

MINUTES
LDAC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, 28 November 2019. 09.30.-16.00h
NH Collection Madrid Eurobuilding Hotel.
Madrid (Spain)

Chair: Iván López van der Veen
Vice-Chairs: Béatrice Gorez, Juan Manuel Liria and Marc Ghiglia
Rapporteurs (Secretariat): Alexandre Rodríguez and Manuela Iglesias

1. Welcome by Spanish General Secretary for Fisheries, Ms. Alicia Villauriz.
Opening by Director of International Ocean Governance and Sustainable Fisheries at DG MARE,
Ms. Veits.

The Chair, Mr. Iván López, welcomes those present and thanks the Spanish Secretary General for Fisheries, Ms. Alicia Villauriz, and the Director of the DG MARE, Ms. Veronika Veits, for their attendance.

He then gives the floor to the Spanish Secretary General for Fisheries, Ms. Alicia Villauriz, who starts by thanking the LDAC for inviting her to this ExCom meeting, highlighting that the Secretariat General for Fisheries (SGP) firmly supports the role of Advisory Councils owing to their contribution to improving ocean management, being a consolidated and very useful tool for administrations when taking decisions regarding fisheries management.

She praises the LDAC's commitment, since it is the first Advisory Council to conduct its own internal performance review in order to analyse and adapt the organisation model to the aims it has been entrusted with.

She explains that the Common Fisheries Policy is a model at international level due to its use of the maximum sustainable yield as a management aim for fisheries stocks and the fight against IUU fishing. However, there is still work to be done for these principles to be adopted by all countries with fleets operating in international waters, and so for fisheries to develop within a framework based on a level playing field with the same obligations for everyone.

She points out that the fisheries sector is facing great challenges and she believes that important developments have been achieved in long distance fisheries management, indicating that many of these achievements are directly related to the work carried out by the LDAC. For instance, there is a significant commitment to moving forward regarding the environmental pillar of sustainable fisheries, integrating in an increasingly apparent way practices aiming to minimise the impact of fisheries on the environment.

In addition, another step forward is required to get ready to face another great challenge, which is to improve knowledge of the socio-economic component of fisheries, with a need to develop the economic indicators of fishing activities.

These economic indicators shall include information on the whole value chain, from the vessel to commercialisation, and shall also bear in mind all the parameters of the auxiliary industries depending on fisheries (shipbuilders, supplies, etc.).

This information is an essential element of support for the implementation of any management measure. For instance, on the opinion prepared by the LDAC for the ICCAT meeting, different scenarios were proposed for the recovery of tropical tuna stocks in the Atlantic Ocean.

She insists on the need to achieve the same quality standards for economic indicators as the ones we have for biological indicators, and the main source of supply shall be fishing companies so, once again, it will be necessary to count on the effort and commitment of all stakeholders.

Besides, she says that there is an item on the meeting agenda where the conclusions of the last annual economic report drafted by the Scientific Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) will be presented for long distance fleets. She thinks there is a field where the LDAC can make valuable contributions to improve the economic assessment of fisheries in the future. Moreover, safety on board and labour conditions of seafarers are another issue that cannot be avoided.

She also highlights the work carried out by the Spanish administration by means of pioneering regulations to achieve the highest standards in terms of safety and labour conditions of seafarers on board Spanish vessels. Great efforts are being currently made to ratify ILO Convention No. 188. Ratification is expected to be confirmed in the next few months. These developments are a key element to achieve an optimum level of decent employment in fisheries.

We believe that we have to convey an objective and real view of fisheries, emphasising all positive aspects that the fisheries sector contributes to society as a whole, and this way revert the discourse about this sector that is sometimes excessively biased.

This was one of the topics addressed at the Symposium on Fisheries Sustainability organised by FAO in Rome.

Sustainable Fisheries will be an item on the agenda of a series of important events that are going to take place and she highlights the following:

- The 2020 United Nations Conference to support the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 (Lisbon, June 2020) focusing on two basic issues for fisheries, which are: the best scientific knowledge available and the application of new technologies to improve the situation of marine stocks and their environment.
- BBNJ negotiations, in order to adopt the future international legislative instrument (which will be legally binding) for the conservation and the sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction. She points out that Spain is actively participating in this process where two principles considered as key elements for the development of this instrument have been conveyed, which are:
 - 1) The future agreement cannot undermine existing legal instruments, and 2) Ensuring full compatibility of the future instrument with the role of Regional Fisheries Organisations.
- The 7th Our Ocean Conference, with the participation of the SGP.

- The 3rd meeting of the Parties involved in the FAO Agreement on Port State Measures regarding the fight against IUU fishing.

She informs that the Secretariat General for Fisheries (SGP) will address the preparation of these meetings by means of a Working Group on International Fisheries Governance, where the LDAC is an active participant. In this regard, they are particularly grateful for the valuable help received through its General Secretary, Mr. Alexandre Rodríguez, due to his participation at the second annual meeting of the International Seabed Authority held in Jamaica in August 2019.

She then says that negotiations regarding the Control Regulation and the new European Maritime and Fisheries Fund will continue next year. Furthermore, we can expect that the UK's withdrawal of the EU will soon be defined, and that so will be the steps that we should take as a result of Brexit. In addition, the European Commission will start to work with a new cabinet and with new responsibilities for the recently appointed Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries, Mr. Virginijus Sinkevičius.

