General Director DG Fisheries
Mr. S. Schmidt
Wetstraat 200-B
B-1049 Brussel
Belgium

Amersfoort, 28th September 2001

Our remark : JWW/09001
Conc. : contribution to Green paper

Dear Sir,

As already mentioned in our initial contribution to the Green paper conference on 5th to 7th June conference in Brusels, the EAA welcomes the Green paper and the opportunity to comment on behalf of the European sea anglers and the affiliated angling organisations.
The European Anglers Alliance represents sixteen nations and five million of the estimated twenty million sportfishers in Europe. We are also supported by the Federation International de Peche Sportive de Mer which represents the world wide stage of saltwater sport fishing.
In the initial EAA contribution some key issues referring to angling in relation to the CFP were outlined. In this additional comment we want to bring forward the following:

I. The case for recognition sea angling as a stakeholder of the natural fish stock resources in the European CFP.
II. Comment on various subjects in the Green paper.

I. Recreational Saltwater Sport fishing. The case for recognition as a stakeholder of the natural fish stock resources place in the European CFP.

Flawed thinking

The CFP is currently fundamentally flawed for it fails to recognise the Recreational Sport Fishing Industry. Despite the inclusion of '**recreation**' within the overall objective of fisheries policy as defined in the **FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries,** the CFP objectives as outlined on page 6 of the green paper, demonstrate a preoccupation for the commercial fishing industry stakeholders only. From the perspective of fishing mortality and the effects on fish stocks and the aquatic environment this preoccupation is right, but this narrow interpretation of policy perpetuates the mistakes of the past and ignores the expectations of millions of recreational sportfisher stakeholders as well as the industries that trade in and supply the wide variety of goods and services consumed by the recreational sector, including tourism. Section 2 of the green paper ends with, "It is now time to think more clearly about the objectives of the CFP and to prioritise them". The CFP review provides the opportunity to include amongst it's priorities, the following: "to ensure the recreational angling industry is a fully recognised user stakeholder of fish stocks within the CFP and must be referred to specifically by name in order to maintain and develop the competence to deal with the needs of the sport and it's dependent industries."

Recreational Fishing and the Common Fisheries Policy

An examination of the various CFP regulations demonstrates that the CFP was created with a cultural mindset to recognize as the only user stakeholders of natural fish stock resources commercial fishermen.

The interests of the recreational sector have been totally overlooked and the considerable socio-economic impact of the recreational sector has remained unrecognized. As already mentioned in our initial comment this is a failing of the current CFP and should be addressed as part of the reform.

The previous paragraph is all the more relevant because in part two of the green paper, the Basic Principles of the Common Fisheries Policy, we note (and welcome) the inclusion of the following passage from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries: "a responsible fisheries policy provides a vital source of food, employment, **recreation,** trade and economic well-being for people." That the Common Fisheries Policy has actually not delivered sustainable exploitation of fisheries is now fully acknowledged within the green paper. The lack of fish, particularly large ones, brought about by commercial overfishing has resulted in immense but unrecognized damage to angling tourism too. In the Maastricht treaty (1992) the members states agreed on including in the Treaty (art 2) the new term "quality of life". EU and Member states should hereafter still aim at "raising of the standard of living" but now in conjunction with quality of live".

Discrimination

The degradation of fish stocks, in particular the reduction in large mature fish has brought severe repercussions to recreational sport fishing in all its aspects. Overfishing by one user stakeholder, the commercial industry has in fact adversely impacted on another user stakeholder. The sportfishing 'catch per unit of effort' has deteriorated to such an extent that the motivation to go fishing no longer exists for many previous participants. This is a clear case of discrimination and the consequential denial of natural fish resources to the recreational sector may contravene human rights legislation.

Motivation to fish

There are many reasons that motivate recreational anglers to participate. For some it is entirely social, others are motivated by competition, the challenge, the enjoyment of a healthy outdoor activity, therapeutic relaxation and for many the acquisition of top-notch fresh sea food for personal or family use. There is a direct correlation between the availability of fish and the number of angling trips. In other parts of the globe where fish stocks of particular interest to sport fishers have been restored the ensuing increase in participation has been considerable and resulted in substantial improvements to the socio-economic impact.

