

EU fish talks end with endorsement of overfishing

Brussels, 15 December 2010 - EU fisheries ministers have agreed on the amount of catches per fish stock that each EU country can take in the North Sea and wider Atlantic in 2011. This includes agreement on the total allowable catch for cod and the rubber-stamping of an agreement on catch levels for Atlantic bluefin tuna in the Mediterranean and North Atlantic. Both stocks are depleted and, in the case of bluefin tuna, the species is in danger of extinction.

Greenpeace EU oceans policy director Saskia Richartz said: *"Certain red lines set out by the Commission were kept, but a large number of quotas are still too high, especially for cod and tuna. It's obvious that the EU is unable to manage its fisheries under current rules. Reckless overfishing must be brought under control and fisheries policy reformed to allow fish stocks to recover. Ministers must agree to reduce the size and destructiveness of the fishing fleet and designate marine reserves."*

As ministers began their meeting in Brussels on Monday, Greenpeace activists drew attention to the problem of overfishing by symbolically decommissioning a giant replica of a destructive fishing trawler outside the EU Council building.