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IUCN is the world's largest environmental knowledge network and has helped over 75 countries to prepare and implement national conservation and biodiversity strategies. IUCN is a multicultural, multilingual organization with 1000 staff located in 62 countries. Its headquarters are in Gland, Switzerland.

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NEWS RELEASE

Bridging the gap between aquaculture and the environment

Memorandum of Cooperation between the Federation of European Aquaculture Producers and the World Conservation Union.

Brussels, 10 February 2005 (IUCN) – The world's fisheries are in crisis. There is mounting scientific evidence of a sharp decline in global catches. However, fish farming has appeared as a possible solution to answer the growing demand for seafood which the catching of wild fish cannot provide. Yet, from the conservation point of view, aquaculture also raises a number of issues of concern for the environment. These include the release of waste materials, the occurrence of disease, maintenance and assurance of product quality and the introduction of new species.

More and more IUCN – The World Conservation Union, is cherishing the principles of establishing constructive relationships and long standing links with sectoral professionals. By mainstreaming conservation into business, IUCN has signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP) which aims at assuring high standards in quality food production while respecting environmental considerations and consumers' demands.

This agreement will provide a cooperating framework to identify environmental issues related to the development and management of fish farming in the Mediterranean region as well as promote the best environmental management practices for responsible fish farming within the principles of sustainable development.

The two organizations have agreed to develop and reinforce communication partnerships in order to identify relevant areas of synergy.

IUCN strategy aims to mobilize the private sector and the environmental community to work together. This initiative will contribute to the protection of biodiversity by encouraging and assisting the private sector in order to help local communities in their efforts to conserve biodiversity and to reap the economic benefits of conservation sustainably.

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