Participation available to all

Across the European Union several million participants from all walks of life, social classes, creed, ages and colour enjoy recreational angling. If depleted fish stocks can be restored, the potential for attracting newcomers and to revive the interests of those who have given up, is enormous. The current priority of access and policy to the relative few commercial exploiters over and above the requirements of many million recreational exploiters is outrageous and totally ignores proportionality.

Specific Resources

Saltwater sportfishers target relatively few species compared to commercials and the economic impact derived from recreational exploitation of specific resources is often significantly superior to the economic impact derived from commercial exploitation of the same species (see appendix 2). Fish caught by recreational anglers that are not required for personal or family consumption are returned to the sea with a much greater chance of survival than if they had been captured commercially. The FAO Code of Conduct expressly states that exploitation should 'optimise the economic benefits of natural fish stock resources'. There are some species such as the sea bass in European waters where there is overwhelming evidence that the recreational socio-economic impact far outweighs that from conventional commercial exploitation.

Financial Costs / Benefits

According to paragraph 3.6 of the Green paper EUR.1.1. billion of public money is injected the CFP each year on. No such costs exist in the recreational sector and, despite the number of participants; it provokes no civil disorder resulting in a public cost for police presence as with some other sporting activities. Indeed, there is a certain irony that the revenue generated by VAT on the diverse expenditures of all sportfishers throughout Europe almost certainly exceeds the total first hand sale value of the entire EU commercial catch! Sportfishers are actually contributing towards the subsidies paid to commercial fishermen to speed up the decimation of the fish stock resources upon which sportfishing depends!

Environmental Impacts
In just the same way as it is recognised within the Green paper that small scale artisanal fisheries have a lower impact on resources, recreational sea angling impacts minimally on both resources and the environment. A study carried out by the UK government of UK bass fishing in the early 1990's states that some 60% of bass captured by recreational sport anglers are returned alive on a catch and release basis.

Socio-Economic Impacts
The notion that commercial fishing is a valid economic activity whilst recreational fishing is a few people playing is totally invalid. Recreational sea anglers support an enormous range of commercial activities and hence, livelihoods: fishing tackle, bait, boats, chandlery, specialist clothing/footwear, hire of charter boats, travel/accommodation/food/drink, angling publications and (in certain countries) a yield from licenses, used on restoration of fish stocks, jobs, tax etc. .

The provision of these goods and services involves: design, marketing, manufacturing, wholesaling, retailing, distribution and, of course, tourism. In fact all these activities lead and contribute to employment, trade and economic well-being for people. Socio-economic impact studies around the globe have shown that for specific fish stock resources, the socio-economic impact derived from exploitation is far greater for the recreational sector than the commercial sector. (see appendix 1) This has led to management objectives which prioritise the requirements of the recreational sector and in some cases bring about the cessation of commercial exploitation altogether. Examples include: sea bass in the Republic of Ireland, salmon in France & Spain, red drum in Texas, Florida & South Carolina, striped bass in Maine, New Hampshire, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.

A recent study in Wales-UK, conducted by Nautilus Consultants on behalf of the National Assembly for Wales, shows that recreational sea angling contributed £28 million (much of it tourism expenditure), whilst those specific species that actually contributed to the £28 million only contributed some £3 million to the commercial sector at first hand sale value.

A report commissioned by the Nordic Council of Ministers shows that in Finland, the 1998 commercial catch of 48 million kg was worth FIM 320 million whereas the recreational catch, also of 48 million kg was worth FIM 1220 million. In Sweden the 1995 commercial catch of 79 million kg was worth SEK 240 million but the smaller 58 million kg catch of 1999 was worth SEK 2730 million.

Across the globe there is currently a huge transformation of attitude amongst sportfishers, who, responding to overfishing, are increasingly practising catch and release to try and stave off further reduction of the resources. The US leads this cultural change and in Massachusetts in 1998, 97% of striped bass caught by sportfishers were returned alive. There can be no better way of maximising the socio-economic impact from these resources whilst minimising the fishing mortality.

DG14 is requested by the EAA for a comprehensive study at EU level, encompassing all angling. Despite the unavailability of funding from DG14 at present, we understand that such a study is still a possibility if supported by the DGs for Environment and Sport.

Potential unrealised.
In the Nautilus report on Welsh fisheries, the potential for developing the recreational sector was highlighted, but overfishing of resources by commercial fishing was identified as a threat.

In the United States, where species of interest to sport anglers have been successfully restored from commercial overfishing, the ensuing increase in participation and consequential expenditure has been enormous. (see appendix 1) The state of New Jersey now enjoys a sport fishing industry based on the striped bass valued at $2 billion to its 230 mile coastal economy.

Conclusion on part I
Representation to the EU Fisheries Commission by the European Anglers Alliance has been met with a degree of confusion and ambiguity. The assertions by European sport anglers that they are stakeholders raises new questions and calls for fresh thinking. The EAA believes the CFP Review provides an unparalleled opportunity to introduce another significant stakeholder into the CFP framework whose input will be motivated not by short term profits but by the overwhelming desire to restore depleted stocks and to secure long term sustainable exploitation of the valuable natural fish

stock resources. We believe our aspirations would support the Commission in bringing about the changes that are so urgently required.

II. Comment on several subjects with reference to Green paper

Introduction: Sustainable exploitation?

Of course we realise that the conclusions, as given in part I, do not offer a direct solution on the current problems of overfishing and unsustainable (commercial) fisheries, as described in the Green paper. We realise that a lot needs to be done to reach a situation in which sustainability of the resources will be secured. It needs courageous and radical thinking combined with firm political commitment.

Examples of sustainable exploitation of fish stocks are rare and failures are common. The situation within the European Union is aggravated by the close proximity of member states, the mobility of the fish stocks in European waters and the preoccupation of each member of the Council of Ministers on what can be achieved for each of their own fishing fleets. This preoccupation leads to a lack of collective resolve to head scientific advice and further more, has demonstrably resulted in a culture where 'short term economic gains' have been put before the 'long term sustainable use of resources'. The tragic irony is that the commercial fishing industry, whose political pressure has played such a leading role in perpetuating this culture would in fact have been far better served had the Council of Ministers focused on the sustainability of the resources themselves.

The Treaty

The Green paper draws attention to the absence of a specific fisheries chapter in 'the Treaty' establishing the European Community. It assigns to the Common Fisheries Policy, the same general objectives as the Common Agriculture Policy. There are, however, profound differences between agriculture and fisheries.

Farmers reap what they have sown and their production takes place within defined physical boundaries that are exclusively accessible to an individual operator. Since they are unable to exploit crops or livestock on another farmer's patch, they have a built in incentive to conduct their affairs sustainably. Likewise, they do not operate in a climate of fear that another farmer will exploit their resources.

Fishermen, however, reap from the sea with no responsibility for sowing or preparation. There are few if any boundaries separating the areas that different fisheries operate in. Resources are also mobile and this leads to fishermen harvesting as much as possible before another fisher should catch it. As a result responsible conduct is also far less likely whilst fishermen from one state perceive that the enforcement of fisheries legislation is less robust in other states.

The commercial fishing industry is unique as the only part of the modern food industry that attempts to provide a staple resource by exploiting wild populations. All other sectors of the food industry have accepted that this is unsustainable, and resorted to agricultural production. Wild populations are widely recognised for their intrinsic economic value and managed either as a tourism resource or as premium priced luxury resources.

Shortcomings and contradictory objectives of the CFP

Here are some extracts from the Green paper in which the EU Commission clearly states the shortcomings of the Common Fisheries Policy:

- "The CFP has not delivered sustainable exploitation of fishery resources."
- "Many stocks are at present outside safe biological limits. They are too heavily exploited or have low quantities of mature fish or both."
- "The situation is particularly serious for demersal fish stocks such as cod, hake, whiting."
- "If current trends continue, many stocks will collapse."
- "The available fishing capacity of the community fleets far exceeds that required to harvest fish in a sustainable manner."

- "The current situation of resource depletion results, to a good extent, from setting annual catch limits in excess of those proposed by the Commission on the basis of scientific advice, and from fleet management plans short of those required."

