

CELEBRITIES POSE NAKED WITH FISH FOR FISHLOVE CAMPAIGN TO END OVERFISHING

Brussels, 10 December 2017:- As Europe's fisheries ministers head to Brussels to debate 2018 fishing quotas for 2018, actors and celebrities have called for an end to overfishing by appearing naked with fish from Europe's seas, in the latest release of images from the striking Fishlove campaign.

Actors and celebrities Imelda Staunton, Jessie Buckley, Bobby George, Rula Lenska have posed with fish species to highlight the ongoing disaster of overfishing and the urgent need for the EU to follow scientific advice on quotas. Actress and director Florence Keith-Roach has been photographed with a European eel, which has become virtually extinct through overfishing and hydropower plants.

The portraits were released to the UK's Sunday Times on December 10th, and are now available for broader publication (contact Nicholas Rohl, see below for details).

An estimated 55% of European fish stocks are still being overfished, despite commitments and laws put in place to end overfishing. During the EU Council meeting on December 11th and 12th, fisheries ministers will agree on 2018 fishing limits for over 120 species in the North Sea and Atlantic. During previous meetings, fishing limits have been set far above what is advised by fisheries scientists, despite EU member states having committed to ending overfishing by 2015, where possible, and by 2020 at the latest.

"It breaks my heart to think about what we are doing to our seas through overfishing, especially when you realise how easy the solution is", said award-winning British actress Imelda Staunton, Oscar nominee and Harry Potter star, posing with a blonde ray, one example of a species that is caught and discarded as bycatch. "All it needs is for our politicians to have the courage to follow the scientific advice, and our seas will spring back to health and life for the benefit of all."

Fisheries ministers are also set to discuss a ban on fishing for adult eels - listed as critically endangered by the IUCN - in European waters during the Brussels council meeting. With less than 2% of its original population left, European eel populations have undergone such a dramatic decline that scientists have called for a complete ban for all fisheries and to reduce all human induced mortality to zero. There is only one European eel stock on the planet - the fish all start and end their lives in the same place, the Sargasso Sea in the south west corner of the north Atlantic.

"98.4% of the European eel population is already GONE. Continuing to fish for them is like hunting pandas" said actress Florence Keith-Roach. "EU member states must help save this species from extinction by supporting a ban on eel fishing in European seas."

"European countries have the power to end overfishing - and with just two years left until the 2020 deadline, what's needed is political will to act on behalf of EU citizens", said Rebecca Hubbard, Program Director for Our Fish. "The benefits of ending overfishing are already known and accepted - sustainable fishing means healthier fish stocks, more jobs and profit for fishers, and a healthier marine environment. It's high time that European fisheries ministers start representing all EU citizens, not just the interests of a few big industry players, and start following

the laws they have already signed up to.”

“Ministers have for years set fishing quotas too far from scientific advice and not in line with EU agreed law”, said Nils Höglund, Policy Officer for Coalition Clean Baltic. “The eel has been sidelined and slowly disappearing in front of our eyes for decades, although scientist have spent 17 years calling for eel mortality to be as close to zero as possible. We fish and eat a critically endangered species - 98% of which are gone - but lack the stomach to discuss what we we have done to the eel. The issue of overfishing on the EU Council’s table on December 11th. Ministers should be guided by the agreed principles of ending overfishing; one of their decisions is easy: take the European eel off the table and leave it in the water!”

Petition:

EU fisheries ministers need to take urgent action now if they are to achieve ecologically diverse, clean and healthy seas as they promised by 2020. This must include ending overfishing and protecting at least 30% of our seas.

<https://act.wemove.eu/campaigns/save-eu-seas>

Environment and Fisheries Ministers are meeting in December and we need them to get the clear message that this has to change - 112,000 people have already sent that message!

ENDS

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Quote from Imelda Staunton

“55% of European fish stocks are still being overfished, despite a commitment - and a law - to end overfishing.”

It breaks my heart to think about what we are doing to our seas through overfishing, especially when you realise how easy the solution is. All it needs is for our politicians to have the courage to follow the scientific advice, and our seas will spring back to health and life for the benefit of all.”

Quote from Bobby George

“My religion is nature and too many fish are being taken out of the sea. I found the Wolf Fish very slippery and slimy and could hear him say ‘Please release me! Let me go!’”

