Transparency International EU

The global coalition against corruption

A Wide Net? New report exposes who really sits on the EU's Fisheries Advisory Councils

Marthe Jansen · Tuesday, November 3rd, 2026

Our new report delves deep into a lesser-known channel of policy influence: Advisory Councils (ACs). These provide the Commission with advice on fisheries policy, but who really sits on them? After analysing all eleven of them, we find:

- Fisheries ACs are disproportionately skewed towards large industry interests. These voices dominate: **70% of all AC seats are allocated to large industry players**. One Advisory Committee, the North Western Waters AC, allocates 83 % of seats to industry players.
- **Small-scale fisheries**, which make up 77% of the EU fishing fleet, **only take up 8% of all seats** and are not represented at all on two ACs (Aquaculture and Long Distance AC).
- Despite an obligation for these Councils to maintain a 60-40 split between "industry" and "other interest groups", NGOs are consistently underrepresented. **NGOs represent only 12% of all AC seats.**
- **In general, 78% of all AC seats are occupied by industry representatives, substantially exceeding the 60% quota stipulated by the rules, while other interest groups account for only 22% of seats**, falling short of the required 40%.

Download the full report at the button on the right.

This entry was posted on Tuesday, November 3rd, 2026 at 12:01 am