Press release | 27.02.2013

EU fisheries policy reform

Fisheries ministers try to gut plans for more sustainable CFP

EU governments agreed on their collective position regarding proposals to overhaul the EU's Common Fisheries Policy last night. The Greens hit out at the agreement, which would seriously scale back planned reforms aimed at making the EU's fisheries policy more sustainable. Commenting on the outcome, Green fisheries spokesperson **Isabella Lövin** (MEP, Sweden) said:

"EU fisheries ministers have tried to gut plans for a more sustainable fisheries policy at their late night council meeting. Just weeks after a historic European Parliament vote to put the CFP on a more sustainable footing (1), EU governments have agreed a depressingly unambitious position, after bowing to pressure from countries like France and Spain. MEPs must now fight to uphold their vote for a meaningful CFP reform to ensure this unique opportunity is not missed.

"A proposed ban on the senseless, wasteful practise of fish discards would be rendered effectively meaningless by the loopholes proposed by fisheries ministers. The ministers not only agreed to allow up to 7% of the catch to be discarded, they also agreed to delay the proposals and limit the ban to specific species. MEPs must now fight to ensure this outdated approach to discards is not maintained.

"Ministers have previously proposed to weaken core proposals to require sustainable levels of fishing from 2015 on, through management plans.. This would prolong the flawed functioning of the CFP, as a tool promoting subsidised overfishing. This is not in the interest of Europe's fishermen and certainly not in the interests of our seas. With many fish stocks teetering on the brink, we cannot afford a fudged or delayed reform. The European Parliament must not yield in its negotiations with governments on finalising this legislation in the upcoming months."

(1) The European Parliament voted to fundamentally reform the Common Fisheries Policy at its plenary session in February. See Green press release: http://www.greens-efa.eu/eu-fisheries-policy-reform-9136.html

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