



# **Towards a Vision 2040 for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Food**

## **Placing Blue Foods at the heart of Vision 2040**

EBCD considers that the Vision 2040 for Fisheries and Aquaculture must be firmly grounded in food sovereignty, food security and sustainable food systems, mirroring the approach taken in the Vision 2040 for Agriculture and Food.

Blue foods are not a marginal component of the food system; they are central to it and must be fully recognised as such. They provide essential nutrients for healthy diets, contribute to climate mitigation and adaptation, and support biodiversity when sustainably managed. For these reasons, EBCD believes that the Vision should be structured around a food-centred narrative, recognising the strategic role of blue foods in strengthening the resilience of European societies.

Placing blue foods at the core of the Vision would naturally reinforce the three pillars of sustainability - economic, environmental and social - while also enhancing climate resilience, food security, competitiveness and consumer trust. Such a framing would send a strong and positive signal to the sector. The success of the Vision will depend on ensuring genuine ownership by fishers, aquaculture producers, processors and the wider value chain, thereby enabling effective implementation and the delivery of tangible results by 2040.

## **An EU Action Plan on Blue Foods**

EBCD calls for the development of a dedicated EU Action Plan on Blue Foods as a key instrument to translate the Vision 2040 into concrete action. A broad coalition of stakeholders - including EBCD, Européche, EAPO, FEAP and Seafood Europe - is calling for such an initiative, underlining the urgent need to better integrate blue foods into European food and sustainability strategies. This call reflects a growing recognition that blue foods are essential to addressing current challenges facing global and European food systems. Europe is currently confronted with declining domestic aquatic food production and consumption. At the same time, blue foods offer a unique combination of high nutritional value, relatively low environmental impact, and strong socio-economic importance for coastal and rural communities.

Against this backdrop, an EU Action Plan would provide a coherent and science-based framework to strengthen production, improve market conditions, support responsible fisheries and aquaculture, and increase consumer awareness. It would ensure that blue foods are no longer treated as a secondary component of food policy, but as a strategic pillar of Europe's food system.

## **A European stakeholder-led Platform for Blue Foods**

As mentioned in the stakeholder call on the Action Plan for Blue Foods, EBCD also advocates for the creation of a European Platform for Blue Foods. Blue foods remain insufficiently integrated into broader policy discussions on food systems, which continue to be largely dominated by terrestrial agriculture. This results in fragmented policy approaches and an underutilisation of the sector's full potential. A dedicated platform would provide a structured space for dialogue between science, policy and practice. It would strengthen the evidence base for decision-making, improve policy coherence and facilitate knowledge exchange across the value chain.

The platform would also play an important role in improving communication, promotion and public understanding of blue foods, addressing persistent misconceptions and highlighting their contribution to healthy diets, climate objectives and sustainable economic development.

The EU Blue Food Platform should be established as a stakeholder-led platform with a dedicated budget, ensuring inclusive governance, long-term stability, and effective coordination across the blue food value chain.

## **A Vision aligned with the Competitiveness Compass and the Clean Industrial Deal**

EBCD stresses that the Vision 2040 must be fully aligned with the Competitiveness Compass and the Clean Industrial Deal. Competitiveness should not be treated as a separate objective, but rather as intrinsically linked to sustainability and resilience.

A modernised and forward-looking fisheries and aquaculture sector is essential to ensure the sustainable harvesting of marine resources while minimising impacts on biodiversity, habitats and marine ecosystems, and reducing the sector's carbon footprint. This transformation will require significant investment in innovation, including the development and deployment of blue technologies. Adequate financial support will be necessary to enable both pilot initiatives and their scaling up across the sector.

