

MINUTES

LDAC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Venue: NH Brussels Carrefour de l'Europe
 (Rue Marche aux Herbes-Grasmarkt Straat, 110. Brussels)
Thursday, 16 October 2025
13:30 – 16:00h CEST

Chair: Iván López van der Veen
 Vice Chairs: Vanya Vulperhorst, Julio Morón and Marc Ghiglia
 Rapporteurs (Secretariat): Alexandre Rodríguez and Manuela Iglesias

1. Welcome by the Chair

The Chair, Mr. Iván López, welcomes members, observers and the rest of invited experts.

He then informs about the vote delegations (if appropriate) received in writing prior to the meeting:

AG members not able to attend:	They delegate their vote to:
Iris Ziegler Seas at Risk	Vanya Vulperhorst OCEANA
Raúl García WWF	Vanya Vulperhorst OCEANA
Javier Garat CEPESCA	Edelmiro Ulloa OPNAPA
Julio Morón CEPESCA	Edelmiro Ulloa OPNAPA
Tim Heddema Dutch Pelagic Fisheries Association	Aivaras Labanauskas LLDFA
Emil Remisz NAPO	Aivaras Labanauskas LLDFA
Julien Daudu EJF	Béatrice Gorez CFFA-CAPE

The Chair informs that there is the necessary quorum (half plus one of a total of 23 members) for adoption of decisions by members present and represented.

The complete list of attendees is included in **ANNEX I**.

2. Approval of the agenda

The agenda is approved with no comments or modifications.

3. Approval of the minutes of the last Executive Committee meeting (Vigo, 13 May 2025)

The minutes of the previous Executive Committee meeting held on 13 May 2025 at the port of Vigo are approved without any comments or changes.

4. Presentation of the LDAC Performance Review (BG Sea Consulting)

Mr. Benoît Guerin, BG Sea Consulting, makes a presentation on the results and recommendations of the second LDAC performance review based on the 5-year period 2020-2025 that has just been completed and the publication of which is expected for the month of November.

The content of the presentation is available on the following link:

<https://ldac.eu/images/i/LDAC2ndPerfoReview-ExCom16October-BenoitGuerin.pdf>

Moreover, it is reported that the LDAC Secretariat is working on the final and corrected version, as well as commissioning the design and layout of the review report. Therefore the following action is agreed.

ACTION: The final report together with the second LDAC performance review will be published on the LDAC website before the end of November and will be distributed to the LDAC members, DG MARE and the rest of Advisory Councils in good time¹. In addition, it will be presented at the Inter-AC meeting to be held on 18 November 2025.

5. Administrative and procedural matters. Report by the Secretariat on:

5.1- Proposal for LDAC membership fee increase for the financial year from 1 June 2026 to 31 May 2027 and subsequent years.

Due to time restrictions as item 5.3 is to be addressed as a matter of priority, it is agreed to address this item at the next ExCom meeting to be held at the beginning of 2026.

5.2- Calls for LDAC partnership in European projects

Due to time restrictions as item 5.3 is to be addressed as a matter of priority, it is agreed to address this item at the next ExCom meeting to be held at the beginning of 2026.

¹ The final publication of the Performance Review (2020-2025) is available on the following link:
https://ldac.eu/images/LDAC_PERFORMANCE_REVIEW_2020-2025_FINAL.pdf 2

5.3- Proposals for streamlining formal and informal consultation procedures:

- Formal set up of “management/steering team” (Chair)

The Chair, Mr. Iván López, explains the importance of including a new specific article in the rules of procedure that contains a definition including the composition, mission and running of a "Steering Committee". This Committee already exists in practical terms, and it is made up of the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Executive Committee and the Working Groups, with the participation and assistance of the LDAC Secretariat, that also acts as convenor, organiser and coordinator. This Committee has been informally operating for two years with regular (fortnightly or monthly) meetings, but it is necessary to include it in the rules of procedure so that it is formally recognised and is authorised to make decisions based on its defined mandate scope.

