



Mrs Maria Damanaki
Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
Maria.damanaki@ec.europa.eu

Dear Commissioner Damanaki,

Re: Social Clause to be inserted in the Sustainable Fisheries Agreements between the EU and third countries

As you are aware, ETF, Europêche and COGECA, EU-level social partners in the sea fisheries sector, have been working already for a long time on the social aspects related to the fishing agreements between the EU and third countries.

In 2001 they have adopted a social clause which is now included in the protocols to the existing agreements with the aim to guarantee basic decent working and living conditions for the locally-engaged fishermen who work on-board EU vessels fishing through the agreements.

Over the last years social partners have engaged in negotiations to review the text of the social clause, with a view to improve it. We are pleased to send you herewith the new text of the social clause, resulting from such negotiations.

Social partners would ask the Commission to replace the existing text with the new one, and to integrate it in the protocols that are to be signed in the future.

Prior to this, however, we would like to ask to the European Commission to make a thorough legal assessment of the new text.

We draw your attention to the fact that the principles expressed in the clause should be applied taking into account the limitation of the EU competencies in certain of the fields touched upon in the clause, in respect of the Member States' laws on which the Union has no competence and of the Flag State's duties.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Michel Claes'.

Michel Claes
Chair-SSDC for Sea Fisheries

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Ment van der Zwan'.

Ment van der Zwan
Vice-Chair-SSDC for Sea Fisheries

Cc: Laszlo Andor, European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion