

A photograph of a fishing boat on the ocean. Two crew members are visible on the deck. One is wearing a brown jacket and the other is wearing a white rain suit. A large net full of fish is in the center of the boat. The ocean is dark and choppy, and the sky is overcast.

# “Initial reactions by key stakeholders to the Farm-to-Fork & EU Biodiversity Strategies”

## The contribution of the fishing industry

# Safeguarding the marine environment

We catch around 5 million tonnes of fish a year, mainly for human consumption

EU vessels are subject to hundreds of EU rules ensuring a responsible and sustainable activity

There are no good or bad fishing gears, it all depends on their use and good regulation

Close collaboration with scientists

The number of **stocks at Maximum Sustainable Yield** has increased in the last 10 years **from 5 to 62** (out of 78)

Almost **100%** Landings from EU managed stocks in the Atlantic that come from catches **sustainably fished**

A **50%** reduction in fishing pressure in the North-East Atlantic has led to **50% more fish in the sea** than in 2010

**79%** of the **fish consumed worldwide** that is **sustainably caught**



100%



50%



79%

# Keep eating seafood: It's the best way to feed the world

Wild fish is the **PERFECT PROTEIN** since wild-caught seafood does not require being artificially fed, use of water supply, antibiotics or pesticides, nor locking up in cages

Eating wild caught fish means **CLIMATE PROTECTION** as it is by far the animal protein with the **lowest carbon footprint** thus the best option in terms of **food security**

