



FOOD & ALLIED WORKERS' UNION

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FAWU Statement On The MPV Lecanto Capsized Vessel

The Food and Allied Workers' Union is deeply saddened by the tragedy that saw the MPV Lecanto hake deep- sea trawler vessel owned by Sea Harvest capsized last Friday leading to many lives being lost and eleven fishermen still being unaccounted for. Our hearts go out to the families who had to learn of the dire fate of their loved ones onboard the 63-year-old vessel the MPV Lecanto

We have serious concerns over Sea Harvest management's decision in allowing a vessel that was constructed 63 years ago to venture out in weather conditions brought about by "the Cape of Storms" risking the lives of crew members. We are aware that the company own several old vessels that are more than 50 years old that we believe should have been decommissioned long ago. We also know that the company has struggled to land their target allocations and have been working their fleet and crew to maximum capacity to try and achieve this goal. However profits cannot come before workers' lives.

Furthermore, while Sea Harvest has been engaging in mergers and acquisitions totalling billions over recent years, renewal and upgrading of its fleet remained at minimal levels. FAWU therefore calls on the company to introduce safe and seaworthy vessels to prevent similar incidents in future.

FAWU believes that the search for survivors was called off too early and we wish to understand what motivated such a decision. We will support a swift and thorough investigation by the relevant authorities to explain the sudden sinking of the MPV Lecanto.

We will monitor all developments closely and ensure that the interests of crew and their relatives are protected in light of this tragedy.

For more information kindly contact FAWU General Secretary Mayoyo Mngomezulu on 082 440 4039, the Deputy General Secretary Vuka Chonco on 082 499 5854 or alternatively, the Western Cape Secretary Zolani Mbanjwa on 082 494 7940.