



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,  
MARE/B1//OF

Dear Mr. López,

Thank you for your letter of 20 May 2021 regarding the LDAC opinion concerning the promotion of regional sustainable fisheries management for shared fisheries resources in West Africa.

We agree that it would be beneficial for the stocks and the fleets involved to establish a non-tuna RFMO covering the waters off West Africa and this is in fact our stated objective for CECAF under the Ocean Governance Communication. For your information, a dedicated discussion on the independent cost-analysis study, funded by the EU through the FAO, is foreseen at the next CECAF Annual Meeting in 2022.

We also share your views that this study is incomplete and lacks sufficient information on the concrete steps to be taken to create a new RFMO. We have sent our comments to CECAF and would expect the study to be further revised to incorporate our remarks before its discussion at the next CECAF Annual Meeting.

I also acknowledge your comments on the study commissioned by COMHAFAT. Even if this organisation has a different role and mandate than CECAF, certainly there are some aspects providing a vital complement to the above-mentioned study funded by the EU, promoting the sustainable management of shared stocks in West Africa through the creation of a new RFMO.

I would furthermore like to point out that in the framework of the negotiations to renew the SFPA with Mauritania, we are taking into account the recommendations of the Independent Joint Scientific Committee, as well as the recommendations of the other competent Regional Fisheries Organisations (ICCAT and CECAF in particular). With regard to the specific case of the small pelagics, in addition to the actions mentioned in your letter, Mauritania informed us that they are currently working on the preparation of a dedicated management plan.

Moreover, the Independent Joint Scientific Committee, established by the Fishery Partnership Agreement with Mauritania, frequently accompanies the works of the Annual Joint Committee and since 2019, scientific experts are also invited to participate in this Annual Meeting.

If you wish to have further discussions on these matters, I would suggest the LDAC Secretariat to add a specific point on the agenda of a next LDAC meeting.

I am looking forward to our continued fruitful cooperation. Should you have any further questions on this reply, please contact Ms Pascale COLSON, coordinator of the Advisory Councils ([Pascale.COLSON@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Pascale.COLSON@ec.europa.eu); +32.2.295.62.73), who will forward it to relevant colleagues.

Yours sincerely,

Charlina VITCHEVA

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