for early 2027. These elements now need deadlines and resources.

"The Commission has the evaluation, the Parliament's mandate and the sector's proposals on the table," said EAPO President Jean-Marie Robert. "A diagnosis without legislative follow-up leaves our fishers with the same constraints. We urge the Commission to commit to a targeted revision of the CFP with a clear timetable, and to back it with a budget that matches its ambitions."



European Association of Fish Producers Organisations

Vision 2040 for Fisheries and Aquaculture

EAPO remains committed to constructive cooperation with the Commission, the European Parliament and Member States, including in the landing obligation dialogue, the Ocean Act preparations and the implementation dialogues announced in the Vision. EAPO will also continue to work with its members and other sector organisations towards a revision that serves fishers and coastal communities.

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