

# EFTP AT A GLANCE

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### PREFACE

Fishing and aquaculture are important economic activities in the European Union. While the fishing sector's contribution to the gross national product (GNP) of Member States is generally less than 1%, its impact is highly significant as a source of employment. Statistics provided by EUROSTAT (2008) shows that more than 400 000 people are employed in the fisheries sector. The number of people employed in this sector is not limited to the number of fishermen at sea. The entire sector is concerned, including processing, marketing, distribution and aquaculture. This observation is relevant not just to understand the importance of employment but as a premise to have in mind to understand the real dimension of the fishing sector in Europe.

When assessing the European fishing sector, another characteristic to have in mind, is the relevance of these activities in the European coastal rural context, where other employment opportunities are scarce. This has made some specific areas importantly depending from fisheries sector, there are examples about this, not just in Spain where Galicia is a specially remarkable case, but also in France (Bretagne, Poitou-Charente, Basse-Normandie), UK (N-E Scotland), Estonia and Latvia, Poland (Pomorskie), Portugal (Algarve) and several NUTS-2 regions in Greece.

However, the total production in the European Union fisheries sector have declined from the previous year, as it has for the past 20 years. Over the last decade, awareness of the serious threat facing fish stocks not only in European waters, but throughout the world, has grown. Sustainable fisheries are now firmly at the top of the international fisheries agenda – including in the EU<sup>1</sup>. The management of fleet capacity of EU fishing countries has been one of the policy instruments used to face the problem of overexploited stocks. During the last 15 years, fleet capacity has decreased in terms of tonnage, power and number of vessels despite of EU enlargement in 2004. Nowadays the total number of vessels is 82.527 (data for 2008, source EUROSTAT), more than 15% less than the number of vessels was for EU15, ten years ago.

### INTEREST OF A EUROPEAN FISHERIES TECHNOLOGY PLATFORM

The sustainability of fisheries is the major objective of the CPF, and the EFTP, in compliance with this goal, should be an important instrument to contribute to that through involving the major stakeholders in defining, prioritizing and implementing RTD activities as the most efficient pathway to achieve such goal.

The European fishing industry has put high on its agenda the need to find new paths for improving its economic performance, sustainability and competitiveness. For this, the sector must be reorganised and

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<sup>1</sup> Brochure 'The Common Fisheries policy. A User's Guide' (EC 2009).

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fisheries have to be considered a crucial element of the EU's RTDI strategy. The European Fisheries Technology Platform (EFTP) aims to play a key role in this process.

*The European Fisheries Technology Platform is considered an essential tool to promote the transition from an obsolete and traditional sector to another more competitive, sustainable and modern one. The fishing industry in a wide sense must be a fundamental part of this initiative, not just giving its opinion but leading the process.*

The overall strategy of the **EFTP** is aiming to identify the **key challenges up to year 2025 for fisheries and fishing technology, and to formulate and implement the RTDI Strategic Agenda** for meeting such challenges. Thus, to achieve a consensus on future research directions and to mobilise a critical mass of public and private technical, human and financial resources, are critical to achieve the goals of the overall strategy.

The European Fisheries Technology Platform will bring together European private and public stakeholders in order to create an enduring basis for structuring initiatives, for co-ordinating and bundling efforts, for setting up sustainable structures, and so to define and realise a European Research Agenda on Fisheries as a means to ensure a sustainable and competitive future for the European Fishing Industry.

## WHO IS EXPECTED TO BECOME PART OF THE PLATFORM?

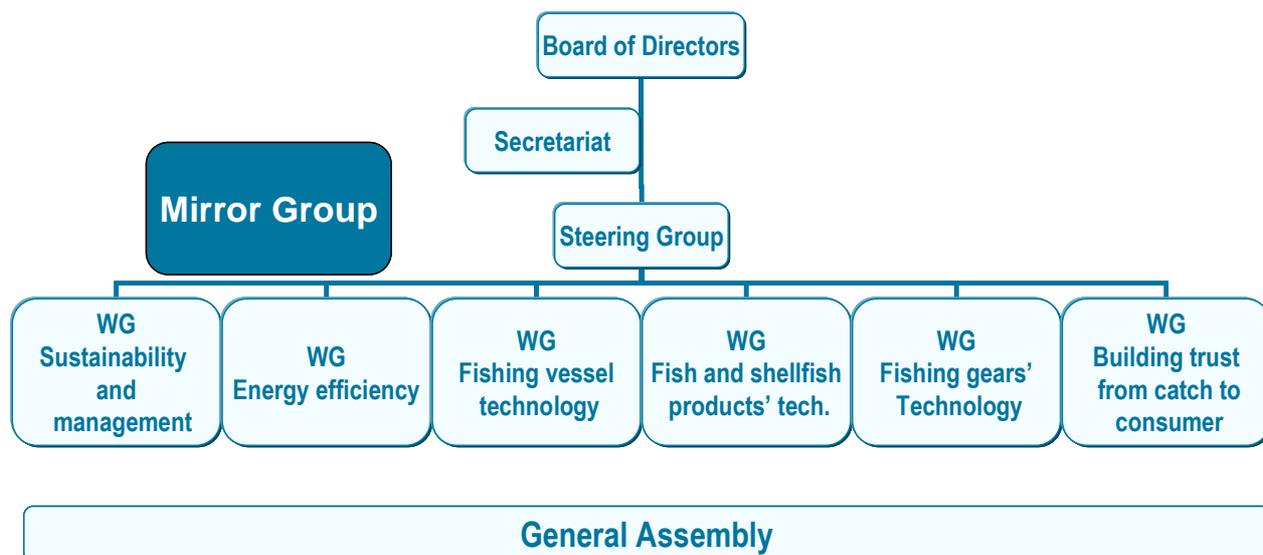
The EFTP is opened to integrate the whole value chain around the fishing activities in Europe. It intends to include the entire spectrum of fisheries; processors gear suppliers and associated industries. In addition to ensure that appropriate support is available to develop a robust platform the following groups will also be engaged:

- Fisheries, processing and seafood research centres
- Industrial stakeholders linked to the priorities of **EFTP**: suppliers and customers
- Universities through a European network
- Representatives of EU Member States
- Representatives of the trade unions

The organization of the Platform will be flexible, reactive and open to allow integration of appropriate partners as the process evolves.

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## HOW WILL IT ORGANISE?



WG means Working Group

## HOW TO KNOW MORE AND JOIN THE INITIATIVE?

Through [www.eftp.eu](http://www.eftp.eu) you can get more information and follow any relevant news about the platform.

You can also find the official form to submit your expression of interest at:

<http://www.eftp.eu/participate.htm>

The EFTP Secretariats will help you in case of any doubt:

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