In mid-July the EU announced its long-awaited proposals for reforming the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). It has acknowledged that previous policy efforts have been a failure. Critics have been urging a more conservation-based focus while industry spokesmen wanted change as long as it didn't affect them adversely. According to Commissioner Maria Damanaki changes were needed because scientific models suggested that only eight of 136 fish stocks in European Union waters would be at sustainable levels in 2022 if no action were taken. One of the fundamental changes is the introduction of tradable fishing rights, which would be imposed at the national rather than the European Union level. In theory this would put responsibility for safeguarding fish stocks with the industry and help reduce overcapacity. She also addressed another thorny issue, discarding. All fish would now be landed and counted against quotas. But there were no proposals to to directly reduce the tremendous overcapacity in the European fleet. NGOs have questioned whether the tradeable fishing rights will help reduce capacity and the fishing industry is divided with small boat owners generally opposed. More here

TAGS: EU, fisheries, sustainable, overfishing, Common Fisheries Policy Reform, Commissioner Maria Damanaki , tradeable fishing rights, individual quotas

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