
PRESS RELEASE

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Mediterranean and Canary Island Fishers demand fishing quota justice

Representatives of Mediterranean and Canary Island fishing grounds will not rest until they achieve a just share of Bluefin tuna quota and other species

08 October 2016, Tarragona – The Association in Defence of Mediterranean Artisanal Fisheries (ADPAM), the Regional Federation of Canary Island Fishing Cofradías, the Gaia Oceans Association, the Tarragona Fishing Cofradía and the Low Impact Fishers of Europe (LIFE) met in Tarragona this weekend to agree on the next steps of their campaign, to follow up on the Castellón meeting that took place in May. They affirmed that they will now focus on getting their voices heard in Madrid, to call for the grave injustices of recent years to be ended once and for all.

Participants congratulated ICCAT and its contracting parties for their efforts to adopt measures for the recuperation and control of tuna resources. They therefore **advocate precaution, and for all necessary management and control measures to be taken to consolidate the recovery, and to assure the sustainability of the tuna fishery over the long term.**

They call on the Spanish government to apply Article 17 of the CFP's Basic Regulation ((EU) No 1380/2013) and Article 8 of the recent Regulation on a Multiannual Plan for the Recovery of Bluefin Tuna ((EU) 2016/1627), both in the spirit and the letter of the law. This means that they must promote responsible, sustainable and socially beneficial fishing, and ensure a just and balanced allocation of quota between all the fleets and regions that exploit or could exploit the resource.

However, they criticize and call for a derogation to Article 9 (point 3) of the latter regulation on Bluefin tuna recovery to be applied, considering that it annuls the aforementioned Articles 17 and 8, given that the hand line fleet had already been deprived of its historic Bluefin tuna rights prior to the dates referred to in the text.

In particular, small scale low impact fishers insist that the **Mediterranean “artes menores” (passive gear) fleet be provided with access to Bluefin tuna resources, finally assuring the assignment of a dedicated quota that allows them to fish this resource actively,** separate from the “fondo de maniobra” (reserve pool), **with hand lines.** This quota should be preferentially assigned specifically **to the coastal small scale low impact fleets of the Mediterranean and Eastern Atlantic by ICCAT.**

At the same time small scale low impact fishers **reject Individual Transferable Quotas** as a model for allocating fishing rights, whether in the Mediterranean or elsewhere. Fisheries represent a global heritage and a public asset, whose commodification is neither just or sustainable. They therefore consider that the transfer to other fleet segments of fishing opportunities allocated through this quota dedicated for small scale and low impact fishing should not be permitted.

The fishers welcome the declarations made by some regional autonomous governments that support these demands and encourage the Spanish Government to defend them in the next Council of Ministers meeting taking place in Brussels this week and at the ICCAT meeting in November.