



ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS
OF FISHING ENTERPRISES IN THE EU

Europêche welcomes EU–UK fisheries agreement as a positive step for both sides

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Europêche welcomes the agreement reached today between the European Union and the United Kingdom, which includes extension of fishing access to each other's waters until 2038. The deal, set to be formalised in London by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer, represents a constructive step toward stabilising post-Brexit fisheries relations and supporting long-term cooperation. While the final text and specific access conditions are still pending, the agreement signals a shared intent to promote predictability, mutual benefit and closer collaboration in the management of shared marine resources.

The agreement, which replaces the current arrangements due to expire in June 2026, will provide much-needed certainty for European fishing communities that depend on access to British waters. In exchange, the EU and UK have agreed on measures to ease trade frictions, including streamlined sanitary and phytosanitary rules and checks, benefiting both exporters and consumers.

The fisheries provisions are part of a broader EU–UK package to deepen cooperation in energy and defence, signalling a renewed long-term partnership. Europeche recalls that the 2020 Trade and Cooperation Agreement, though politically necessary, placed a heavy burden on the EU fishing sector—cutting 25% of the value of landings from UK waters and leading to EU fleet decommissioning and lost livelihoods in several Member States.

Europêche commends the European Commission, Member States and the European Parliament for their leadership and commitment in ensuring that this agreement was reached well in advance of the 2026 deadline. Their coordinated efforts have sent a strong signal of unity and dedication to the long-term viability of the European fishing sector.

“This is a forward-looking agreement that ensures long-term sustainability and mutual benefit,” said Daniel Voces, Managing Director of Europêche. “The extension of fishing access until 2038 provides vital stability for our fleet and coastal communities, while the reduction in trade barriers supports both EU market access and food affordability in the UK. This is a clear example of what pragmatic and constructive cooperation can achieve.”

Europêche emphasises that continued collaboration and predictability are essential for sustainable fisheries management and for ensuring that seafood remains a competitive, safe and accessible food source for both European and British consumers. Europêche hopes the new agreement leading to full reciprocal access will open a new chapter in EU–UK fisheries relations, enabling both parties to work towards renewed access to sandeel fisheries and fostering a constructive management of our mutual access to territorial waters. As the President of the European Council, Mr António Costa, rightly said: *“The UK and the EU are looking forward, not looking back.”*

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