

# 2-year Anniversary of BirdLife's Seabird petition: a good time to ask the Commission to keep its promises

## Title

On 9 June 2010, BirdLife Europe delivered to Commissioner Maria Damanaki, EU Commissioner for Maritime Affairs and EU Fisheries, **pledges of 23.000 European citizens** who were concerned about the needless death of seabirds in EU waters as bycatch.

Fishing gear in EU waters is estimated by BirdLife International to have killed two million seabirds in the past ten years. Globally, bycatch is the main cause for 17 out of 22 Albatross species being in danger of extinction nowadays.

When she received the montage image of a Cory's Shearwater composed of 23,000 images of seabirds, representing the voices of the citizens that day, Commissioner Damanaki declared **"It's time to do something. I am completely convinced about it?"**. And so were we.

However, since then, BirdLife Europe has estimated that more than 400,000 seabirds have died as a result of bycatch in the EU fisheries gear, while the EU action plan has still to see the light of day. In October last year (2011), Ms. Lowri Evans, Director General of DG Mare publicly affirmed that the European Commission was going to adopt the EU Seabird Action Plan by the end of the year 2011. Despite this, no text has yet been published.

BirdLife Europe was very encouraged by Ms. Evans' confirmation of DG Mare's plan of producing an "EU Seabird Action plan" containing monitoring and mitigation measures that will reduce seabird bycatch in both European and international waters. We also appreciated her call upon Members of the European Parliament, Member States, NGOs, the fishing industry and civil society to help bring about this change.

The Commission shouldn't forget that to be effective, the Action plan will need to be translated into the ongoing CFP reform and be accompanied by research, development of

technical mitigation solutions, and awareness rising within the fisheries sector. Further delays might void the action plan of much of its significance as it could arrive too late to have any impact on the ongoing CFP reform process.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary of the [BirdLife Seabird petition](#), BirdLife Europe sent a reminder to Commissioner Damanaki, asking her to keep her promises to us and to the concerned public, by finally adopting a credible and sustainable Action Plan and then swiftly following with its implementation. For more information, please contact [Elodie Cantaloube](#), Media and Communication Assistant at BirdLife Europe.

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