Press release | 12.09.2012

Fisheries reform

EP votes for more transparent fish labels to promote more sustainable fish consumption

The European Parliament today voted on the first of a set of legislative proposals reforming the EU's Common Fisheries Policy (1). The Greens welcomed support for proposals to amend the draft legislation on market organisation to make labelling more transparent. Commenting after the vote, Greens/EFA fisheries spokesperson **Isabella Lövin** (MEP, Sweden) said:

"Consumers are set to get clearer information on the fish they buy after MEPs supported Green proposals to include information on specific fish stock, area of catch and how the fish was caught on labels. This is a step forward from the current situation under which labels only indicate a huge area that may contain many fish stocks. Information on how a fish was caught (e.g. by damaging bottom trawling or by line) is crucial for consumers to determine whether the fish they buy is sustainable. The EP also supported the inclusion of information on the flag state of the fishing vessel, so that consumers can see the country of origin of the fish they buy. Providing clear information to consumers on the fish they buy is essential for encouraging more sustainable consumption habits.

"MEPs unfortunately failed to support Green proposals to change the current provisions of the legislation, which foresee subsidies for storing/freezing fish when prices are too low. The Greens believe these outdated subsidies should be phased out. If the market price is too low, fishing boats should stay in port. The best place to store fish is alive in the sea."

(1) The Stevenson report on common organisation of the markets in fisheries and aquaculture products - an EU legislative file.

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