



### **Damning Picture Of EU Fishing Policy**

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**Brussels, Belgium:** Welcoming the Green Paper on the Common Fisheries Policy published today by the European Commission, WWF, the conservation organization, said it painted a damning picture of the European Common Fisheries Policy.

Julie Cator, WWF's European Fisheries Coordinator said "The Green Paper identifies the problems facing fish stocks and our marine environment but it does not go far enough in proposing concrete reforms."

"The Green Paper acknowledges that the existing policy has led to overfishing, that there are too many boats chasing too few fish, that substantial public subsidies fuel overfishing and that the EU's fisheries agreements with third countries disadvantage developing countries. It also puts forward useful options for future reform."

Proposals for a revised CFP are expected by the end of 2001, and a reformed Policy has to be in place by the end of 2002. "One can only hope that the member states show more courage and decisiveness in tackling the problems facing the fishing industry than they have in reforming agriculture" said Julie Cator. "This is the start of a long and hard debate. There is a long way to go before a reformed fisheries policies is in place."

"EU leaders should base their decisions on the long-term health of marine ecosystems not on narrow, short-term economic interests. Member states must remember that the future of fishing communities depends on the survival and sustainable management of natural resources."

WWF calculated in 1999 that EU fishing subsidies were worth an average of 14,000 euro per boat per year. It recently highlighted action taken by Mauritania, Guinea Bissau and Senegal to protect one of the world's richest marine environments from overfishing by EU and other fishing fleets.

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