



NGOs welcome commitment by Intermarché's fleet

Paris, 31 January 2014

Following the controversial outcome of the 10th December European Parliament vote on the phase out of deep-sea bottom trawling, the Intermarché fleet, Scapêche, has "reached out" to NGOs to discuss the group's deep-sea fishing practices in the northeast Atlantic.

Yesterday morning, after several weeks of discussions, Scapêche, BLOOM, a member of the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition (a coalition of over 70 NGOs) and WWF France reached a compromise agreement: **the Intermarché fleet will stop deep-sea bottom trawling below 800 meters by early 2015**. In 2013 the European Parliament had debated a ban on deep-sea bottom trawling below 600 meters.

Furthermore, Intermarché's fleet has offered to begin a long-term collaboration and to share catch and vessel positioning data (electronic log books and VMS satellite data).

BLOOM welcomes the decision of Intermarché's fleet. ***"The commitment of Scapêche proves that they heard the request from citizens to stop destructive fishing practices in the deep"*** noted Claire Nouvian, founder of BLOOM. *« 800 meters is still too deep compared to the vulnerability of species and marine ecosystems at these depths, but it is a real effort on the part of Scapêche which is certainly headed in the right direction. We hope that the dialogue we have reestablished will allow us to work together towards more ambitious goals in the next few years. »*

The European Council of Fisheries Ministers, which for a year and a half blocked any discussion on the deep-sea fishing regulation, finally opened the negotiations on the regulation last week. ***"The fact that the leading French fishing fleet can commit to stopping deep-sea bottom trawling below 800 meters depth without compromising their activity should reassure politicians, who were particularly concerned about the preservation of jobs, and allow France to defend an ambitious position in favor of marine biodiversity protection"*** commented Claire Nouvian.

« We expect EU Member States involved in the Council negotiations to recognize this as a clear signal that a strong new deep-sea fisheries regulation is possible and achievable, including a phase-out of bottom trawling in the deep sea. » said Matthew Gianni, political and policy advisor to the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition.

The 28 EU Member States have until February 14th 2014 to provide their official position on the new deep-sea regulation. It was agreed at the French Environmental Conference in September 2013 that the **French position would be co-produced with stakeholders**. NGOs are ready to continue the dialogue.

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About BLOOM www.bloomassociation.org



BLOOM is a nonprofit organization founded in 2005 working for marine conservation and protection of sustainable fisheries through an approach of public awareness and scientific mediation of environmental issues, the production of independent studies, as well as the participation in public consultations and institutional processes. Its actions are aiming at the general public as well as policy makers and economic actors.

About the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition www.savethehighseas.org

The DSCC was founded in 2004, to address the issue of bottom trawling on the high seas in the absence of an effective governance regime. The coalition is made up of over 70 non-governmental organisations (NGOs), fishers organisations and law and policy institutes. All are committed to protecting the cold-water corals and vulnerable deep-sea ecosystems.

BLOOM's petition to French President François Hollande, which has collected over 800,000 signatures:

<http://petition.bloomassociation.org/stop-the-destruction-of-deep-sea/>

To see the **comic trip that started the French buzz on deep-sea fisheries** :

<http://www.penelope-jolicoeur.com/2013/11/take-5-minutes-and-sign-this.html>