

Mr Stéphane Travert, Minister of Food and Agriculture, France

Mr Giuseppe Castiglione, Undersecretary for the Ministry for Agriculture, Italy

Dña Isabel Garcia Tejerina, Ministra de Agricultura y Pesca, Alimentación y Medio Ambiente, Spain

Mr Karmenu Vella, Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, European Union

5 October 2017

Dear Ministers and Commissioner Vella,

The Mediterranean is synonymous with a culture that celebrates food and the sea. It is part of our identity, critical to our way of life - we depend on sustainable, fresh seafood and a healthy sea. However, decades of intense overfishing in the Mediterranean has decimated fish stocks, threatening this culture and forcing us to consider a future without fish.

This week, EU Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Commissioner Karmenu Vella welcomes world leaders to Our Ocean conference in Malta. By inviting high profile guests from around the world to his home country, Commissioner Vella hopes to attract international praise for European nations by focusing the conference on ocean governance and plastic pollution.

But Mediterranean waters surrounding Malta have little to celebrate. It's currently estimated that the Mediterranean EU stocks are 96% overfished, and the sea is the sorriest example of the EU's failure to effectively implement the pillars of the Common Fisheries Policy and to end overfishing.

Mediterranean fisheries still have a chance. They may be 96% overfished, but if urgent action is taken to halt their overexploitation, these fish stocks have a good chance of rebounding to more sustainable levels by 2020. What's needed is political will from Mediterranean's EU nations to take real action, and to take it *now*, before, it's too late.

Despite last April's signing in Malta of the Medfish4ever Declaration by Mediterranean leaders, EU governments - especially those with Mediterranean waters, such as yours - are failing to deliver the urgent action required to prevent the collapse of not just the fishing business, but the entire Mediterranean ecosystem. While Our Ocean focusses on the global ocean, EU fisheries ministers and Commissioner Vella must look closer to home, and put your own houses in order.

As chefs who depend on the future health of Mediterranean fisheries, we're calling on you to take urgent, concrete measures that will conserve, protect and manage the marine resources that not only feed us, but have sustained culture for millennia.

SIGNED:

OSTERIA FRANCESCANA

Massimo Bottura
Osteria Francescana



Paco Morales
noor



Christopher Coutanceau



David Ariza

FREELAND COOK

David Ariza Abad
Freeland Cook

Ristorante
Paisa'
... stare bene a tavola.

Valerio Calabrese
Slow Food Cilento
Paisá Restaurant
Director, Mediterranean Diet



Nicola Attianese and
Filomena D'Uva
Philly's