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Europeche strengthens its work to supporting the European fishing industry

- **Appointment of new Managing Director signals fresh drive to communicate the modern face of the sector to the public and policy-makers.**

-For immediate release-

Europêche, the foremost trade body representing the fishing industry in Europe, is strengthening its office and activities in Brussels to champion the sector and ensure its vital contribution to the economy, social fabric and food supply chain is fully recognised by EU policy-makers.

With 14 member organisations across ten countries, Europêche plays a leading role in ensuring the views and concerns of both large and small-scale fishermen are heard in the European Commission, Council and Parliament when setting policy and regulations. It is focused on supporting the so-called ‘three pillars of sustainability’ – environmental, social and economic.

As part of the organisation’s reinvigorated approach, Europêche has appointed Daniel Voces de Onaíndi, former Policy Adviser for 5 years in the same organisation, as Managing Director and Rosalie Tukker as Fisheries Policy Officer Assistant.

Mr Voces declared: “*The European fishing industry provides a vital source of food, employment, trade, economic welfare, cultural heritage and recreation. With tens of thousands of fishermen and their families relying on the industry for work, millions relying on it for food and Governments across the continent relying on it to contribute to their economies, the fishing industry has a greater impact than most people realise. This is all done whilst we also take a pro-active role in ensuring fishing activities are carried out in an environmentally friendly and socially responsible way. We want a sustainable fishery and a sustainable sector.*”

Mr Voces continued: “*Nobody can deny that fishing is an extremely regulated and complex industry conditioned by a variety of factors such as market, nature, science and politics. The fishermen we represent have made huge efforts in recent years, not only to comply with and adapt to the new ambitious objectives set in the Common Fisheries Policy, but also to act proactively to safeguard stock levels and their own livelihood in the years to come. However, the sector is struggling to make itself heard among the multitude of heavily-funded environmental lobby groups in Brussels. Nevertheless, I believe we are all ultimately striving towards the same outcome: to secure sustainable fisheries for future generations. What is important is that legislation is rational and proportionate, based on proven science, best practices and provides for the long-term sustainability of the sector.*”

Europêche has renewed its drive to illustrate how sustainable and responsible commercial fishing can be. European fishermen operate within strictly defined quotas and days at sea, which are set in line with Maximum Sustainable Yield levels advised by scientists. Such a policy has allowed the majority of European fish stocks to experience a significant recovery in recent years. Indeed, two-thirds of the fish stocks will be already exploited at the maximum levels of sustainability in the Atlantic and North Sea for 2018.

Javier Garat, President of Europêche, said: “*Europêche is here to support the excellent work done by our fishermen in this indispensable industry. Our fishermen deserve appreciation and recognition for the work they do in often challenging conditions to provide food for so many people, whilst also helping towards creating and maintaining a sustainable marine environment. We must not forget that our fishermen bring almost 5 million tonnes of seafood to our plates each year; in other words, 40 million of healthy meals a day or 14 billion meals a year.*”

Ends

Europêche represents the fisheries sector in Europe. Currently, the Association comprises 14 national organisations of fishing enterprises from the following 10 EU Member States: DE, DK, ES, FR, IT, MT, NL, LV, PL, UK.

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