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VISION 2040 FOR FISHERIES & AQUACULTURE

EBCD CALLS FOR STRONGER ACTION AND MEASURES ON BLUE FOODS

On 20 October, the European Commission published its **Vision 2040 for Fisheries and Aquaculture**, alongside the Energy Transition Roadmap and the EU Strategy for Fisheries External Action. While the European Bureau for Conservation and Development (EBCD) **welcomes some positive developments and objectives**, particularly the recognition of blue foods as an important pillar of the EU food system, **it regrets that the Vision largely relies on existing initiatives and commitments** rather than proposing the structural changes needed to ensure a sustainable future for the fisheries and aquaculture sectors.

In particular, **EBCD regrets that the Vision does not include a dedicated EU Action Plan on Blue Foods or the establishment of a European Blue Food Platform**. EBCD believes that these initiatives could play a key role in strengthening EU food security and sovereignty, supporting the competitiveness and profitability of the fisheries and aquaculture sectors, and advancing the EU's climate and sustainability objectives.

Blue foods are an essential component of sustainable food systems, providing valuable nutrients, supporting coastal and rural communities, and contributing to environmental and climate objectives when sustainably produced and managed. EBCD believes that an Action Plan on Blue Foods would create a clear and actionable pathways creating a **virtuous circle**, whereby promoting sustainable blue food production and consumption would stimulate demand, improve profitability, encourage investment in sustainable practices and strengthen Europe's food security.

The need for such an approach has already been widely recognised. A **broad coalition of stakeholders**, including EBCD and the EU Seafood Alliance – comprising Europêche, the European Association of Fish Producers Organisations (EAPO), the Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP) and Seafood Europe – has called for a dedicated Action Plan to better integrate blue foods into European food and sustainability policies. The **European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and several Advisory Councils** have also called for such an initiative.

Beyond an Action Plan, EBCD also strongly supports the creation of a **European stakeholder-led Platform for Blue Foods**, supported by a dedicated budget. Bringing together the entire value chain, scientists, policymakers and civil society, this platform would strengthen dialogue, improve policy coherence and promote public awareness of the nutritional, environmental and socio-economic benefits of blue foods. Its inclusion in the Vision would have further strengthened stakeholder engagement and supported a coordinated approach to promoting blue foods across the EU.

EBCD therefore regrets that these proposals have not been taken forward in Vision 2040 and calls on the European Commission to pursue these two complementary initiatives to ensure that concrete measures are in place for blue foods to fully become a strategic pillar of the EU's sustainable food system.