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PRESS

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Fishermen's Federation seeks Concrete ACTION at Friday's meeting with Ministers

The Federation of Irish Fishermen is seeking immediate action and commitments on key issues at the meeting to be held between FIF and Ministers Smith and Killeen on Friday next. The meeting is being held in response to the current crisis in the fishing industry and in preparation for the forthcoming meeting of the EU Council of Fisheries Ministers on June 23d.

The following are National issues previously raised with Ministers which the FIF will be expecting full commitment on in Friday's meeting.

- Temporary Tie up Aid as identified in the Commission Statement;
- Honouring commitment to provision of €58 million for over 18metre fishing vessel decommissioning scheme including extension of the current eligibility rules;
- Roll out of a decommissioning scheme for Under 18 metre fishing vessels as previously approved by Government.
- Commitment to Introduction of Administrative Sanctions with full FIF participation, as previously committed to by current Tánaiste Mary Coughlan TD in her role as Fisheries Minister, as a method of dealing with minor fishery offences.

- Marketing initiatives in order to increase fish prices to the primary producer, in particular measures to enable the consumer recognise the origin of all fish products.
- An undertaking from Government that control and enforcement is conducted in a manner proportional to each countries catch in Irish waters

The FIF will be vigorously pursuing a strategy with the Ministers at Friday's meeting to have the following issues dealt with at Council meeting on June 23rd.

- To insist on a level playing field in control and enforcement across all Member States incorporating harmonisation of penalties and use of Administrative Sanctions
- An immediate ban on IUU (Illegal Unregulated, Unreported) fishery products entering the EU.
- Full Enforcement of existing Marketing, Labelling and Health and Hygiene regulations for all fishery products imported to the EU.
- Introduction of measures to avoid unnecessary dumping of marketable fish due to Quota restrictions on primary species.
- Funding of joint industry/science partnerships in order to provide for more informed decision making in relation to quotas.
- Immediate review of 2008 TAC and Quota decisions as applies to certain species.

FIF Chairman Mr Michael Walsh stated that; 'FIF as a body that represents Irish fishermen fully understands the deep frustration, anger and desperation of fishermen at the current situation in the industry, and fully acknowledges the efforts of fishermen and the Ministers for the goodwill expressed this morning in trying to resolve this extremely difficult situation'.

Friday's meeting will be attended by Ministers Smith and Killeen, and an FIF delegation comprising fishermen nominated from their respective Producer Organisations and the CEOs of the four constituent bodies.

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Note to Editors:

The Federation of Irish Fishermen (FIF) was established in 2007 and is the umbrella organisation for the four main Irish Fish Producer Organisations (FPOs) namely, The Irish South and East Fish Producers Organisation Ltd (IS&EFPO), The Irish Fish Producers Organisation Ltd (IFPO), The Irish South and West Fish Producers Organisation. Ltd., (IS&WFPO)

*The Killybegs Fishermen's Organisation Ltd (KFO)
Presently, the FIF represents over 90% of the Irish fishing fleet over 12m and is run by a Board of 8 directors.*

The position of Chairman is rotated between the CEOs of the four FPOs and Michael Walsh, CEO Irish South and East Fish Producers Organisation currently holds the Chair.

The FIF's key aim is to provide a unified voice for the Irish Fishing Industry and to provide an active input into all policy making decisions both nationally and internationally.