**NO MARINE FISH HAS EVER GONE EXTINCT** due to commercial fishing

Wild Caught-Fish  
means a  
**Green Deal**



# Biodiversity Strategy

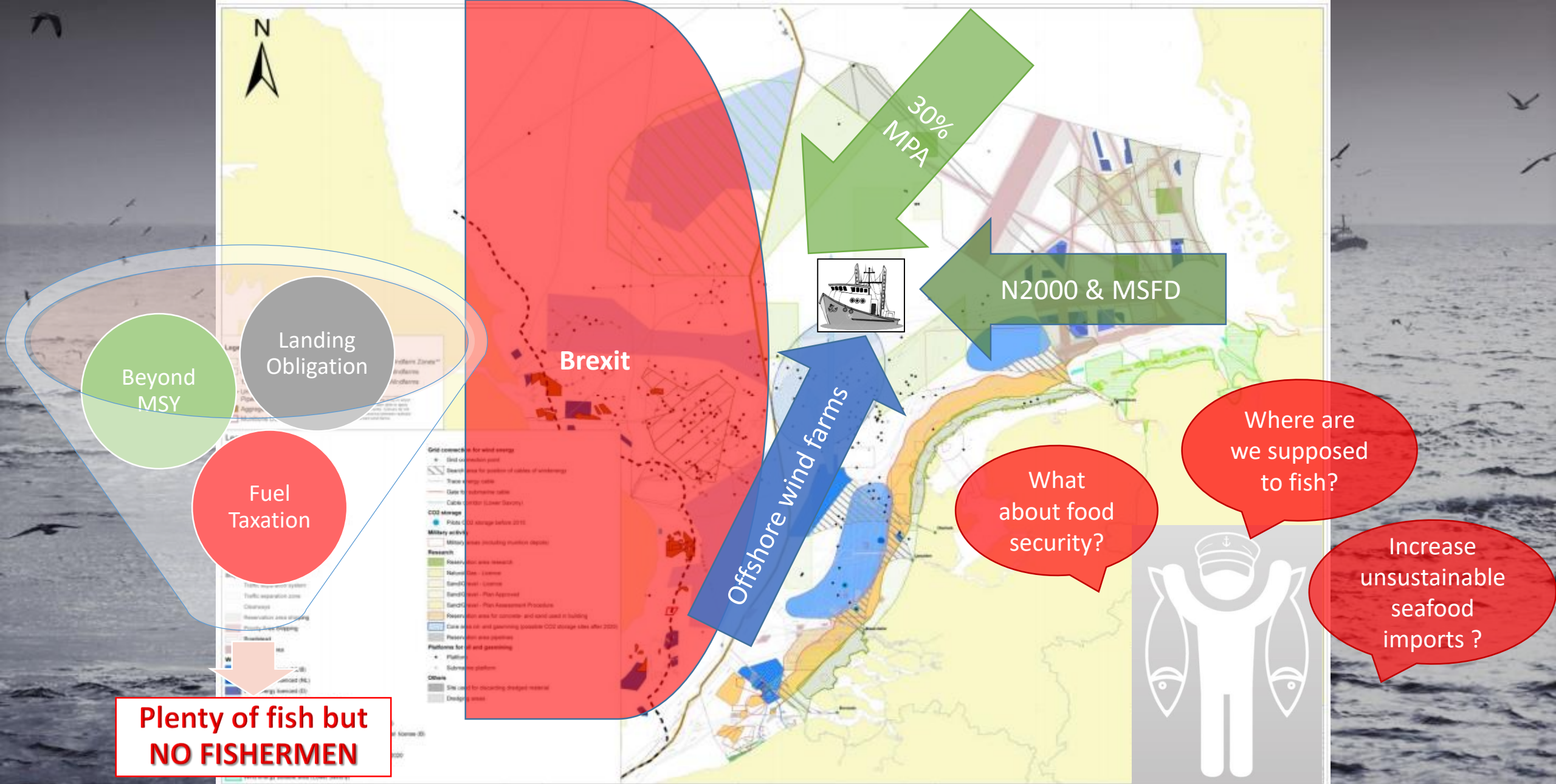
## Fishermen guardians of the sea

### PROBLEMS

- **Discriminatory treatment** (do not mention oil, gas, dredging or shipping)
- Do not recognize at all the huge **improvements in EU fish stocks**
- **MPAs** not panacea for all ocean problems
  - **Economic benefits** of MPAs: tourism, ocean energy and recreation
  - Paper parks
- Phase out of **bottom contacting gears**
- **Impact Assessments** only as a 2<sup>nd</sup> step
- **Fishing mortality at or under MSY**  
↓ food production ⚠

### INDUSTRY VIEWS

- Need to be treated on an **equal footing**
- FAO SOFIA 2020: management is the best tool for conservation
- **Protect what must be protected based on science**
  - No arbitrary targets (30%)
  - Other effective area-based conservation measures
- **Fish is thriving** in bottom trawling areas
  - What about **offshore wind farms?**
- **Fmsy** already difficult to achieve
- **Bmsy / MEY** inoperative for fisheries mgmt



# Farm to Fork Strategy

## Sea to Plate Strategy?

## Fisheries is the answer

### CHALLENGES

- Drawing on the potential of sustainable **seafood as a low-carbon food source**
- **Current pandemic** showed the need to **ensure food security and long-term resilience** of food systems
- **Redefine sustainability** for fish: cannot be only MSY indicators
- **Need to eliminate trade preferences** (e.g. zero tariff quota) for fish coming from countries connected with **IUU fishing & serious labour abuses** (Vietnam FTA / ATQ China)

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Fishing the most efficient, climate-smart system that provides healthy & sustainable food, while securing a decent living for EU fishermen
- **Promote EU fish** for healthy diets and reduce dependence on imports
- **Sustainable food labelling** covering **nutritional**, climate, **social** and environmental aspects of fisheries products
- Support fishers to **improve their position in the value chain and marine space**
  - More targeted use of **VAT** rates to favour healthy and sustainable food choices

# Many thanks for listening

## Over to you

Europêche is the representative body for the fishing industry in the European Union

### TAKE HOME MESSAGES

The EU fishing industry favours an EU Green Deal that is inclusive of all three pillars of sustainability, building on all the efforts and achievements made so far, and giving the recognition and promotion fishermen deserve.

Both biodiversity and food security are better served by expanding effective fisheries management and not by establishing more marine sanctuaries.

The leading by example priority of the EU is great, but what we preach internally cannot stop at the border and therefore require imported products the same level of sustainability.

The EU needs to think food. Each time the EU reduces the volume of fish captured by the European fleet, there is an automatic increase of imports.

The EU should not use global statistics disconnected the EU reality to dictate strong environmental measures or even prohibit certain fisheries operations in the EU.