



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,
MARE/C1/CB/ms

Dear Mr López,

Thank you for your letter of 12 June which outlines the concerns and recommendations of the Long Distance Advisory Council (LDAC) regarding the EU fishing rights and quota allocations in ICES areas 1 and 2, including waters surrounding the Spitsbergen archipelago (Svalbard).

I would like to provide some updates on the various matters you have raised.

First, regarding the level of the Arctic **cod research quota** set by Norway and Russia, the Commission has, once more, reached out to Norway on this matter. We are of the view that other options can be considered, particularly in view of the total allowable catch (TACs) decrease.

Furthermore, the Commission has raised with Norway the situation regarding the **14% haddock bycatch limit per haul** in cod fisheries in the Svalbard zone. We have noted that it restricts Union fisheries of cod in Svalbard waters compared to other Parties to the 1920 Treaty fishing for the same stock, and we called for a constructive dialogue to find workable solutions on this matter.

Concerning your point on **redfish in ICES subareas 1 and 2**, this will be addressed in the context of a future proposal on the Fishing Opportunities Regulation, following the adoption of a North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC) Recommendation, with the aspiration that such Recommendation is adopted.

My services are aware of the LDAC's concerns on **Greenland halibut in ICES areas I and II** and have taken note of the information provided by the LDAC.

Concerning your recommendations on **banking and borrowing** in ICES areas I and II, the Commission has informed Norway about the second amendment to the 2026 Fishing opportunities Regulation, published on 3 July 2026. This amendment introduces an inter-

Mr. Ivan López
Chairman Long Distance Advisory Council
ivan.lopez@pesqueraancora.com
C/Núñez de Balboa nº 49, 3º izquierda
ES-28001 MADRID
SPAIN

annual flexibility of up to 10% for the Union's quota of Arctic cod in the Barents Sea including in Svalbard waters and that it may be used by the EU, in the same manner as it is being applied by certain other Parties to the 1920 Treaty of Paris, including Norway.

Regarding the research and management of fisheries in the Barents Sea, including **northern shrimp**, we continue to engage with Norway on these matters. At the same time, the Commission continues to defend the EU's fishing rights and non-discriminatory fisheries measures in the Svalbard area and has formally reiterated the Union position, including through a Note Verbale sent to Norway on 8 April 2026.

Finally, we take note of the LDAC's comments on **collecting bags** in bottom trawl fisheries. ICES presented the part 2 of the scientific advice on this fishing gear during the Like-Minded Permanent Committee on Management and Science (PECMAS 01) in March 2026 and we expect further discussion on this report at the forthcoming NEAFC meetings.

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

Yours sincerely,

Charlina VITCHEVA

c.c.: Alexandre Rodriguez alexandre.rodriguez@ldac.eu
Manuela Iglesias secretaria@ldac.eu