Following the unanimous agreement of those present, **the approval of this "Steering Committee" that is already operating in practical terms is agreed, so a draft text describing its composition and functions will be presented by the Secretariat at the next Executive Committee meeting. If appropriate, the said text will be submitted to the Executive Committee for formal approval so that it may be subsequently ratified by the General Assembly at the meeting to be held in May 2026.**

The Secretariat will arrange the necessary formalities for the formal amendment of the rules of procedure in order for the updated version to be registered in the Spanish Register of Associations.

- Consultation procedures in writing (NGOs)

Ms. Vanya Vulperhorst, OCEANA, suggests an improvement in the procedures for written consultation on draft recommendations or advice for adoption, in which multiple changes are introduced and different versions are distributed throughout time, especially in fast-track procedures. Ms. Vulperhorst invites the Secretariat to explain the nature and location of all changes between versions more clearly and in more detail to the members, although she is aware of the difficulties this entails.

Mr. Alexandre Rodríguez, General Secretary, replies that, in those cases where there are multiple versions of a technically complex document, the best option would be to have one or several Focus Group meetings to analyse any significant changes, providing members with interpreting services when they request so or it is objectively necessary.

The Chair, Mr. Iván López, agrees with the Secretary but considers it important that members - insofar as possible - try to send their comments well in advance and not wait until the last day of the stipulated period for approval. Furthermore, he encourages all members to carefully read the final draft sent for approval, and not only changes highlighted in yellow, in order to avoid misunderstandings or mistakes when giving consent or approval, always respecting the deadlines set.

Ms. Béatrice Gorez, CFFA-CAPE, highlights the importance of avoiding technical discussions and exchanges of conflicting opinions by e-mail as far as possible, as it leads to multiple misunderstandings both in interpretation and tone. Therefore, she supports₃

what has been said by the Chair and the Secretary regarding the importance of reading the documents in their entirety and calling Focus Group meetings for those interested to jointly analyse the content and the changes made.

Regarding the possibility of rectifying a paragraph of the already approved advice on ICCAT, as requested by some NGOs (OCEANA, PEW, WWF and EJF), following some discussion among the members with differing positions, the following is finally **AGREED**:

- **To keep the whole text of the advice on ICCAT without modifications or amendments to it, leaving it exactly as it was approved in the past, in order to avoid setting a precedent regarding subsequent changes to future pieces of advice or documents to be approved that would effectively involve some kind of opt-out. In addition, reference is made to the responsibility of members when revising the final versions of draft documents prior to their approval.**

Mr. Luis Vicente, ADAPL, requests it be recorded in the minutes that the LDAC Secretariat must not be held accountable for this incident, since it is a responsibility shared by all LDAC members.

5.4- Proposal of collaboration with Ecoafrik Foundation

Due to time restrictions as item 5.3 is to be addressed as a matter of priority, it is agreed to address this item at the next ExCom meeting to be held at the beginning of 2026. Apologies are offered to Dr. Ana Ramos for this last-minute change.

5.5- Decision from members on items above

The members agree on actions covered under item 5.3 and on the fact that items 5.1, 5.2 and 5.4 of this agenda will be addressed at the next Executive Committee meeting to be held in Madrid at the beginning of 2026.

6. Mid- term review of LDAC work in Y19

6.1. Monitoring of work programme

It is agreed to discuss this matter at the next Executive Committee meeting.

6.2. Proposal on additional unscheduled meetings: MARE-LDAC dialogue on strategy for fisheries external action and high level conference on Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements

The General Secretary, Mr. Alexandre Rodríguez, informs that a meeting is expected to be held between the LDAC and DG MARE on the EU strategy for fisheries external action, in order for it to be discussed more in detail among the members and directly with the EC representatives. The date is likely to be mid- or late January 2026. As soon as it is confirmed, the Secretariat will let all members know.

On the other hand, Mr. Carlos Aldereguía, Director General for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Blue Economy in the Regional Government of Andalusia (Spain) has sent the Secretariat a proposal to fund, together with other sponsors, the organisation by the LDAC of an event on the new generation of Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (SFPAs) at the European Parliament in Brussels. The latter is likely to be held at the end of February or in March 2026.

