



LONG DISTANCE FLEET ADVISORY COUNCIL

To: Bernhard Friess
Acting Director General - DG MARE
European Commission
JII-99, B-1040 Brussels

Reference: R-04-20/ExCom

Madrid, 13 May 2020

Subject: Requests to open and develop a communication channel with DG Environment

Dear Director General,

During our last Executive Committee meeting held in Madrid on 28 November 2019, we had the opportunity to discuss with the Director of International Ocean Governance and Sustainable Fisheries of DG MARE, Ms. Veronika Veits, a number of topics linked to global and regional processes to enhance the role of the EU in fisheries management.

It was made clear to the LDAC that there are an increasing number of areas related to conservation of marine biodiversity and sustainable fisheries which require a closer collaboration between EC fisheries and environmental policies in 2020 and beyond.

These linkages find its legal basis both in the EU Treaties, CFP Regulation and the mandate provided to the new Commissioner on the Oceans, Environment and Fisheries, Mr. Sinkevicius by President von der Leyen's Political Guidelines in relation to a headline ambition titled "*a Europe stronger in the world*".

In order to coordinate and interchange useful information in how environmental policies affect fisheries management ones and vice versa, the LDAC considers extremely useful to open a more direct channel communication with the DG Environment as a complement of our work with DG MARE in order to assist these two DGs to fulfil the EC Communication on a Work Programme for 2020¹.

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/2020-commission-work-programme-key-documents_en

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Given our balanced composition of stakeholders (both fishing industry sector and other interest groups including NGOs) and our specific remit as the only Advisory Council dealing exclusively with fisheries management in international waters, we feel that there are specific areas identified in our work programme in which we could collaborate to mutually benefit in terms of exchange of knowledge and quality of advice such as:

- Implementation of EU Communication on International Ocean Governance;
- Review of the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy including CBD and post 2020 Aichi targets;
- Impact of climate change in fisheries;
- Protection of the vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) and biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction (ABNJ)
- Marine spatial planning and area based management tools (including MPAs and OECMs)
- UN processes including negotiation for a BBNJ Treaty; UN Workshop on Bottom Fishing; ICSP15 or UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon;
- Fulfilment and coordination of UN 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development Goals – interaction between SDGs 13, 14 and 17;
- EIA and SEA in relation to fishing and other marine activities such as deep-sea mining.

For the above mentioned reasons, **we would like to request a joint meeting between the LDAC and DG Environment and DG MARE representatives**, when conditions allow so after COVID-19 extraordinary measures, in order to present you our lines of work and explore avenues of future collaboration with both teams.

The LDAC would also wish to be able to have a liaison officer in DG ENV to channel future invitations and requests of participation to attend future LDAC meetings.

We remain at your disposal for any further queries you may have.

Yours sincerely,

Iván López van der Veen
Chair of the Long Distance Advisory Council