Common Fisheries Policy CFP: reform action programme and roadmap

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PURPOSE : to present the Communication from the European Commission on the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (Roadmap). CONTENT : the CFP has reached a turning-point. The challenges are urgent and serious. The current poor sustainability performance of the CFP proves that many of the instruments applied over the last twenty years have reached their limits. In this state of crisis there is a need for major change. Reform of the objectives, principles, priorities and instruments of the CFP is more than ever necessary to deliver sustainable development and to ensure that the European fishing industry has a secure future. In order for the CFP to function effectively, it is essential that good governance principles are embodied into the Policy. The new CFP must therefore aim at ensuring: - openness and transparency, in particular by improving the quality and transparency of the scientific advice and data on the basis of which policy decisions are taken; - participation, through greater and broader stakeholder involvement from conception to implementation of policy, including at local and regional level; - accountability, through a clearer definition of responsibilities at European, national and local level; - effectiveness, through decision-making processes whose results are properly evaluated, controlled and complied with and - coherence with other Community policies, in particular environment and development policies, through a cross-sectoral approach. The Commission proposes to do away with the annual ritual of setting fishing quotas at too high levels. In future, TACs would be fixed within a multi-annual management plan, on the basis of the most recent scientific advice to ensure that enough fish stay in the sea to replenish the stocks. The Commission intends to tackle excess fleet capacity by ending public aid for introducing new fishing vessels. More EU money would be available to help fishermen to find alternative work and for the restructuring of the sector. The Commission also advocates uniform and tougher sanctions across the EU. Controls would be reinforced by setting up a Joint EU Inspection Structure. To bring the CFP closer to fishermen, the industry, NGOs, regions and other stakeholders, the Commission is proposing the creation of Regional Advisory Councils. To achieve sustainable fisheries beyond EU waters on the basis of stronger international co-operation, the reform package includes an action plan against illegal fishing and a strategy for EU fisheries development partnerships with third countries. The present Communication now presents the first package of reform proposals. These are: - Council Regulation on the conservation and sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources under the CFP, establishing the framework within which conservation measures, measures to adjust fishing capacity and control and enforcement measures may be taken under the CFP. The Regulation should enter into force by 1 January 2003. - Council Regulation establishing an emergency Community measure for the scrapping of fishing vessels over the period 2003-2006. The Regulation should enter into force by 1 January 2003. - Council Regulation amending Council Regulation (EC) No2792/1999 laying down the detailed rules and arrangements regarding Community structural assistance to the fisheries sector. The Regulation should enter into force by 1 January 2003. - Action Plan to integrate environmental protection requirements into the Common Fisheries Policy. - Action Plan for the eradication of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU). The Commission will also come forward with the following legislative proposals and other actions for Reform as follows: - Action Plan to counter the social, economic and regional consequences of the restructuring of the EU fishing industry. It will be presented in the second half of 2002. - Report on economic management of fisheries within the Union. The Commission will present its report to the other European Institutions in 2003. - Action Plan for the improvement of scientific advice for fisheries management. The Action plan will be presented in the second half of 2002. - Action Plan on discards. The Action Plan will be presented in the second half of 2002. - Action Plan for fisheries management in the Mediterranean. The Action Plan will be presented in the second half of 2002. - Code of Conduct for responsible fisheries in Europe. ACFA will be invited to develop such a Code by the end of 2002. - Integrated Framework for fisheries partnerships at national and regional level. The Framework will be presented in the second half of 2002. - Action Plan to improve stock evaluation in non-Community waters.

The Action Plan will be presented before the end of 2002. - Action Plan for co-operation in enforcement. The Action Plan will be presented in the second half of 2002. - Communication on a Joint Inspection Structure. The Communication will be presented before the end of 2002. The Joint Inspection Structure should be in place by mid-2004. - Strategy for the development of European Aquaculture. The strategy will be presented in the second half of 2002. - Communication on transparency, performance and compliance: The Communication will be presented in the second half of 2002.