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WWF European Policy Office
168 avenue de Tervurenlaan Box 20
1150 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: +32 2 743 88 00
wwf.eu

Media Release

Embargoed until 00:01 GMT – 16 October 2012

€2.1bn EXTRA INCOME PER YEAR FOR FISHERIES IF EU VOTES FOR FISH STOCK RECOVERY

Brussels, Belgium - Enabling fish stocks to return to healthy and sustainable levels will result in an increase in landings, profit and income for the fisheries sector and fishermen, according to a new independent study - **Socio-Economic Benefits of a Bold EU Fisheries Reform** - launched today.

The research carried out by Framian BV and commissioned by WWF, is the first to examine the potential social and economic benefits of the fisheries sector from a purely EU perspective, providing strong arguments for an ambitious reform of Europe's fisheries, which is presently up for review.

If politicians vote for a strong EU fisheries reform with proper implementation that will allow fish stocks to recover, just 10 years from now in 2022, we could start seeing huge benefits (compared to continuing past trends):

- EU fishermen could land an **additional 2.8 million tons** of sustainably caught fish - an increase of around 80%
- The fisheries sector could generate an **extra income of €2.1 billion per year** - around 80% more
- Across the EU, **income per fisherman could be up to 50% higher** on average than it is today

"EU fisheries have the potential to be highly productive. A long-term stable supply of fish is possible, but only if fish resources are managed sustainably. Now is the time to put the much needed policy and financial structures in place and put a stop to bankrupting our oceans," says Tony Long, Director at WWF's European Policy Office.

In 2012 we have seen some positive signs on stocks and even profits, but these reflect substantial efforts in certain fisheries and remain an exception rather than the rule, when looked at across European Waters.

Over the past 15 years, EU fisheries have been in continuous decline. Landings and employment have been falling at a steady rate of 4% per year and fishermen's incomes have stagnated. The discussion paper draws some stark conclusions for the future if the status quo continues. With no strong fisheries reform, by 2022:



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- EU fishermen could land 1.4 million tons of fish less compared to 2009 - about 30% less
- EU fishing fleets could decrease by as much as 20%
- 50,000 fishermen will have lost their jobs across the EU – that's a 30% drop in employment, compared to 2009

"EU fisheries have been close to the edge of bankruptcy. Fisheries Ministers and the European Parliament need to heed the call of thousands of consumers and businesses across Europe who want to see a prosperous future for fish stocks, our fishing industry and our oceans. Our politicians have the opportunity and the power to secure profit for industry and income for fishermen - so they must ensure a progressive reform of the Common Fisheries Policy," concludes Tony Long.

WWF is orchestrating a massive online lobby of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) who sit on the Fisheries Committee and play a key role in deciding the future of our fisheries end of November. After decades of poor management by Fisheries Ministers they have a chance, for the first time ever, to ensure progressive reform of the Common Fisheries Policy and secure a prosperous future for fish stocks and in turn the fishing sector.

WWF is calling for a Common Fisheries Policy that:

- ensures fish populations are above levels which can support maximum sustainable yield (BMSY) by 2015;
- establishes multi-annual plans by 2015 and fishery-based co-management groups involving all stakeholders;
- enhances cooperation at regional level on sustainable management of fish stocks;
- stops the wasteful practice of discarding unwanted fish while bringing unwanted catches close to zero by 2018 at the latest; and
- limits subsidy payments to sustainable fishing practices.

On 28 November the European Parliament's Fisheries Committee will decide and vote on the future of our oceans. Send a message to MEPs and tell them to 'Stop Bankrupting our Oceans': www.wwf.eu/stopbankrupting (direct link to WWF's e-action)

For further information please contact:

Tony Long, Director, WWF European Policy Office, tlong@wwf.eu , +32 2 743 88 05 or +32 497 293 656

Alexandra Bennett, Communications Director, WWF European Policy Office, abennett@wwf.eu
+32 2 740 09 25, +32 477 393 400

About WWF

WWF is one of the world's largest and most respected independent conservation organizations, with over 5 million supporters and a global network active in over 100 countries. WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of the earth's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by conserving the world's biological diversity, ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable, and promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption.

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