- "The quantities of mature demersal fish in the sea as assessed by the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES) have, in many cases, declined significantly over the last twenty-five years. On average, these quantities were about ninety percent greater in the early 1970's than in the late 1990's. The general decline in landings is similar."

- "For many stocks, the authorised mesh sizes remain too small for the effective protection of juveniles."

- "The protection of small juveniles is particularly difficult to put into practise. The situation has deteriorated to such an extent that larger fish have become rare."

- "Technological progress is increasing the efficiency of fishing vessels and it undermines the efforts of capacity reduction programmes."

The contradictions that the CFP has had to contend with and work through in formulating a fisheries policy are laid out in 'The Basic Principals of the CFP'. These contradictions in policy requirements do not appear to be solvable at the present time.

It must be concluded that all of these contradictory requirements must be set aside and the one over riding central requirement of restoring the fish stocks to viable levels must be paramount.

We consider there are some simple issues at the root of the fish stock decline:

- The presumption that historical mixed fisheries must be allowed to continue leads to small meshes being used in order to capture smaller species at the expense of allowing more profitable larger species to mature.

- Discards, which have resulted in huge and wasteful fishing mortality especially when they suppress the potential benefits of strong year classes when they do occur.

- Allowing political opinion to dominate scientific advice to such an extent that a real danger now exists where some scientific advice may be compromised for political expediency. The notion that Fisheries Ministers can return from EU meetings and claim that they have secured the 'best deal for their fishermen' is folly in the extreme, short term politics must become a thing of the past.

These points, and others from the green paper, are covered in detail below.

Resources First

"It is now time to think more clearly about the objectives of the CFP and to prioritise them", states the Green Paper. The CFP currently focuses on the welfare of the commercial industry to the detriment of the resources and other stakeholders. The focus must alter towards the resources and the environment.

If the resources become the priority, then the long term sustainability of all exploitation - be it commercial or recreational - is far more secure. The concept of regarding the welfare of resources as the absolute priority is not new. Doug Kidd, past Minister of fisheries in New Zealand, whose term of office transformed New Zealand fisheries from virtual collapse to what is now regarded by many as a global example of sustainability, adopted as an over riding principle, 'fish first—people second'. This philosophy actually serves in the long-term to look after the welfare of 'people' far better than the current short-term preoccupation for the catching industry.

As outlined in part I of our comment the CFP review provides an opportunity to cease being an industry centric CFP, and instead, to focus on the fish stock resources. This does not preclude stakeholder involvement, but the priority must always be the fish stock resources before the interests of any exploiters. The status of the various stakeholders should then be promoted by their environmental and economical benefits to society.

A set of clearer objectives for the future (section 4-7th objective)
"To secure an economically viable and self sufficient fisheries and aquaculture sector" is open to interpretation. In the context of restoring the currently depleted fish stocks, it will be impossible to do so with an objective that demands security of short term economic viability for any exploiters. The priority objective must be to restore depleted stocks and only allow sustainable exploitation for the long-term benefits. The responsibility for economic viability should not be an objective of the Common Fisheries Policy. **The responsibility of the CFP must be to look after the resources.** The responsibility for economic viability in exploitation should be the entire and exclusive responsibility of those who elect to commercially exploit fish stocks within a robust framework of conservation and regulations, administered and enforced by the CFP. **Participants in the fishing industry must be regarded in exactly the same way as any other business. Success or failure will depend on acumen, planning, effort and other attributes just as with land based enterprises. The welfare and sustainability of the fish stocks must not be jeopardised by a political desire to prop up a sacrosanct fishing industry.**

Strengthening and Improving conservation policy (section 5.1)
Lack of large mature fish and the dominance of juveniles in those remaining stocks and in landings reflect an appalling level of fishing mortality imposed on immature fish. Such minimum landing sizes that remain, together with correlated mesh sizes are simply too small. One of the main objections to increasing minimum landing sizes and mesh sizes has been the claim that smaller species would be forfeited to landings. This objection can no longer be allowed to prevent significant increases in minimum landing sizes & mesh sizes.

