



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,
MARE/B2

Dear Mr López, dear Mr Remisz,

I would like to thank LDAC for its advice submitted in preparation for the 48th NAFO Annual Meeting, which took place in Vilnius on 21 to 25 September 2026.

Your input was valuable in shaping the EU position and contributed to a number of successful outcomes for the European Union. While my services will have an occasion to debrief you on this Annual Meeting during the upcoming LDAC meeting of 14-16 October, I would like to provide feedback on some of the key issues raised in your advice or discussed during the Annual Meeting:

- **Cod in Div. 3M:** NAFO agreed on a TAC for 2027 of 12.452 tonnes, corresponding to the upper end of the range advised by the Scientific Council. This TAC is in line with the NAFO Precautionary Approach Framework and took into account the scientific advice for a reduction in fishing mortality. We took good note of your concerns regarding the increased uncertainty in the assessment, in particular the continued lack of age and maturity data from the EU-Spain surveys. The EU continued to support the importance of assessing the effects of the technical flanking measures, including the sorting grid and the seasonal closure, and of ensuring the necessary scientific data are available to support future assessments. The EU reiterated this need during the meeting, and DG MARE will continue working with Member States to facilitate data sharing and cooperation between the fleet and scientific institutes.
- **Greenland Halibut in Subarea 2 and Div. 3KLMNO:** We took note of LDAC's recommendation concerning the effectiveness and adequacy of the Management Procedure (MP) control parameter μ used in calculating the TAC and put forward a request to the NAFO Scientific Council regarding the application of this parameter. In its response, the Scientific Council indicated that modifying the control parameters of the MP would require full re-opening of the Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) analysis.

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Furthermore, as NAFO Contracting Parties did not reach agreement on suspending the application of parameter μ pending the full stock assessment review scheduled for 2030, NAFO ultimately decided to set the TAC for 2027 at 14,351 tonnes, in accordance with the adopted MP. We acknowledge LDAC's concern regarding the reported disconnect between the situation observed on the fishing grounds and the scientific recommendation for further reduction of the TAC. We trust that the upcoming reviews of the stock and the MSE will provide an opportunity to further examine the uncertainties surrounding the design and application of the MP.

- **Redfish in Div. 3M:** NAFO agreed on a TAC at the upper end of the Scientific Council's advice. This outcome is consistent with the EU position and takes into account the available scientific information while applying the precautionary approach. Here too, the EU will continue working with Member States to facilitate data sharing and cooperation between the fleet and scientific institutes.
- **Redfish in Div. 3LN:** The was TAC increased slightly and set at 8,705 tonnes, corresponding to the average catches over the past five years. This decision is in line with the improved signals about the stock situation, the advice of the Scientific Council, and LDAC's recommendation.
- **Witch Flounder in Div. 3NO:** Following the significant reduction in the Scientific Council's advice, the EU was attentive to the potential implications for fisheries in terms of by-catches noted by LDAC. NAFO agreed to roll over the existing TAC, while including a footnote limiting catches to the level of the Scientific Council's advice. This approach ensures that catches remain within the scientific advice while avoiding unnecessary discards of unavoidable by-catches by the EU fleet.
- **Shrimp in Div. 3L:** The fishery in the NAFO Regulatory Area was reopened following more than a decade without a directed fishery. The existing allocation arrangement was maintained, including the EU's quota share. The EU considers this an important outcome, providing fishing opportunities while maintaining the existing allocation framework.
- **Atlantic Halibut:** NAFO agreed to bring Atlantic Halibut within the NAFO management framework, while providing for the continuation of the existing EU by-catches.

I thank you once again for your overall contribution and constructive engagement in the NAFO process. We look forward to our continued fruitful cooperation.

Should you have any questions on this reply, please contact Ms Julia Rubeck, our Advisory Councils coordinator, via the functional mailbox MARE-AC@ec.europa.eu.

Yours sincerely,

Charlina VITCHEVA