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PRESS RELEASE

Fishing Industry set to lose €70 million and 1,250 jobs in 2014

Eibhlin O'Sullivan, CEO of the **Irish South & West Fish Producers Organisation Ltd.** (IS&WFPO Ltd.,) today stated that if the European Commission's Proposals in relation to TAC and Quotas for whitefish stocks are implemented by the Council of Ministers at next month's Council meeting in Brussels, it will result in a loss of income to fishermen of €22 million and an overall loss to the Irish economy of approximately €70 million.

"The Commission issued their Proposals last week and we have calculated that the cuts proposed for whitefish stocks which Irish fishermen rely on are in the region of over €22 million. This is in fact, a conservative estimate based on the average prices for the various species this year and also due to the fact the Commission has yet to issue its proposals for some stocks and so there may in fact be further reductions" explained Ms. O'Sullivan.

"In addition to the €22 million direct loss of income for whitefish fishermen, it is likely the loss to Onshore Industry such as processing etc. will be in excess of €47 million. In terms of employment, this will likely lead to the loss of 750 jobs within the Catching Sector and another 500 jobs Onshore. This represents a catastrophic loss for rural coastal peripheral areas which have few alternative sources of income" continued Ms. O'Sullivan. *"We all saw Minister Coveney's response to the fodder crisis which farmers experienced earlier this year however, fishermen who will experience a significant loss of income if the proposals are implemented, will receive no such assistance or support"*.

"The Commission have advised that they are basing their Proposals on Scientific Advice however, as the IS&WFPO have previously indicated, there are issues with some of the Scientific Advice particularly given the difference in the perception of the stocks between the Scientists and Industry. We are actively working on trying to assist scientists where possible in improving the accuracy of the scientific advice however, if the Proposals as drafted are implemented there will be very few fishermen remaining in the Irish Industry to assist the Scientists".

*"We are therefore, calling on Minister Coveney and his fellow European Ministers to adopt a conservative approach to the TAC and Quota Regulations and ensure the survival of very valuable Irish species - **our fishermen**"*.

ENDS

13th November, 2013.

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Notes:

The EU Commission published its Proposals for TAC and Quotas for 2014 (2013/0366) on the 30th of October 2013