

Att. Mr. Fernando Andresen Guimarães

Director, Directorate B – International Ocean Governance and Sustainable Fisheries

Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE)

European Commission

1049 Brussels, Belgium

Madrid, 3 February 2026

Ref.: R-11-Ej.19(2025-2026)/WG4-WG5

Subject: Need for a detailed response to LDAC advice to consider the role of fishing joint ventures and especially those that promote sustainability and transparency

Dear Director Guimarães,

The LDAC would like to thank the European Commission for its reply to the LDAC advice adopted on 16 October 2025 on “Advancing Sustainability in EU-Linked Fishing Joint Ventures”.

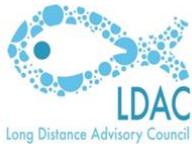
The lack of details in this [reply](#) stands in stark contrast to the [reply](#) we received to our advice from May 2025 “LDAC Advice on Improving Transparency of Fishing Joint Ventures in Third Countries” which is much more detailed but is not a completely satisfactory answer to all our enquiries.

Ahead of the upcoming communication on the EU Strategy of the external action the LDAC has prioritised the role of Joint Ventures as we see an opportunity to better include these European investments in European policy. For the LDAC to provide informed advice, we count on a dialogue with DG Mare on this topic.

We appreciate the Commission’s engagement on this topic. At the same time, members consider that the reply does not substantially address the core proposals and recommendations put forward in the LDAC advice on how joint ventures could be recognised and governed in a way that ensures, environmental sustainability, social responsibility, and clear mutual benefits for partner countries.

In this context, LDAC members would like to emphasise the relevance of the recent exchanges with LDAC or its members with representatives of EU partner countries, including fishers and non-profit organisations. These discussions confirmed a consistent message: partner countries are increasingly looking for tangible, concrete, and demonstrable benefits from their fisheries relations with the European Union. These benefits include contributions to local value creation, employment, skills development, technology transfer, and improved governance and transparency.

Against this background, LDAC members believe that those fishing joint ventures that are operating according to transparency, sustainability and accountability requirements set out in the LDAC advice, could be part of what the EU has to offer to partner countries. Indeed, such joint ventures should not be seen in isolation, but rather as complementary to existing instruments that deliver benefits to partner countries, including SFPAs, development cooperation initiatives (often backed by EU Member States’ own support), and trade preferences facilitating access of partner-country fishery products to the EU market.



LDAC members therefore respectfully invite the Commission to further consider the substance of the LDAC advice and provide a more detailed response to its recommendations. This is especially relevant as the LDAC has committed to continue working on the 'Concrete implementation of Joint Ventures sustainability and transparency requirements by the EU and all Member States. We plan to get into more details about how sustainability and transparency requirements for joint ventures, as agreed by LDAC members, can be operationalised at EU and Member State level'.

We encourage the Commission to consider the potential role that those joint ventures that operate in line with EU standards on environmental and social sustainability and are transparent could play within a coherent and mutually beneficial EU external fisheries policy.

The LDAC remains fully available to continue this constructive dialogue and to contribute further to the Commission's reflections on this matter.

We thank you in advance for your attention and look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

Iván López

LDAC Chair