In order to set the exact dates, programme, guests and sponsors for this event, the LDAC Secretariat will be soon called to participate in the relevant organising committee.

Noting the preliminary interest and approval of the members on this initiative, the following **ACTIONS** are agreed:

- **The Secretariat will continue to make progress with Mr. Aldereguía and the members of the organising committee in planning this event. The Executive Committee members will be timely informed on any novelties regarding this event, and about the meeting to be held in January.**
- **As soon as the dates and the agenda are clear, a letter shall be sent to the President, Spokespersons and Members of the European Parliament's Fisheries Committee, to the cabinet of the Commissioner for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, the representatives of the Council (MS) and DG MARE staff informing on this event. Moreover, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) shall be reached to assess the possibility of booking a room and holding the event at their headquarters.**

6.3. Request for adoption of pending LDAC working papers and advice

Following an explanation by the Secretariat on the state of play of the final drafts of pieces of advice pending approval by the Executive Committee, that have been previously distributed via email and the consultation process for comments in writing of which is over, **approval of all four of them indicated below is unanimously agreed so that they can be sent to the EC.**

- **LDAC Advice: “Towards a new generation of Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (SFPAs)”**
- **LDAC Advice on “Advancing Sustainability in EU-Linked Fishing Joint Ventures”**
- **LDAC advice: “Recommendations for the 22nd Regular Session of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC22)”**
- **LDAC advice: “Recommendations for the 44th Annual Meeting of NEAFC”**

7. Date and venue for next Executive Committee meeting and CLOSE.

The Chair, Mr. Iván López, suggests studying new alternative locations to Brussels to hold the March working group meetings in order to reduce logistical costs.

It is agreed that the next Executive Committee meeting will take place in mid- or late January in Madrid.

He then informs that the General Assembly and Executive Committee meetings will be held in May 2026 in the Netherlands. The exact venue and date will be confirmed soon along with the rest of meetings for the first quarter of 2026.

He ends the meeting thanking the members for their attendance and participation, the interpreting team and sound technicians for their work and the Secretariat for the organisation and smooth running of the meeting, as well as for the preparation of documents prior to the meeting.

The meeting is closed.

ANNEX I: List of attendees

Executive Committee

EU Long Distance Advisory Council

Brussels, 16 October 2025; 13:30-16:00h

Members

1. Iván López. AGARBA/CEPESCA (Spain)
2. Vanya Vulperhorst. OCEANA (European Union)
3. Marc Ghiglia. UAPF/CNPMEM (France)
4. Michel Goujon. ORTHONGEL (France)
5. Xavier Leduc. UAPF (France)
6. Aivaras Labanauskas. Lithuanian Long Distance Fisheries Association (Lithuania)
7. Luis Vicente. ADAPI (Portugal)
8. Despina Symons. EBCD (European Union)
9. Francisco Mari. BFW (Germany)
10. Edelmiro Ulloa. OPNAPA / OPP3/ ACEMIX / AGARBA (Spain)
11. Juan Manuel Trujillo. ETF (European Union)

Chairs and Vice Chairs of Working Groups

12. Anne-France Mattlet. EUROPÊCHE (WG1 Chair)
13. Ignacio Fresco. OCEANA (WG1 Vice Chair)
14. Béatrice Gorez. CFFA-CAPE (WG4 Chair)
15. Julien Daudu. EJF (WG5 Chair)
16. Daniel Voces. EUROPÊCHE (WG5 Vice Chair)

Observers

17. Joëlle Philippe. CFFA-CAPE
18. Benoît Guerin. BG Sea Consulting (Zoom)
19. Ana Ramos. Ecoafrik (Zoom)
20. Christine Xu. Aquatic Life Institute
21. Yago Rosado. OCEANA
22. Margot Angibaud. EUROPÊCHE

LDAC Secretariat

23. Alexandre Rodríguez. LDAC
24. Manuela Iglesias. LDAC
25. Marta de Lucas. LDAC (Zoom)