



EAPO
H. Baelskaai 20
8400 Oostende - Belgium
Tel: +32 59 43 20 05
e-mail: info@eapo.com
website: www.eapo.com

EUROPECHE
Rue Montoyer 24
1000 Brussels – Belgium
Tel: +32 2 230 26 80
e-mail: europêche@europêche.org
website: www.europêche.org

EP(20)23 / EAPO20-11

COMMISSIONER
Virginijus Sinkevičius
European Commission
Rue de la Loi / Wetstraat 200
1049 Brussels
Belgium

Brussels, 26 March 2020

Re.: Meeting request on COVID-19 disruption of fishing and market activities

Dear Commissioner Sinkevičius,

The European fishing sector is experiencing an unprecedented crisis due to the escalating protective measures taken by EU governments to avoid the spread of the coronavirus infection “COVID-19”. In some EU countries the socio-economic effects are extremely severe due to an already strongly reduced market demand, plummeting prices, port, trade, logistic, protective material and crew mobility restrictions, that taken together is ultimately leading to the cessation of fishing activities in many parts of the EU. Annexed is a first sketchy impression of the problems that the EU fishing fleets are confronted with.

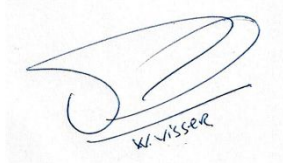
As already voiced by the entire fishing industry in our letter of last week, all efforts should be focused, where possible, on the continuation of the fishing activities to secure seafood supply as well as on providing financial assistance to those fleets forced to stop operations due to the problems above-described.

Europepêche and EAPO called on the EU authorities to adopt urgent and extraordinary (legislative and executive) measures to overcome the operational, commercial and health problems that the sector has only begun to endure. Among the solutions proposed we asked for:

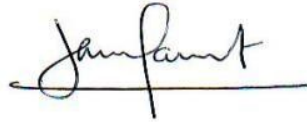
- Higher (25%) year-to-year quota flexibility and higher intervention prices for unsold fish;
- Guarantee the logistical needs of crews, ships and auction halls;
- Modify the fisheries fund regulation to provide financial aid for those fishing companies that are forced to cease their operations;
- Introduce measures such as VAT reduction, suspension of social security contributions and tax exemptions.

In order for us to get first-hand information on the legislative and executive actions that the European Commission intends to propose in the short term, we would be most grateful if you could accept an e-meeting as a matter of urgency with our members. We thank you in advance for your consideration and efforts to help the EU fishing industry to overcome this social and economic turmoil.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. Visser', with the name 'P. VISSER' printed in small letters below it.

Pim Visser
President of the European Association
of Fish Producers Organisations (EAPO)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Javier Garat', with a horizontal line underneath.

Javier Garat
President of the Association of National
Organisations of Fishing Enterprises in the EU