

MINUTES

LDAC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Venue: Martin's Brussels EU Hotel (Bd Charlemagne 80, 1000 Brussels)

Thursday, 17 October 2024

14:30 – 17:00h

Chair: Iván López van der Veen

Vice Chairs: Vanya Vulperhost, Julio Morón and Marc Ghiglia

Rapporteurs (Secretariat): Alexandre Rodríguez and Manuela Iglesias

1. Welcome by the LDAC Chair, Mr. Iván López van der Veen

The Chair, Mr. Iván López, welcomes members, observers from Member States, DG MARE and FAO representatives, as well as the rest of invited experts.

He then indicates the vote delegations received:

Members not able to attend:	They delegate their vote to:
Einar Bergur (ELDFA)	Aivaras Labanauskas (LLDFA)
Julio Morón (CEPESCA)	Daniel Voces (Europêche)
Javier Garat (CEPESCA)	Daniel Voces (Europêche)

The Chair informs that there is the necessary quorum (over 50%) for adoption of decisions by members present or 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. Adoption of minutes of the last Executive Committee – Berlin, 22 May 2024

The minutes of the previous Executive Committee meeting held on 22 May 2024 in Berlin are approved.

4. Update on FAO ABNJ Deep-sea Fisheries Project – Ms. Eszter Hidas

Ms. Eszter Hidas, FAO, makes a presentation on one of the 5 projects under the Common Oceans Programme umbrella, fully funded by the GEF. The time scope is from 2022 to 2027. One of the actions undertaken is the review of the implementation of FAO guidelines on deep-sea fisheries. Generally speaking, there are positive changes regarding bottom fisheries management in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ). Moreover, she announces that a high-level event will be held in Barcelona on 9 and 10 May 2025, as well as some thematic workshops on cross-sectoral research work with deep-sea fisheries or deep-sea sharks conservation and management. Finally, she concludes by inviting LDAC members to join the DSF technical forum as information channel, to discuss proposals and send feedback to the technical components of the project.

The content of Ms. Hidas' presentation is available on the following link:

https://ldac.eu/images/Presentation_FAO_DeepSea_Fisheries_project_Ezther_Hidas.pdf

5. Administrative and procedural issues:

5.1. Proposal for adoption of updated Code of Conduct for LDAC meetings.

The Chair, Mr. Iván López, recalls that at the General Assembly held in May 2023 the suggestion to update the code of conduct was approved.

The updated version was sent to the members and it is available for consultation on the following link (with changes highlighted in green):

https://ldac.eu/images/ENG_Draft_Code_of_Conduct_and_Annex_May2024_V3.pdf

The following is **AGREED: to approve the updated code of conduct, being open to further modifications if so considered or proposed in the future.**

5.2. Proposal on procedure and timing for tender of performance review

Mr. Alexandre Rodríguez, General Secretary, explains that the LDAC carried out a voluntary performance review in the years 2018-2020 on its own initiative. This performance review was structured in two distinct phases owing to budgetary and technical reasons:

- The first phase was carried out during the 2018-2019 tax year and focused on the organisation of working groups, the analysis of the decision-making process, quality of advice, as well as replies from the EC to advice and the promotion of transparency.
- The second phase was carried out during the 2019-2020 tax year and was based on: cooperation and work practices with international organisations, communication and dissemination policy, and aspects related to gender balance in sectoral policies.

He then informs that in this 2024-2025 tax year, in light of provisions set forth under recital 14 and new Article 7a of the Delegated Regulation (EU) 2022/204, that recently incorporated amendments to the functioning of the Advisory Councils, it is compulsory for the LDAC to perform an external and independent performance review, since five years have gone by since the first one was conducted. Therefore, the Secretary proposes to the members, prior consultation to the Commission for approval, that the Executive Committee approve carrying out this second review. Owing to practical and cost-efficiency reasons, he suggests focusing this review on verifying compliance with recommendations identified in sections I and II of the first performance review, in order to consider corrective or additional actions to achieve full effective implementation if appropriate.

After receiving positive feedback and comments from the members to carry out this performance review along the lines suggested by the Secretary, **the following ACTION is agreed:**

- **To include this item in the agenda for the next Executive Committee meeting to be held in Madrid on 7 November. The Secretariat will present the tender bases of the performance review for approval and to launch a tender invitation as soon as possible in order to start work at the beginning of 2025 for it to be carried out in time before the end of the tax year (31 May 2025).**

5.3. LDAC credentials to access the European Parliament

The Chair, Mr. Iván López, suggests that the LDAC Secretariat staff be those who have the relevant credentials to access the European Parliament. Only the Secretariat staff will be able to request credentials via the EU transparency register while LDAC chairs, vice chairs and/or other members shall request them through their own organisations if they wish to do so.

DECISION: This proposal is unanimously approved, adding this point to the code of conduct for transparency purposes.

