



LONG DISTANCE FLEET ADVISORY COUNCIL

Att.: Ms. Charlina VITCHEVA
Director General
DG MARE - Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
JII99, B-1000 BRUSSELS

Madrid, 18th February 2022

Subject: Support to DG MARE work and clarification on possible EC budget reductions

Dear Ms. Vitcheva,

The LDAC wishes to highlight the importance to have a robust DG MARE staff for the success of the completion and implementation of the EU Common Fisheries Policy and related cross-cutting strategies such as Green Deal, Biodiversity or International Ocean Governance.

In particular, we greatly value the work of those representatives involved with the work falling within the remit of the LDAC, who come often to our meetings, address our queries regularly and provide comprehensive replies to our written advice. This is crucial for guaranteeing stakeholders' meaningful participation in EU decision making and ensure good governance. It is also in the benefit of DG MARE to consolidate this bilateral dialogue to be fully aware of the AC priorities and adjust strategies and policy directions to fine tune their needs and demands. The ACs would also be better prepared to deal with the growing number of public online consultations and targeted contributions in technical meetings/workshops.

From the LDAC, we give recognition and support to the technical meetings our delegates have had with DG MARE negotiating teams in preparation of international high-profile meetings such as RFMO annual meetings or UN related processes. This interaction allows us to provide our views in due advance so it can influence in the mandate proposed by the Commission. The workload to organize those meetings and integrate such comments in their files cannot be underestimated and requires backup and support from several officials.

Despite all the evidences shown above, we note with concern an announcement made by the Director of International Ocean Governance and Sustainable Fisheries, Ms. Veits, during her speech at the last LDAC Executive Committee meeting in November 2021. She informed that the European Commission had approved a significant budget reduction on all their directorates including DG MARE, based on a recent decision that can be found here:

https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/about_the_european_commission/eu_budget/db_2022_wd_2_human_resources_web_0.pdf

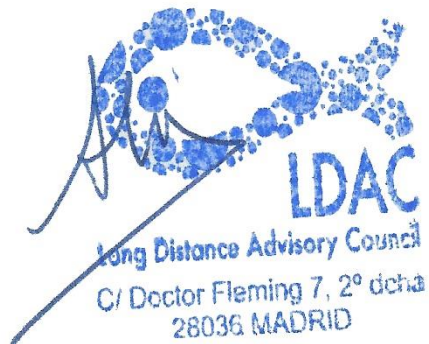
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From the LDAC, we wish to strongly support DG MARE staff work and dedication to date and we would like to know what impact these budget cuts might have in practical operations such as participation to meetings, staff resources for relevant units (e.g., international ocean governance, SFPAs, RFMOs, IUU fishing...). We hope that this decrease will only apply to office space and new modalities of remote working but will not severely affect your functioning as a result of a reduction of staff.

We look forward to hearing from you on this and remain at your disposal for any specific support you may require from us.

Yours sincerely,



Iván López van der Veen
LDAC Chair

Alexandre Rodríguez
LDAC Executive Secretary