

COMITE REGIONAL DES PECHEES MARITIMES ET DES ELEVAGES MARINS DE BRETAGNE
REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR MARITIME FISHERIES AND SEA FARMING IN BRITTANY
-Articles 912-1 and following of the Rural and Maritime Fishing Code -

Opening Speech at the Annual General Meeting of the
North Western Waters Regional Advisory Council
In DUBLIN on the 27th of October 2011

Mr Chairman of the Executive Committee,
Mr Director,
..... (depending on the people and VIPs present)
Members of the Advisory Council,
Dear Colleagues,
Dear friends of fishing and fishermen,

It is not without a twinge of sadness that I have the pleasure of welcoming you to this new annual general meeting of the North Western Waters Regional Advisory Council. Indeed, last year, I announced my decision not to stand again for election as Chairman of this annual general meeting. In a few moments, you will therefore name my successor.

Before that, I would like to address the important issues that await us next year with the reform of the CFP.

Fishing has a future but the form that it takes will be shaped through the new CFP. Shall we give priority to socio-economic stability, employment and a multi-functional field of activity? Or shall we throw ourselves into the adventure of the financialisation of fishing rights and the concentration of production tools? The response to these questions is essential and the future of European fishing will depend on it.

For my part, and for many of my colleagues in Brittany and France, we think that excessive liberalisation would be detrimental to the profession in the long term. Not only is the future of fishing at stake, but also the food security of European consumers.

The reform could also be important for the North Western Waters Regional Advisory Council. The project presented this summer leaves the RACs with limited powers and even removes the “R” from regional in our organisation. Nevertheless, many voices in Europe have pleaded for greater regionalisation of fisheries management and more prerogatives for the RACs. Our general meeting today must clearly position itself in relation to this issue.

I also wish to reaffirm my concern in relation to the implementation of “Marine conservation zones”. I have the feeling that fishermen are not being listened to and that their interests are not being taken into consideration. Last year, my call for vigilance did not receive much of an echo. It is essential that this subject be seriously addressed this year

Before handing over, I would like to thank the NWWRAC team for these years of collaboration and I wish them well with a new team at the head of the annual general meeting and the Executive Committee.

May you all work well, and I look forward to seeing you soon.

André LE BERRE
Chairman of the North Western Waters Regional Advisory Council