



Conclusions of the 8th ARVI International Conference on the Future of Fisheries: "European fishing on the Level Playing Field".

- Fairness and equality in the rules of engagement of fishing, the Level Playing Field, will be achieved by strengthening the level of International Governance, which ensures that these common rules are established and followed.
- To this end, it is necessary to strengthen the "common framework", which constitutes international law, as a tool for consolidating fairness in the rules of engagement.
- The Level Playing Field (LPF) must be a framework for the International Treaties; ratify and apply them, and establish a control and sanction regime in the countries involved in the process, which will allow progress to be made towards achieving it.
- Lack of competitive equality:
 - It is the main distortion of international competition.
 - Jeopardises the fisheries sustainability in its three pillars:
 - Economic
 - Social
 - Environmental
- The Spanish administration confirms its full support for this competitive fairness.
- The European Union is a reference, a leader in the establishment of rules in the field of fisheries; it must therefore lead the work to achieve this competitive fair play in international decision-making frameworks, but it must also moderate the impact that its self-limitations have on the European sector.
- The renewal of the fleet is an essential pillar for the future of the Spanish fisheries.:
 - The Level Playing Field in shipbuilding, both within and outside the EU, is strategic for the fairness of the renewal and the future of the Spanish fishing fleet
 - The new Spanish regulation on this matter, which is currently undergoing public consultation, should make it possible to:
 - Improve in the energy efficiency of the fishing fleet.
 - Improve the habitability and safety of ships for their crew members.
 - Reverse the lack of generational replacement and guarantee the future of fishing.

- EU fisheries are "over-regulated"; the problem is that the European consumer does not know this. Can labelling contribute in any way to highlight this, to build their purchasing decision?
- Fish is one of the central pillars of the Atlantic Diet and both its "carbon footprint" and its "water footprint" confirm it as essential to feed the world's population with the least possible environmental impact; official labelling is already being developed in several countries to inform consumers of both footprints.
- Fish provides 20 times more protein than fruit and vegetables, and its low water and CO₂ footprint make it essential to the future of the global food supply; consumers need to know this.
- The labels, ecolabels and certifications:
 - They communicate traceability and sustainability; in short, the compliance with EU legal standards.
 - They provide useful information to consumers so that they can support equality for fisheries in their purchasing process.
 - They enhance perceptions, preferences and extrinsic attributes, and thus contribute to enhancing the value of the products that accompany them.
- Socio-economic and corporate social responsibility aspects are an immediate challenge for fisheries labels and seals, and can contribute to fairness in the rules of the fisheries game.
- Greenwashing and the growing number of eco-labels are of concern. Processes to move towards official EU-wide seals would therefore be very positive.
- Similar to the existing ECO-EU label standards for almost all consumer goods on the EU market, which allowed for a simplification of the many pre-existing labels, an equivalent process should be developed for fishery products.
- Tools such as blockchain are important and can enhance full chain information to the consumer, but this area needs to be worked on and advanced in the medium term.

In short, the international regulatory framework must advance, through the international bodies responsible in each case, in an exercise of homogenisation and equality that will lead to fairness in the rules of engagement in the fisheries sector from a global perspective.

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