



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,
MARE/D3/PC/Ares (2020)

Mr. Alexandre Rodríguez
Executive Secretary
Long Distance Advisory Council
alexandre.rodriquez@ldac.eu

Your Ref: R-15-20/WG1

Subject: LDAC recommendations to inform the EU position on conservation and management measures for North Atlantic Stock of Shortfin Mako (*Isurus Oxyrinchus*) caught in association with ICCAT fisheries

Dear Mr. Rodriguez,

I would like to thank you for the LDAC recommendations of 19 November 2020 on Northern shortfin mako (SMA) in the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT).

At the time of writing to you, the negotiations in ICCAT are still ongoing and the position of the European Union (EU) reflects the mandate received by the Commission from the Council. It is challenging to envisage how a satisfactory outcome can be reached in the context of this year's exchanges through written correspondence in ICCAT, especially considering the polarization of the positions around the issue of a full retention ban. It is therefore likely that further discussions will be required in 2021, possibly via the organisation of a dedicated intersessional meeting of ICCAT Panel 4.

Nevertheless, the EU remains committed to try to avoid a simple rollover of the existing measures under Recommendation 19-06, and instead is seeking additional progress on a number of key areas in order to effectively reduce mortality, including through the introduction of catch limits.

The Commission acknowledges and welcomes the sustained efforts made by the European fleets since 2017 and their buy-in into the management measures, which have resulted in a substantial decrease of the catches. Despite these efforts, the fishing mortality for these important sharks remain too high and this calls for additional measures to be implemented as soon as possible.

The Commission therefore welcomes the engagement of LDAC on this issue and values the advice provided to guide ongoing and future discussions.

I invite you to take contact with Ms Pascale Colson, coordinator of the Advisory Councils (pascale.colson@ec.europa.eu; +32 2 29 56273) should you have any question on this reply.

Yours sincerely,

Charlina VITCHEVA