6. Report on Inter-AC work and EC priorities for last quarter 2024 and 2025:

6.1. Report on outcomes of the inter-AC coordination meeting with MARE (4 Oct. 2024)

Mr. Alexandre Rodríguez, General Secretary, summarises the meeting led by the LDAC Chair who, as delegation spokesperson, read the statement previously agreed by consensus with the management team made up by chairs, vice chairs and the secretariat.

In his intervention, he summarised the main topics mentioned such as the CFP assessment process regarding the external dimension, the sustainable fisheries partnership agreements (SFPAs), the level playing field (LPF), zero tolerance against IUU fishing (in collaboration with EFCA) or work carried out by fisheries companies with external investments. In addition, more resources were requested both for the EC and to increase scientific and technical contributions to the different RFMOs and the creation of an inter-AC forum for the North East Atlantic was proposed, similar to the already existing one for Brexit.

Finally, he points out the detailed responses given by Director Charlina Vitcheva that will be shared once the official meeting report is available.

The following **ACTION** is agreed:

- **To distribute the final version of the Inter-AC minutes and the presentations by DG MARE among the Executive Committee members once they are made available.**

6.2. State of play of WGs for Energy Transition Partnership for EU fisheries and Aquaculture (4 Oct. 2024)

Mr. Alexandre Rodríguez, General Secretary, indicates that written clarifications have been requested from the Commission by letter led by the LDAC on the role of coordinators and the Secretariat, consultation deadlines and the roadmap for this initiative.

The said letter was sent on 30 September as a joint letter from LDAC, MEDAC, PELAC and AAC, and is available here: https://ldac.eu/images/LDAC-MEDAC-PelAC-AAC_letter_on_role_of_ACs_on_ETP_WGs_30Sept2024.pdf

The following **ACTION** is agreed: **to continue informing members on any new developments or additional information that is received regarding this topic, and to consider the appropriateness of the LDAC possible participation in the working group to be set up on external distant water fleets.**

6.3. State of play of “Fishers for the Future” foresight initiative

Mr. Alexandre Rodríguez, General Secretary, recalls that at the end of May the NWWAC, LDAC, MAC, PELAC, MEDAC and SWWAC sent a joint letter to the EC regarding this initiative.

The said letter is available on this link:

[https://ldac.eu/images/Multi AC letter Fishers of the Future May2024 EN.pdf](https://ldac.eu/images/Multi_AC_letter_Fishers_of_the_Future_May2024_EN.pdf)

In addition, several workshops analysing the different existing scenarios and the consequences for fishers of the future were held. Further information on existing developments on this initiative will continue to be provided.

6.4. Update on the creation of an Inter-AC Forum:

6.4.1. Implementation of new EU Control Regulation

The General Secretary, Mr. Alexandre Rodríguez, starts by explaining that DG MARE has made it clear to all ACs that it is a cross-sectional and not regional topic that they wish to discuss and address at Inter-AC level and not individually with each Advisory Council. Therefore, the LDAC has agreed to join the initiative of other ACs to organise a face-to-face seminar with the DG MARE control unit at the beginning of next year (February 2025). As for the structure of this event, there will be a morning session with a common section with topics of interest for all Advisory Councils and an afternoon session that will be divided into subject matters so that each AC will have a certain amount of time set aside.

The following **ACTION** is agreed: **to inform members on the date of the call and organisation details in coordination with the Secretariats of the interested ACs as soon as they are made public.**

6.4.2. North Atlantic coastal states negotiation and bilateral & trilateral dialogues between the EU and North East Atlantic third countries (Norway, UK, Faroe Islands...) – Chair's proposal to expand the scope of Brexit Forum

The LDAC Chair, Mr. López, recalls his proposal to set up an Inter-AC forum with DG MARE that is similar to that on Brexit to have a regular communication channel for bilateral and multilateral negotiations with North Eastern Atlantic countries (Norway, Iceland, Faroe, United Kingdom...) transferring some matters that are currently addressed in WG2 and adding other interested Advisory Councils (e.g. NWWAC, NSAC, PELAC).

He believes that this would result in improved coordination among all actors concerned (DG MARE representatives and common members participating in several Advisory Councils) allowing for an optimisation of time and resources.

6.5. Proposals on involvement and collaboration of LDAC with other ACs:

6.5.1. MAC-AAC-NSAC Event with MEPs: role of Advisory Councils (12 Nov. 2024)

The General Secretary, Mr. Alexandre Rodríguez, informs that on 12 November (from 12:45 to 14:15h), Advisory Councils based in Brussels (MAC, AAC and NSAC) have organised an event at the European Parliament to raise awareness among the members of the Committee on Fisheries (EP-PECH) on the role of Advisory Councils in the framework of the Common Fisheries Policy.

