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DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

Fisheries Policy Mediterranean and Black Sea  
CFP and Structural Support, Policy Development and Coordination

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Mr. Pim Visser  
President of the European Association  
of Fish Producers Organisations (EAPO)

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the EU  
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**Subject: Your call for a Farm to Fork Strategy update**

*Your ref.: EAPO20-22 / EP35(20)*

Dear Mr. Visser and Mr. Garat,

I would like to thank you for your letter dated 15 May 2020 on the Farm to Fork Strategy. This strategy aims at making of European food the global standard for sustainability; the fisheries industry is key to the achievement of this ambitious goal. In this regard, I strongly welcome EAPO's and Europaêche's contribution to the roadmap of the Strategy and your overall interest on this initiative.

As far as your remarks are concerned, let me clarify the following:

- the Farm to Fork strategy was adopted on 20 May 2020<sup>1</sup>, a few weeks later than previously announced, so that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the food system could be appropriately taken into account. This additional time has allowed the Commission to draw lessons from the crisis and better reflect on the need to build a more resilient and sustainable food system. This shared concern is well reflected in the published Strategy, where the Commission announces a contingency plan for ensuring food supply and food security. In this regard, the Commission expects to assess the resilience of the food system and develop a contingency plan for ensuring food supply

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<sup>1</sup> COM(2020) 381 final, *A Farm to Fork Strategy for a fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly food system*, 20 May 2020, available at [https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/actions-being-taken-eu/farm-fork\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal/actions-being-taken-eu/farm-fork_en).

and food security to be put in place in times of crisis. In addition to risk assessment and management measures to be activated during such a period, the plan will set up a food crisis response mechanism coordinated by the Commission and involving Member States and will count on the involvement of various sectors, such as fisheries, transport, and other, according to the nature of the crisis.

- the Farm to Fork strategy sets the vision for sustainable food systems in Europe. The initiatives thereby announced, including those relevant for fisheries and aquaculture, will be brought forward through dedicated sectoral initiatives which will include their own consultation processes. We invite you to take part in the relevant consultation exercises of these initiatives.
- the Dialogue on Sustainable Food Systems organized by DG MARE on 16 April 2020, and which counted with the participation of DG SANTE and DG AGRI, was an information session conceived to provide the Advisory Councils with information on the Farm to Fork Strategy. The meeting was prepared under extraordinary circumstances, namely the COVID-19 crisis and related confinement measures. This scenario forced our services to make use of a virtual platform for the meeting, which presented limitations in terms of maximum number of participants.

To conclude, I would like to highlight that the Commission sees the success of the Farm to Fork Strategy as very much linked to the engagement of all stakeholders in the food value chain. In this regard, I would like to reassure you that we have taken due note of your remarks and of your interest to be further involved in future discussions on Farm to Fork related initiatives, and we look forward to continue collaborating with you in this regard.

Yours sincerely,

Elisa Roller  
Head of Unit