

COMMITMENTS AND RIGHTS FOR COASTAL FISH FARMS AS HEALTHY SEAS ASSOCIATE PARTNER DONOR

The main objective of the Healthy Seas initiative is to remove waste, in particular fishing nets, from seas to create healthier seas and recycle marine litter.

A wide range of stakeholder groups – such as volunteer divers, fishermen and local NGOs - are actively participating in this process.

Removing litter is an important activity: however, the prevention of littering itself has an even higher priority.

When it comes to the interaction with the marine environment and the production of waste fishing nets, one important sector is the fish farming industry.

Coastal fish farms use considerable amounts of nets, which impact on the marine environment in a number of ways. As well as the impact of waste fishing nets, anti-fouling treatment is widely applied to most fish nets used in fish farming, in order to keep marine life away and allow fishing nets to last longer. The treatment consists of a mix of paraffin and plastifying co-polymers, containing various chemical additives, which will remain in the seas, and in the environment, for generations.

At the end of their useful life in fish farms, it is of great importance that those fishnets enter into the recycling loop.

As has become evident over the years, it is vital as well that fish farms balance their possible impacts on the marine and coastal environment, including on issues such as the use of fish food and of medicines. Big steps in the right direction are being made by various fish farms in that respect.

Fish farms offer excellent opportunities of playing an active role in local environmental awareness activities and campaigns, informing the public and local communities about the importance of balancing ecological and economic activities.

Farmers have an important role and responsibility in the seafood chain, which includes manufacturers, processors, transporters, retailers and consumers.

Fish farm [*insert name*], joining Healthy Seas as **Associate Partner Donor**, supports the pollution prevention principle, commits itself to the general Associate Partner admission criteria, and signs up to the following commitments:

COMMITMENTS

Fishing nets

- a) To dispose of their fishing nets in a responsible way at the end of its productive lifecycle, and enter them into the recycling chain of the Healthy Seas initiative – in this way, they will become part of the ECONYL® Regeneration System;
- b) To gradually reduce the use of fishing nets coated with anti-fouling materials, and to completely eliminate anti-fouling by 2020, or earlier if possible;
- c) To increase the purchase and the use of fishing nets made of nylon 6, which is the only plastic material used in fishing net production, which can be recycled and regenerated in perpetuity;
- d) To keep a solid and transparent account of fishing nets purchased, and of the way these nets are disposed of at the end of their productive lifecycle;
- e) To follow and to promote, at a local level, plastic recycling and waste reduction in general.

Ecological impacts

- a) To cooperate with, and participate in, appropriate research, technological development and training activities, focusing on enhancement of the economic, social and environmental sustainability of aquaculture;
- b) To reduce any risk to fish health associated with the presence of wild birds, land predators and vermin, by ensuring the secure storage of feed, good feeding practice and the secure temporary storage of dead fish;
- c) To operate fish farms in a manner that ensures the highest standards of fish health and that provides the fish with conditions that are consistent with the best available advice on welfare;
- d) To use low ecological impact fish feed as much as possible, and to use veterinary medicines prudently and as little as possible, and take all reasonable steps to avoid negative ecological or health impacts – for example, feed should preferably be sourced from suppliers who participate in appropriate quality assurance schemes respecting the environment;
- e) To avoid expansion or relocation of the fish farm if it would significantly harm the natural environment.

Evident non-compliance with the above ecological impact commitments will result in a discontinuation of the Associate Partnership at any time.

Awareness raising

- a) To actively promote via their communication means, at local level, and also to manufacturers, processors, transporters, retailers, consumers and visitors, the importance of business operations which enhance sustainability in general and the Healthy Seas objectives in particular;
- b) Whenever possible, to initiate and/or participate in local awareness raising campaigns for sustainable seas and marine litter reduction.

RIGHTS

- 1) The Associate Partner fish farm is entitled to profile itself as a “Healthy Seas Fish Farm Facility”;
- 2) The Associate Partner fish farm is granted the right to use the Healthy Seas logo in the way as described in the Associate Partner admission criteria;
- 3) The Associate Partner fish farm will be included in the Healthy Seas communication tools (for example, their logo will appear on the Healthy Seas blog and other communication means and initiatives);
- 4) The Associate Partner fish farm will have access to the experience and expertise on environmental compliance, circular economy, and business & biodiversity networks of the Healthy Seas initiative;
- 5) The Associate Partner fish farm will be invited to actively participate in Healthy Seas activities and relevant meetings and will be encouraged to share its expertise on sustainable fish farming as widely as possible.

The owner and management of the fish farm will do its utmost to comply with the commitments and rights outlined here.

Signed on _____ in _____

On behalf of the fish farm _____

Function _____

Name _____

Signature _____