

**Newsletter No.40, March 2012  
Marine Information Network  
Friends of the Earth Local Groups**

**Common Fisheries Policy Reform:  
*Delivering a Winning Strategy.***

Members' support for the Common Fisheries Policy Reform campaign has been first class, and this newsletter is designed to bring you up to date on both achievements and the next campaign actions

We have accomplished the following:

1. Through your letters to EU Fisheries Ministers and MEPs, we have succeeded in informing **all** Fisheries Ministers in the EU countries and **all** MEPs on the Parliament's Fisheries Committee of the need for CFP reform to re-establish **food security** (the ability to feed ourselves from EU fish stocks throughout the whole year without importing fish from other seas and oceans, as we do at the moment) by means of **re-building fish stocks** to levels which we know are sufficient to this task, using **closed areas (marine reserves)** centred on spawning and nursery grounds as a key tool to rebuild stocks.
2. Through your recent lobbying of MEPs on the Fisheries Committee we have managed to table **three amendments** for debate by the Fisheries Committee, with a vote on these amendments on 10<sup>th</sup> July. These amendments (in ***bold italics***) are:
  - The Common Fisheries Policy should ensure that fishing and aquaculture activities contribute to long-term sustainable environmental, economic, and social conditions. It should contribute moreover to increased productivity, ***the delivery of food security***, a fair standard of living for the fisheries sector, stable markets, ensure the availability of resources and that supplies reach consumers at reasonable prices.
  - Maximum Sustainable Yield means the maximum catch that may be taken from a fish stock indefinitely ***and that provides for the restoration of stocks to maximum levels of abundance that current ecological conditions will permit.***
  - Prohibition or restriction of fishing activities in certain zones and/or periods, ***including the spawning and nursery grounds of fish and shellfish stocks.***

Two matters are now of note here. **Firstly**, the lobbying undertaken by Marinet members to secure the tabling of these amendments has impressed the marine NGOs in Brussels, and we (which means you) have been complimented on this by the staff of Ocean 2012. **Secondly**, we still have to actually persuade the MEPs to adopt these amendments. This means ***winning the vote on 10<sup>th</sup> July.***

**Future Actions:**

1. We will be in touch very soon to ask **you** give your support to an **intensive lobbying** of all the MEPs on the Parliament's Fisheries Committee so that they **vote for** these amendments on 10<sup>th</sup> July.
2. We are developing with lawyers at the University of the West of England, Bristol, a **legal action** against the British government over its continued issuing of fishing quotas at unsafe levels which are in exceedance of scientific advice i.e. illegal over-fishing. This action will be developed during the course of this year, and is our "insurance policy" to ensure the CFP reform genuinely takes place.

## Other News.

**Constitutional:** National Friends of the Earth have agreed, after a long period of non-observance (over two years), to honour their commitment to appoint two officers to serve on our Steering Group. These officers are: Paul de Zylva (policy), and Tim Atkinson (activism). We welcome this re-establishment of national FOE's commitment, and we thank Tim Atkinson for his considerable assistance in recent time, and we look forward to Paul de Zylva being able to play a positive part.

**Steering Group:** As members know, the elected officers (chair, secretary, treasurer and co-ordinator) form the Steering Group along with the two national FOE officers. In recent time, we have co-opted three people for their expertise : Tim Watson (N. Tyneside FOE, on marine reserves), Deborah Wright (Affiliate, author of *The Ocean Planet*) and Tom Appleby (lawyer, Univ. of West of England, Bristol). In addition, we now invite other members to attend or participate in the Steering Group's meetings, either in person or by telephone conference link. If you would like to be involved or to know more, contact Stephen Eades [stephen.marinet@btinternet.com](mailto:stephen.marinet@btinternet.com)

**Website:** Our website, which we regard as one of the foremost marine sites in the country, is now documented by the British Library. Since the beginning of the year we have opened a new section, titled *Planet Ocean*, which provides film, video and illustrated material on our seas and oceans. In this section we now carry our film material on marine aggregate dredging, The Ocean Planet booklet, a special feature on whales, our illustrated Guide to British Marine Animals, and a remarkable video on California's Central Coast kelp forest. If you have not yet visited this new section, see <http://www.marinet.org.uk/planetoccean.html>

**Twitter:** We now have Twitter on the website. This is an excellent way to keep up with the latest news and to share information with others, see [http://twitter.com/#!/marinet\\_uk](http://twitter.com/#!/marinet_uk)

## Campaigns.

**CFP Reform campaign:** We are constantly looking at new ways of campaigning, and trying different methods of getting our message across. In recent time, these include:

- **E-petitions:** We have not tried this before, but Tim Atkinson (national FOE Steering Group member) established an e-petition earlier this year aimed at Richard Benyon, UK Fisheries Minister. A petition, to be successful, must secure a large sign-up – a poor sign-up is actually counter productive. We put the CFP petition on the front page of our website, but national FOE could not match this listing on their website. As a result, few members of the public knew about the petition's existence. We would like to try e-petitions again (i.e. targeted at key people in the EU involved in the CFP's reform), but first we need to persuade national FOE to give proper publicity to the petition on the national FOE website.

- **National media:** Media coverage is like oxygen to successful campaigning. For this reason, we have sought to develop a national profile for the CFP reform campaign. National FOE require us to work through their own media department, but so far we have been unsuccessful in persuading the media department and other key officers to give us the support we need. These discussions have been on-going since November, and we are looking for something positive from national FOE to enable our distinctive CFP reform campaign to get the national exposure it would benefit from.

- **Letter writing:** Letters in the local and national press, particularly local, are relatively easy to secure. They are read by a large number of people, and are a very cost-effective way of getting media coverage. We are about to launch a new set of template letters aimed at the local press, so please give this task and your commitment to it serious thought.

- **Marine aggregate:** Dredging the sea bed for sand and gravel has huge adverse consequences, not least on fish spawning grounds, and we are keeping the pressure up on restraining this damaging industry, see our website <http://www.marinet.org.uk/mad.html>