Cod are quick growing, increase in value per kilo as they grow but are currently targeted at 35 cms when they weigh less than .5 of a kilo and are a little over one year of age. Two years later the same fish will measure 60 cms, weigh over 2 kilos and 25% will have reached maturity. The retention of an MLS for cod of 35cms just because the commercial industry wish to benefit from landing whiting is preposterous and severely curtails future prosperity of the commercial industry.

Why have mesh sizes remained too small? Why does the Council of Ministers ignore the ICES recommendations of so many TAC's year on year? **Because** of organised political pressure from the fishing industry stakeholder. Yet the green paper suggests closer involvement of this stakeholder. How can this possibly contribute to an improved Common Fisheries Policy?

Promoting the environmental dimension of the CFP (section 5.2)
Integration of environmental protection into the CFP must be an absolute priority. Strengthening the legal basis in order to facilitate the implementation of environmental integration should be put in hand as soon as possible.

Fleet policy (section 5.4)
Reference in this section is made to the advances in vessel and gear design and fish finding equipment, which contribute to an increase in fishing effort. Commonly referred to as "technological creep", it is in our opinion more like "technological stampede", and has historically been greatly under estimated. Even within the industry it is now recognised that many new under ten metre vessels enjoy a fishing capacity of older twelve to fifteen metre vessels. Its is necessary to establish better methods for measuring capacity.

Public aid should not be used for fleet renewal and, indeed, we cannot understand the rationale behind the provision of public funds even for safety equipment, when in all other economic activities the provision of safety equipment is both mandatory and has to be provided at the expense of the industry itself.

Improving Governance within the CFP (5.5)
Greater involvement with stakeholders. The green paper states that stakeholders consider they have not been consulted or had their views taken into account. The problem is that untill now only one group of stakeholders have had any say at all, and that is the commercial fishing industry and allied trades.

In our opinion, it is these stakeholders who have applied political pressure resulting in much of the failures of the CFP. Had other stakeholders been given an equal voice, the outcome today might be entirely different. Regional Advisory Committees for specific geographic sea areas and specific

(species) fisheries have much potential. Recreational industry stakeholders must be included both in any debate surrounding the establishment of such committees and as participants where they have an interest.

Member states can currently impose on their own fleets within twelve miles (territorial waters) regulations and conservation measures that exceed EU regulations. Currently, such measures only apply to the fleet of that member state. To improve conservation and the enforcement of such measures, any such measures should apply to **all** fishing effort, including that of other member states who fish in territorial waters under historical rights.

Monitoring, Control and Enforcement (5.6)

Clearly the Common Fisheries Policy can only succeed if all participants believe that there is a level playing field for enforcement. That is clearly not the case at present. A Community Joint Inspections Structure is essential and the cost should be borne by the industry.

Strengthening the Social and Economic Dimension of the CFP (5.7)

There appears to be recognition that there is a link between the natural fish stock resources and the economies of the coastal belts. As the green paper states, “The catching sector will have to become significantly smaller than it is today in order to be sustainable.” Priority consideration should therefore be given to assessing how the restoration of some specific fish stocks could enhance the recreational sport fishing sector in the coastal area, both from shore and boat angling where the latter could provide alternative employment for some displaced inshore commercial fishermen.

Other areas of the globe where this has been achieved should be the subject of EU investigation to assess the potential for achieving sustainable eco-tourism and thus radically improving the socio-economic benefits to the rural coastal communities of Europe from such specific fish stock resource.

Yours sincerely

Harm Minekus
President

Encl.: 2

Appendix 1

The Economic Importance of Marine Recreational Fishing in the United States
Case Study: Striped Bass - By Vishwanie Maharaj

INTRODUCTION
The vast coastline and marine resources in the United States provide a multitude of diverse and rewarding fishing experiences for the nation's marine recreational anglers. In fact, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) estimates that 9.4 million adult Americans (16 years of age and older) participated in marine recreational fishing during 1996 (USFWS, 1996). When children under 16 are included, the total number of marine anglers fishing each year exceeds 12 million.

While marine fishing is an enjoyable recreational sport for millions, it has important economic benefits. Pursuit of the social, psychological, and physical benefits of sport fishing has given rise to an industry focused on supplying the goods and services necessary to meet angler demand and ensure satisfying recreational experiences.

