



ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS
OF FISHING ENTERPRISES IN THE EU

Europêche appoints new tuna group director

-Press release-

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Europêche, the leading trade body representing the fishing industry in Europe, strengthens its team to boost the organisation's support for sustainable tuna fishing and to promote the voice of the sector in wider EU and international decision making. Newly founded Europêche's tuna group will advocate the interests of the EU and associated tuna freezer purse-seine fleet to enhance business competitiveness, improve the image of the sector, contribute to sustainable ocean governance, support the fight against IUU and labour abuse, and achieve an international level playing field.

The Europêche Tuna Group is comprised of the main two tuna freezer purse-seine organisations in Europe, namely OPAGAC-AGAC and ORTHONGEL. Mrs Anne-France Mattlet has been appointed as its director. She will be in charge of Europêche's tuna strategy comprised of several pillars: tuna legislation and policy, governance, trade and market, scientific work and the promotion responsible image of EU purse-seine operations. More specifically, she will focus on initiatives such as the revision of the EU fisheries control system, the margin of tolerance and the autonomous tariff quotas for tuna loins.

With over 5 years of experience working on international ocean governance and tuna-related policies within the French administration, Mrs Mattlet has developed an in-depth understanding of fisheries policies decision-making process. She declared: *"The EU purse-seine tuna fleet provides a vital source of food, employment, trade and economic welfare not only in Europe but also worldwide, including in developing countries. Operating across the oceans, our vessels comply with the highest standards of sustainability including working conditions, health, safety and hygiene. On top of that, our fleet has voluntarily adopted measures and invested in technology, at their own expense, to ensure optimal data collection. For instance, our vessels have 100% scientific observer coverage onboard and uses only non-entangling devices"*.

Mrs Mattlet is worried that unworkable rules that do not take into account the technical and climatic specificities of tropical tuna fisheries in the EU control system, such as the margin of tolerance, are and would keep penalising the tuna sector. She concluded: *"On the market side, we are convinced that EU should only grant privileged access to non-EU tuna products if they do respect the same social and environmental standards than the EU ones. At present, low standard fish products unfairly compete with our own production in our own market. It is therefore paramount to address policy gaps and ensure an international level playing field, to protect our standards but also to ensure developing countries achieve the same ones, especially through the sustainable fisheries partnership agreements concluded with non-EU countries. We want a sustainable fishery as much as a thriving European tuna fishing sector"*.

Javier Garat, President of Europêche, declared: *“We are delighted to have Mrs Mattlet in Europêche’s team and warmly welcome her aboard. Her experience and expertise on tuna fisheries affairs will undoubtedly be a valuable asset to our companies in the international arena. I’m sure she will take a pro-active role in advocating fishing activities that are carried out in an environmentally friendly and socially responsible way”.*

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