

# ANOTHER SEA IS POSSIBLE!

## Declaration of the participants of the civil society conference on occasion of the European Maritime Day 2014

Bremen, 17. Mai 2014

The following demands are urgent for attaining a more equitable and environmentally friendly maritime policy:

### 1. Ending overfishing

Despite ever more devastating fishing techniques, the global fishing quota is decreasing since overfishing causes the fish stocks to collapse. This results in the lack of stability of the marine ecosystems, small-scale fishing and food security in the countries of the south.

We call for a comprehensive fishery reform aiming at sustainability. We demand catching quotas based on the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) regulations, the precautionary principle and ecosystem approaches. Catching quotas must exclusively be determined according to scientific criteria. Reducing harmful subsidies which promote environmentally hazardous fishing technologies or fishing methods by 2020 is also of equal importance. Among others, the ban on deep sea and bottom trawls shall be implemented and the respective resolutions of the UN General Assembly which prohibit the use of bottom trawls on seamounts shall be supported. In a second step, stock management must be at least 20% below the MSY by 2030 in order to include illegal fishing into the calculations, to consider marine biodiversity as well as to respond more adequately to the fluctuation of stocks.

Instead of having industrialised countries and industrial fishing fleets dominantly accessing the world wide fish stocks we call for the development of independent fishing capacities in the global south until 2020 in parallel to their reduction in the industrialised countries in order to safeguard the right to food and a change towards the prioritisation of small-scale fishing with regard to structural decisions. Licences to fish in the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) of countries where food security is jeopardised must only be granted to fishing fleets after a surplus has been determined independently and scientifically by a transparent as well as participatory mechanism. For this purpose, Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) which include all fishing nations shall be set up comprehensively by 2020 according to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). On this note, the fight against illegal fishing must consequently be implemented.



## 2. Expanding marine protection

We call for expanding marine protected areas in the open sea as well as the coastal areas. The demand of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) Strategic Plan of declaring at least 10% of the coastal and marine areas as protected areas by 2020 shall be regarded as a milestone for the new agenda of the future. By 2030, the area covered by marine protected areas must increase to 20%. Marine protected areas shall be determined in a transparent manner and in compliance with principles of nature conservation. The protected areas must be based on a sufficiently financed management which in turn rests on a participatory and equitable basis, safeguards the rights of the local population and includes all stakeholders into the implementation of the area-specific protection targets and regulations. Protected areas shall contain sufficiently large unused areas (zero used zones). For European waters this equals at least 50%. Likewise, a complete exclusion of fishing techniques from the protected areas which lead to by-catch of marine mammals or other non-target species and which destroy habitats must be considered – in particular, bottom trawl and gillnet fishing. The reduction of by-catch shall constitute one of the top priorities of fishing. It must be promoted respectively and shall be implemented with selective fishing techniques which must furthermore be monitored.

The process of the Implementing Agreement on Marine Biodiversity of the High Seas of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) shall be concluded successfully. Insuring ocean floor preservation must also constitute an integral part of marine protection. A comprehensive network of protected areas shall be established on the high seas and the ocean floor. As part of marine protection, the conservation of species and the preservation of biodiversity must be assured independently. Here, essential measures constitute in prohibiting the capture and killing of whales and dolphins, banning shark finning, curbing the illegal trade of marine creatures and reducing by-catch of sea birds and other sea dwellers.

In order to give the protection of the marine environment a chance, ocean warming and acidification stemming from climate change must be contained. Here, the consistent implementation of the agreements on climate protection constitutes the precondition. The desired good environmental status enshrined in the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive shall be attained beyond the marine protected areas on all seas.

## 3. Stopping littering

The discharge of litter into the sea shall be reduced by at least 50% until 2020, based on the desired good environmental status of the EU Marine Strategy



Framework Directive. The problem “ocean garbage patch” must be finally solved no later than 2035 meaning that the discharge shall be lowered to zero. To reduce the entry of waste from land-based sources, effective measures in the area of resource efficiency, product design as well as waste and recycling management must be elaborated in close cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme and promoted with regional marine protection conventions. The Honolulu-Strategy (2011), the Message from Berlin (2013) and the UN Partnership on Marine Litter which was founded at the Rio+20 Conference shall be fostered.

#### **4. Leaving the deep sea untouched**

We call for an international moratorium on the deep sea mining of ores. We demand the implementation of an international prohibition of oil and gas extraction in the deep sea and the Arctic by 2020. Oil production in the deep sea (below 200 m) and the Arctic is particularly risky as the sinking of the Deepwater Horizon has already demonstrated. Instead, under consideration of ecological, social and economical criteria, alternative commodity strategies need to be developed which primarily aim at resource efficiency and effective recycling. Scientific basic research on the ecology of the deep sea shall particularly be fostered. From the outset, methane decomposition in the deep sea must be prohibited due to the severe environmental effects of the gas as well as the storage of CO<sub>2</sub> in the deep sea arising from the high risk potential of these technologies.

#### **5. Implementing human and labour rights at sea**

The rescue of people in distress, one of the oldest laws of the sea, shall be implemented in a binding fashion. Despite it being enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) and the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR) of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) it is disregarded with increasing frequency, in particular when dealing with the rescue of refugees at sea.

Flags of convenience must be abolished. All too often, the outflagging of ships serves the circumvention of labour, environmental and human rights on sea. Corresponding to the International Transport Workers’ Federation Initiative of 1948, an international agreement must be ratified by 2020 which ties the flag to the owners’ nationality or residence and thus allows a better control of the processes and responsibilities on board.



In general, the compliance with human, labour and social rights on sea shall be strictly controlled including offshore installations, harbours and docks as well as during ship dismantling. For example, circumventing environmental and social rights in maritime economy by outsourcing ship dismantling shall be prevented. In particular, special importance must be attached to controls (port state) being executed when it comes to implementing and adhering to the Maritime Labour Convention of 2006 which will be globally valid as of 20. August 2014.

**The conference was organized by:**

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