



Brussels, 25 June 2021

## **EU fishermen call consumers to boycott seafood products from Norway**

***The UK departure from the EU has profoundly altered the fisheries governance and political scenario in the Northeast Atlantic. In a move to take advantage of the new situation, Norway seems to have abandoned the path of dialogue and good cooperation, unilaterally deciding to unlawfully grab EU fish quota. This action not only poses a serious threat over the future of a constructive partnership with the EU but also over the sustainability of important fish stocks such as mackerel and cod. Since 60% of the fish caught by the Norwegians ends up in the European market, EU fishermen urge citizens to stop consuming Norwegian seafood.***

According to the Europêche, the Norwegian government, in an opportunistic manner, is misusing the Brexit aftermath to unlawfully appropriate long-held EU fishing quota, first of cod and now of mackerel. Such a reckless and irresponsible behavior has spurred other countries, such as Faroe, to follow the same steps and unilaterally increase their quota share of mackerel.

Europêche argues that this attitude shows not only flagrant disdain for international law but also a blatant disrespect for the EU as a partner and an ally. Furthermore, considering the mackerel situation, **the unilateral quota increases will certainly endanger the sustainability of the stock** in the next couple of years.

Daniel Voces, managing director of Europêche, declared: *“This unacceptable and disloyal behavior shows no respect for the agreed and well-established EU fishing rights in the Atlantic. This also sets a dangerous precedent of an important EU partner, such as Norway, unilaterally moving away from agreements for short term economic gain. Unless a strong signal is sent from the EU to these countries, nothing will stop them from grabbing more and more EU quota of these and other fish species. **EU citizens must realise that the legality and sustainability of the fish coming from this country are now put into question.** EU fishermen call consumers, retailers and food suppliers to halt seafood purchases for the survivability of the EU fishing industry and fish stocks”.*

In addition, the sector reiterates the call to EU institutions to close the single market to these products and remove trade preferences granted to Norwegian fishery products, especially for cod and mackerel. Europêche argues that this would not only be a strong retaliation measure but an important trade aspect to protect EU companies. According to the fishing industry, there is plenty of EU-produced mackerel quota so no shortage in raw material occurs and therefore there is absolutely no need for extra supply to the European market.

Mr Voces concluded: *“It would be completely scandalous and outrageous to continue granting preferential market access to seafood products originating from a country that has illegally appropriated EU-quota and, on top of that, put at risk the sustainability of an entire fish species”.*

ENDS

Press contacts:

Rosalie Tukker, Policy Advisor of Européche: +32 2 230 48 48 [rosalie.tukker@europeche.org](mailto:rosalie.tukker@europeche.org)