Quote from Jessie Buckley

“There is not plenty more fish left in the sea! We all need to find our voice to stop the greedy few from exploiting our sea to extinction. This is why I did my Fishlove portrait with a sturgeon.”

Quote from Florence Keith-Roach

98.4% of the European eel population is already GONE. Continuing to fish for them is like hunting pandas!

Quote from Rula Lenska

“I did a Fishlove portrait with a brill because I’m frustrated that we’re not moving fast enough to conserve fish stocks. Ending overfishing is a win for everyone... and it’s so easy to achieve: even the Americans are doing it! Holding a cold fish to my bare chest took a lot of nerves, but was also huge fun and strangely satisfying because I think it will make a difference!”

IMPORTANT CREDIT INFORMATION

All images **MUST** carry the following caption:

Fishlove portraits expose the naked truth - the EU needs to deliver on its promise to end overfishing of all fish stocks. #EndOverfishing @fishlove2020

and with the following credit:

@Fishlove/Jillian Edelstein

ABOUT FISHLOVE

Fishlove was set up in 2009 by Nicholas Röhl, co-owner of MOSHIMO, and actress Greta Scacchi to raise awareness of the unsustainable fishing practices that are destroying the earth's marine ecosystem.

Since then, the Fishlove images have succeeded in bringing the subject of over-fishing to the front covers and pages of the world's media many times over. It is a visual petition of amazing people, including Sir Ben Kingsley, Sir Michael Gambon, Sir Richard Branson, Melanie Laurent, Fiona Shaw, Terry Gilliam, Kenzo, Dame Judi Dench, Emilia Fox, Mark Rylance, Emma Thompson, Helena Bonham-Carter, and Imelda Staunton, to save our seas.

In acknowledgment of the central role Fishlove has played in promoting fish conversation as part of the reform of the EU Common Fisheries Policy in 2013, a major and influential exhibition of the portraits was held at the European Commission in Brussels at the invitation of Maria Damanaki, then EU Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries.

Helena Bonham-Carter's image with a tuna, released in 2015, is credited with having helped persuade the UK government to commit to establishing some of the largest, fully protected marine reserves on earth.

All of the fish shown in the photographs are commercially fished, although some species shown are regarded by scientists as being over-fished and threatened. Fishlove believes that the use of these fish in these photographs is justified so as to highlight what species could be lost if overfishing continues.

None of the fish depicted in the photographs have been specifically caught for the purposes of making these photographs, and would have been landed irrespective of whether these photographs were taken or not. Other than in very unusual circumstances, the fish photographed are eaten afterwards.

Fishlove is produced by MOSHIMO, an independent Japanese restaurant in Brighton co-owned by Nicholas Röhl and Karl Jones. Famous for its Fishlove campaign, the restaurant has also won a prestigious PETA award for its promotion of plant-based eating.

<https://fishlove.co.uk/>

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ABOUT OUR FISH

Our Fish works to ensure European member states implement the Common Fisheries Policy and achieve sustainable fish stocks in European waters.

Our Fish works with organisations and individuals across Europe to deliver a powerful and unwavering message: overfishing must be stopped, and solutions put in place that ensure Europe's waters are fished sustainably. Our Fish demands that the Common Fisheries Policy be properly enforced, and Europe's fisheries effectively governed.

Our Fish calls on all EU Member States to set annual fishing limits at sustainable limits based on scientific advice, and to ensure that their fishing fleets prove that they are fishing sustainably, through monitoring and full documentation of their catch.

<http://our.fish>

Follow Our Fish on Twitter: [@our_fish](#)

ABOUT COALITION CLEAN BALTIC

Coalition Clean baltic works to promote the protection and improvement of the environment and natural resources of the Baltic Sea Area.

CCB was established in Helsinki, in February 1990 when environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGO's) from the countries of the Baltic Sea Region became united to co-operate in activities concerning the Baltic Sea environment. CCB is a politically independent, non-profit association and at present, is a network of 19 organizations from Belarus, Finland, Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany, Denmark, Ukraine and Sweden. Combined, the CCB member organizations have over 850 000 members in all countries surrounding the Baltic Sea.

<http://ccb.se/>