

COPA-COGECA also represents the interests of Europe's fishermen and fish farmers

Through its fisheries section, COGECA represents the interests of fishing cooperatives in Europe. Depending on the fishing country in question, there are various forms of maritime enterprises in areas as diverse as victualling, fish trading, producer organisations, ship management, i.e. the acquisition and inner workings of a co-owned fishing vessel, and so on.

The most strongly represented countries for this type of specific activity are Italy, France and Spain, but also Ireland, the Netherlands, Germany and even Malta, to name but a few examples.

Through its fisheries section, COPA-COGECA represent the interests of European fishermen, or to be more specific, breeders of freshwater fish (lakes, ponds or basins), seawater fish, molluscs and crustaceans in several EU countries.

The basic regulation that constitutes the CFP (Common Fisheries Policy), which covers conservation, management and use of living aquatic resources, aquaculture, as well as the processing and marketing of fishing and aquaculture products states in one article that the CFP is underpinned by a certain number of principles of good governance, such as "broad involvement of stakeholders at all stages of the policy from conception to implementation".

COPA and COGECA rank among these stakeholders at European level, flanked by other European representative organisations from different maritime sectors such as, for example, private armament as represented by Europêche, an organisation with which COGECA holds close ties, processing and trade, represented by AIPCE-CEP, that of salaried fishermen from fishing enterprises represented by ETF, or even aquaculture businesses (FEAP and EMPA) with which COPA-COGECA also works very closely.

These various organisations (and other sectors involved in the CFP) are represented on the Advisory Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture (ACFA), the only formal consultation body for stakeholders in the fisheries sector and European aquaculture. Established in 1971, radically restructured in 1999 and amended in 2004, this Committee, which belongs to DG FISH at the Commission, meets in various guises more than 15 times a year.

Furthermore, it must be noted that COGECA also sits on the Committee for Social Problems in the Maritime Fisheries Sector, as part of the work carried out by the DG for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. This Committee chiefly aims to present its opinions to the Commission on social policy initiatives and to encourage and develop social dialogue in the fisheries sector. COGECA is recognised as working alongside Europêche (within the category of employers in the fisheries sector) and ETF (within the category of workers in the fisheries sector).

For further information, please contact:

Mr Guy VERNAEVE, Senior Policy Advisor, tel.: +32 2 230 48 48,
e-mail: guy.vernaeve@copa-cogeca.eu or guy.vernaeve@europeche.org