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A BIG APPETITE FOR SUSTAINABLE FISH 78% of Europeans* want reform of EU's Fisheries Policy

Brussels, Belgium – An overwhelming majority of EU citizens want the fish they buy to come from sources that are sustainable and not overfished, according to an independent poll commissioned by WWF and carried out in 14 EU countries. Yet, most citizens feel they do not have adequate information on whether the fish on sale comes from such sources. Not surprisingly a large majority support a reform of Europe's Common Fisheries Policy to ensure the sustainability of fish products in future.

With 88% of respondents believing it is important that fish products on sale within the European Union come from non-overfished stocks, WWF believes a clear signal is being given to the European Union that ambitious reform of the failing Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) is urgently needed. The poll comes as the European Commission is about to hand over its reform proposal to the European Parliament and Member States for approval.

Despite Europe being the fourth largest producer of fish and aquaculture products¹, between 54-72% of its fish stocks are overfished. **Iconic species like Mediterranean bluefin tuna are on the brink of collapse because irresponsible fishing is fast depleting the fish we traditionally eat.** The CFP has twice (in 1992 and 2002) been reformed but has failed to end overfishing. **This ongoing reform of the CFP is a once-in-a-decade opportunity to finally start managing fish in a responsible way, as a precious natural resource.** This is also what European citizens think, with 78% of respondents supporting a reform that ensures that all European fish products come from sustainable stocks.

"Europeans are clearly fed up with the disastrous management of our fisheries. They want the EU to turn the trend of overfishing around and the reform of the CFP offers exactly that opportunity to Members of the European Parliament and to EU Governments." said Louize Hill, Head of Fisheries and Marine at WWF's European Policy Office. *"We cannot afford to continue wasting our precious marine resources in times of economic crisis. The 2012 CFP reform has to be the one that delivers change."*

The results of the poll are especially impressive in Southern European countries (Portugal 92%, France 93%, Spain 91%, Italy 95%) and in Belgium (91%) where over 90% of respondents think it is important that fish on sale comes from non-overfished sustainable stocks.

"It is interesting to see that in countries where fishing is an important sector like Portugal, France or Spain, people are even more convinced that the sustainability of fish needs to be given absolute priority in a policy reform. With the European Parliament's new co-decision powers on fisheries policy, we now have the opportunity and the responsibility to set things right for a really new CFP," said Portuguese MEP Maria do Céu Patrão Neves.

72% of Europeans also feel that they lack adequate information about whether the fish on sale comes from well-managed, sustainable sources. Commenting on this Stephanie Mathey, Head of Sustainable Development at the Carrefour group said: **"The poll results clearly show that consumers are keen to know that their consumption of fish is not contributing to**

¹ European Commission Maritime Affairs and Fisheries. Facts and figures on the Common Fisheries Policy, 2010.



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overfishing. They need to have better information about the sustainability of the products they buy. This requires policy changes, but also action from the retail sector. Through our Responsible Fishing policy, Carrefour tries to source responsibly and keep consumers informed."

Notes to the editors

This press release and related material will be available after the embargo time on www.wwf.eu

On April 12th, MEPs are invited to help 'repopulate the seas' by posting their personal 'fish' on the WWF 'sea board' at the European Parliament with the message "I support a strong Common Fisheries Policy reform". Photos of these MEPs posting fish can be found at: www.wwf.eu/fisheries

* Countries surveyed: Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the UK. 14,635 adults surveyed in total. All figures, except for those from Greece, are from YouGov Plc. Figures for Greece are from Focus Bari Sa. Fieldwork was undertaken between 17 January and 15 February 2011. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all adults aged 18+ (aged 18-54 in Greece).

Further information:

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