



PFA INVITES GREENPEACE TO COLLABORATE ON ENSURING SUSTAINABILITY OF PELAGIC FISHERIES

Press release

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As the Fisheries Bill moves through Parliament, the Pelagic Freezer-trawler Association (PFA) has, today, published an open letter calling for a collaboration with Greenpeace UK, urging the organisation to engage in a dialogue on sustainable pelagic fishing operations in UK waters. This call follows the publication of an inaccurate and misleading report by the campaign group on fishing in Marine Protected Areas earlier this month.

Greenpeace's report contains a number of false statements and inaccuracies about the operations of pelagic freezer-trawlers across Europe, all of whom are fishing legally, sustainably and within allowed quotas.

The report also contradicts a **Memorandum of Understanding** the PFA and its member companies signed with Greenpeace in the Netherlands in August 2016, lasting for ten years. The MoU recognises the leading role the PFA and its members take in ensuring sustainable fisheries; both in the collection of scientific data and scientific research on (pelagic) resources; improving selectivity and avoiding bycatch; and in contributing to effective fisheries management in all regions where PFA members have a pelagic fishing operation. The shared objective of this agreement is to collaborate on the improvement of sustainable fisheries management of pelagic resources.

Greenpeace UK's recent campaign calls for a ban on "supertrawlers" larger than 100 meters entering UK Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), even though pelagic fishing has no impact on seabed habitats, which is what almost all MPAs in UK waters are designated to protect. This call for a ban and the objective of the campaign is not based on any scientific advice or logic.

Gerard van Balsfoort, President of the PFA, commented: "We are surprised and disappointed that Greenpeace UK's current campaign goes entirely against the intention and ambitions as set out in our MoU. The misuse of images of our vessels to mobilise public opinion on a campaign that is based on fiction and half-truths which arbitrarily targets pelagic, non-UK flagged, vessels larger than 100



meters, leaves aside the many other pelagic vessels under UK flag that fish with the same nets, for the same species, in the same areas.

“Moreover, the PFA and its members take a leading role in sustainable fisheries, catching fish for human consumption and directly contributing to the food security in markets much in need of healthy and affordable animal protein.

“We are urging Greenpeace UK to enter into a dialogue with us in the interests of healthy oceans and sustainable fisheries, but also because we need the contribution of pelagic fisheries to keep guaranteeing global food security. If we can commit to working together, we are confident solutions will be easier to find.

Pelagic trawlers use highly sophisticated sonar and other technologies to target large, dense schools of the same fish. This results in a catch that is clean, with hardly any bycatch of unwanted species. Members of the PFA also use the latest generation of pingers (acoustic deterrent devices) as precautionary measure in their fisheries to avoid potential bycatch of cetaceans in the areas west of Scotland and Ireland and in the Channel and Biscay areas.

Pelagic freezer-trawlers do tend to be longer than 100m as they catch pelagic fish and immediately after catching freeze the fish on board, whole-frozen. About 10% of the vessel is related to fishing/catching, 20% for processing/freezing and 50% for storing the frozen fish (the rest is for the bridge, engine room and crew facilities). The size of these vessels also enables them to reach hard to reach waters that smaller vessels cannot access safely.

The PFA’s open letter to Greenpeace UK can be found [here](#).

The MoU between the PFA and Greenpeace NL can be found [here](#).

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