As for the agenda, there will be very brief presentations by DG MARE and the hosting Advisory Councils, followed by a half-hour exchange of opinions, and the maximum number of participants per AC will be of 2 representatives.

After the exchange of views by the members, the following **ACTIONS** are agreed:

- **To respond to the invitation from MAC-AAC-NSAC to confirm the participation of 2 LDAC representatives.**
- **To convey to organisers what has been discussed by the Chair and Vice Chairs (both of the ExCom and WG5 level) highlighting the fact that EU Advisory Councils need to remain politically neutral (not only diverse) in order for the work to be objective and for it to represent all stakeholders, so when organising external events with the Parliament there is a need to act in a cautious way and to respect the formal channels of invitation via the Chair and Vice Chairs of the EP-PECH. For this reason, it is most appropriate and usual to only invite the PECH Committee Chair in an official capacity, and if she is not available then invite the Vice Chairs one by one, following the hierarchy established and always leaving aside each one's political party, in order to remain neutral and avoid being perceived as lobbies.**

6.5.2. MAC workshop on the role of Fishing Producers Organisations (28 Jan. 2025)

The General Secretary, Mr. Alexandre Rodríguez, informs that the MAC is organising a workshop on the role of Producer Organisations (POs). The aim is to address some issues mentioned in the Commission report on the implementation of the CMO Regulation (e.g. differentiated treatment by national administrations, the need to improve the support to Transnational Producer Organisations and Interprofessional Organisations, among other). The workshop will also aim to compile information on the implementation and use of funding by PMPs in the EMFAF framework. In addition, the MAC asked whether the rest of ACs would be willing to co-host the event.

After a round of comments among the members, the following **ACTIONS** are agreed:

- **To ask the LDAC members who would like to participate in the event.**
- **To convey to the MAC that, although the LDAC is interested in participating, it is not capable of co-hosting or co-funding it at this moment in time and to suggest that collaboration would be possible in the future through recommendations to optimise the use of available funds in the PMP under EMFAF. These recommendations would refer to actions aimed at disseminating best practices and achieving a level playing field, promoting fair and equitable market conditions among EU and non-EU producers.**

6.5.3. Joint NSAC-LDAC-BSAC letter on stakeholder involvement in ICES request for scientific advice processes.

The General Secretary, Mr. Alexandre Rodríguez, presents the draft joint letter that has been previously distributed among WG5 and ExCom members, the consultation period for which ends later this week.

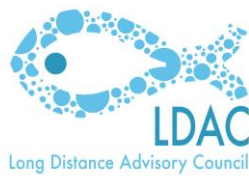
The following **ACTION** is agreed: **to unanimously approve this letter.**

7. Any other business:

The LDAC Chair, Mr. Iván López, recalls that the next Executive Committee meeting will be held in Madrid on 7 November. The agenda of the next meeting will include an item to explain and decide on the proposal of holding the next General Assembly and Executive Committee meetings in Vigo in May 2025 together with a seminar or workshop that could be devoted to the external dimension and its role in the assessment of the CFP.

With no other issues to address, the session is adjourned by the LDAC Chair thanking speakers for the quality of their presentations, members and observers for their attendance and participation, the LDAC Secretariat for their technical work and their efforts in organising and coordinating logistics and documents, and the sound technician and the interpreting team for their technical quality and excellent work, respectively.

The meeting is closed.



ANNEX I: List of attendees

Long Distance Advisory Council Executive Committee Martin's Brussels EU Hotel

Thursday, 17 October 2024, 14:30-17:00h

ATTENDEES

1. Iván López. AGARBA/CEPESCA
2. Vanya Vulperhorst. OCEANA
3. Tim Hedemma. Pelagic Freezer trawler Association
4. Xavier Leduc.UAPF
5. Marc Ghiglia.UAPF
6. Raúl García. WWF
7. Aivaras Labanauskas. Lithuanian Long Distance Fisheries Association
8. Edelmiro Ulloa. OPP3/OPNAPA/ACEMIX
9. Roberto Alonso. ANFACO-CECOPECA/AIPCE
10. Emil Remisz. High Seas Fish Producers Organization
11. Iris Ziegler. Seas at Risk
12. Despina Symons. EBCD

WG Chairs and Vice Chairs

13. Julien Daudu. EJF – WG5 Chair
14. Daniel Voces. EUROPECHE – WG5 Vice Chair
15. Anne-France Mattlet. Europêche tuna group - WG1 Chair

OBSERVERS

16. Rosalie Tukker. EUROPECHE
17. Estzer Hidas. FAO (Zoom)
18. Joelle Philippe. CFFA-CAPE
19. Jean Christophe Vandavelde. PEW

LDAC SECRETARIAT

20. Alexandre Rodríguez. LDAC
21. Manuela Iglesias. LDAC
22. Marta de Lucas. LDAC (Zoom)