

## The facts and science behind the PFA's pelagic fishing

The PFA and its members are committed to responsible fishing in order to provide around 6 million healthy, high-quality and affordable meals a day with the lowest carbon footprint of all animal protein production. Our approach to this is based on facts and science. It is important that the discussion about our fisheries is also conducted in this way, instead of our members' (fishing) activities being intentionally misrepresented.

We understand that messages from third parties can sometimes be confusing and limit constructive dialogue on the importance of sustainable and responsible fishing.

The PFA is aware that certain claims have been circulating that don't accurately reflect our practices and our commitment to responsible fishing activities. Therefore, we want to clarify these facts about our fishing operations:

- 1. Freezer trawlers size:** Contrary to some statements, vessel size doesn't define sustainability. Pelagic vessels are generally much larger than other fishing vessels. This goes especially for freezer trawlers (ranging from 55 to 144 metres), which for 70% are made up of processing and freezing capacity which helps to reduce the carbon footprint of the fishing operation. Therefore, the size of our vessels does not give them disproportionate catching power. Our catches are limited by science-based quotas.
- 2. Selective fishing:** The quantities of pelagic fish within quota caught by our members are directly related to the size of the biomass of the pelagic species. For example, there is currently about 6 million tonnes of blue whiting in the sea. EU Member States are only allowed to fish a very small percentage of this. In addition, freezer trawlers' size and high-tech capabilities, including sonar and echo equipment, allows for detection and highly selective fishing (more than 99%). In short, our vessels catch sometimes a lot of fish, but very selective and only in areas where it is allowed and as long as the quota is not reached.
- 3. Focus on innovation:** Everyone in the PFA is highly committed to scientific research to ensure sustainable fisheries. The crews on our vessels are the eyes and ears at sea, contributing to scientific projects. They use innovative and effective prevention tools to avoid incidental and unwanted bycatch. Pingers, for example, help to prevent dolphin approaching the net.


Sustainable and responsible pelagic fishing is crucial not only to protect biodiversity but also to ensure future food security for generations to come. Therefore, the PFA and its members remain committed to this cause.

We are always happy to have a fact based conversation about the pelagic fishing sector. It is always valuable to take into account all perspectives, such as from scientists, national authorities and other stakeholders.

### For more information

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