The American Sportfishing Association (ASA) estimates that saltwater recreational fishing was worth $25.1 billion to the US economy in 1996. Several sectors of the U.S. economy, ranging from the sporting goods industry to the travel and tourism sector, are to some degree dependent on sport fishing. In many small communities, sportfishing-related businesses are crucial to overall economic health and growth.

Continued angler participation and spending on marine recreational fishing is highly correlated to healthy and abundant marine fisheries. Given the fact that almost one-third of all marine fish species are overfished (NMFS, 1997a), there is great concern about the long-term sustainability of businesses dependent on marine recreational fishing. There is also great concern about the negative economic ramifications on coastal communities dependent on those businesses.

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF SALTWATER RECREATIONAL FISHING
In 1996, U.S. anglers spent $8.7 billion on a wide variety of goods and services for marine recreational fishing (Table 1). These include expenditures at sporting goods stores, bait shops, specialty fishing stores, hotels and motels, fishing lodges, guide services, retail food stores, and restaurants. Sport fishing not only benefits the fishing tackle industry but provides significant revenue to other sectors of the U.S. economy. In fact only 12.4% of saltwater fishing expenditures went to fishing equipment, and more than 50% of marine angler spending impacted the travel and tourism sector in 1996 (Table 1).

The economic effects of angler expenditures ripple throughout local, state and national economies, sustaining existing jobs and creating new ones. They reach down to support manufacturers and their suppliers, and into service industries. The total economic output of the marine sport fishing industry was $25.1 billion in 1996. These dollars supported the equivalent of 288,000 full-time jobs that paid $6.7 billion in wages (Table 2).

Employment effects of the sport fishing industry give rise not only to worker salaries and wages (earnings) but also to state and federal income taxes. Further revenues are generated by sales taxes on angler retail purchases of fishing equipment and services. In 1996, state sales and income taxes amounted to $511 million, and the federal taxes collected totalled $727 million

ECONOMIC GAINS FROM STRIPED BASS RESTORATION
A recovery of striped bass populations improved the quality of striped bass recreational fishing, which attracted more anglers to this fishery along the Atlantic Coast. The number of directed striped bass trips increased from about 1 million in 1981 to over 7 million by 1996. This represents an average increase in participation of 38% per year. As expected, from 1981 to 1996 the inflation adjusted angler expenditures on striped bass trips increased from $85 million to $560 million, which translates into a 35% annual growth in revenue. For the industry dependent on marine recreational fishing, benefits from increased striped bass recreational activity somewhat alleviated financial losses due to the decline of other important saltwater game fish species

Appendix 2

The Nautilus Report on Welsh Fisheries (UK) valued recreational sea angling expenditure at £28 million and the first hand sale value of commercial catches at £11 million.

In a detailed analysis of all commercial landings in Milford Haven which totaled £4.8 million, almost half of all Welsh landings, three quarters of the species by value are not targeted by sport anglers.

It is interesting and relevant to realize that those species targeted by sport anglers actually contributed only £1.3 million to commercial landings in Milford Haven.

The inevitable conclusion is that in Wales, those specific resources generating the £28 million impact from recreational fishing, are worth less than £3 million to the commercial fisheries.

The case for recognizing that those specific species can generate the optimum sustainable return used as recreational sport fish is overwhelming.

Now, consider catch & release, and the economic return for minimal fishing mortality becomes even more impressive.

Then, consider the potential to develop and grow on the sport fishing sector. Remember, the £28 million impact was derived from severely depleted resources.

What if the commercially over-fished fish stocks of direct interest to anglers are restored? In other areas of the globe where fish stocks of interest to anglers have been restored, the much improved threshold of availability has resulted in tremendous growth in participation and economic expenditure. The US striped bass recreational fishery grew by an average of 35% per year from 1981 to 1996 as stocks became restored.

Nautilus Consultants stressed the need for the tourism industry to recognize the development potential of sport fishing and further more in a SWOT analysis they concluded that the main threat to realizing the development potential was overfishing of the resources by the commercial fishing industry.