Finally, she insists on the willingness of the Spanish administration to work together in any area of mutual interest that the Long Distance Advisory Council requires or may require in the future.

The Chair, Mr. Iván López, congratulates the Secretary for such a clear and brilliant explanation and thanks her for her kind words about the LDAC work, joining in the acknowledgement of the General Secretary and the Secretariat team. He then gives the floor to the Director of the International Fisheries Area at DG MARE, Ms. Veronika Veits.

Ms. Veits starts by saying that it is always a pleasure to meet up with the LDAC and its members. She points out that it is very important that all stakeholders participate in the rule-drafting process, highlighting that for the EC the role of Advisory Councils (ACs) is essential and so are their opinions for the development of the CFP. In fact, she underlines the valuable recommendations the LDAC issues in the field of RFMOs such as NAFO and ICCAT, so their expectations on their input regarding international ocean governance are high for the following years. In her opinion, the LDAC is internally working in a successful way and she thanks the LDAC for the initiative to carry out its own performance review, which could serve as an example to the rest of Advisory Councils.

She then comments that it is a critical time since the European Parliament voted on 27 November for the new College of Commissioners that will start their mandate on 1 December.

From this date on, the new European Commission will start to implement the new political guidelines that will have 5 priorities or ambitions:

1. Green Deal: a Communication will be published by mid December, and it will include the following as its fundamental components: the EC biodiversity strategy, the Farm 2 Fork initiative and the circular economy strategy.
2. Broadening of the maritime sector and trade policy.
3. Review of the energy taxation directive.
4. Creation of a stronger Europe in the world, updating the concept of multilateralism, with a comprehensive strategy for Africa.

5. International governance agenda: focusing on SDG14 (Life below water) and SDG2 (Zero hunger).

Finally, she says that the new Commissioner Sinkevicius has a clear mandate to promote a zero emissions policy by 2050 and to fight against plastic, which will have an impact on fisheries. She explains that protection of the environment, sustainability of seas and oceans, and fisheries control are key elements for the implementation of the CFP. In fact, the performance review of the CFP to be carried out by 2022 as well as the Farm to Fork strategy will focus on sustainable sea products, EU combined leadership for aspects such as the ban on harmful fisheries subsidies in the WTO or zero tolerance in the fight against IUU fishing. Furthermore, we should not forget the importance of ensuring the viability of the industry and of coastal communities.

2. Approval of the agenda

Prior to the approval of the agenda, the Chair informs of the vote delegations received from the members that could not attend the meeting, which are the following:

- Mr. Francisco Portela Rosa, Vianapesca, delegates his vote to Mr. Juan Manuel Liria, CEPESCA.
- Mr. Hjálmar Vilhjálmsson, ELDF, delegates his vote to Ms. Jane Sandell, NFFO.
- Ms. Andrea Ripol, Seas At Risk, delegates her vote to Mr. Raúl García, WWF.

After counting the representatives of the member organisations present and represented with delegation of vote, attendees are informed that, in conformity with Article XXIV of the LDAC Rules of procedure, the necessary quorum for adoption of decisions by simple majority (at least 50% of the members present or represented) is acquired, if so required.

The complete list of attendees (members and observers) is included in ANNEX I.

The agenda is then approved with no additional comments.

3. Approval of the minutes of the last Executive Committee meeting (Sopot, 22 May 2019)

The minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on 22 May 2019 are approved with no comments or modifications.

4. Perspective and priorities of DG MARE on the International Dimension of the CFP

The Director of DG MARE, Ms. Veits, says that international governance and sustainable fisheries are two of the Green Deal priorities, as well as the Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG14 and SDG2, together with the implementation of the external dimension of the CFP. In addition, all this will contribute to making Europe stronger in the world.

Then, Ms. Veits explains global, regional and bilateral processes.

- **Global processes:** in 2016 a joint communication was adopted together with the European External Action Service (EEAS) on international ocean governance, leading to the first political approach on this issue at global level. This communication was based on improving the governance framework and progress in understanding the oceans, among other. In 2019 they drafted a mid-term report on the implementation of this Communication, highlighting among the achievements reached the agreement for the fight against IUU fishing in the Central Arctic Ocean;

the financial and political commitments presented in subsequent Our Ocean Conferences, or partnership agreements with China or Canada, among other countries.

She points out that 2020 will be a very important year for oceans because it marks the beginning of the Decade of Ocean Science under the UN umbrella.

Furthermore, it will be a year full of events starting as a prelude with the celebration in Madrid of the Climate Summit (COP25) in December that, for the first time, is going to focus on the link between climate and oceans. Moreover, she highlights the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) report that alerts about oceans and cryosphere being most badly affected by climate change and moving towards irreversible and unprecedented degradation conditions because of global warming. As a result, when water temperature increases, fishing stocks may change their migration patterns and survival, and it is essential that they are in a good biological condition.

In addition to COP25, at the beginning of June (2-6) the 2020 UN Ocean Conference will be held in Lisbon, with high-level participation of the EU.

In August (17 and 18) the Our Ocean Conference will take place in Palau, where the EU will have to present new commitments and explain how previous ones have evolved.

Later, in October, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) will be held with new “post Aichi” targets as of 2020. The EU intends to present its biodiversity strategy in January.

Regarding negotiations for a future UN treaty on biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction (BBNJ), although there are many issues that remain open, the EU position is to achieve broad agreements prior to the next Intergovernmental Conference (IGC). The meeting held in August focused on living marine genetic resources, area-based management tools (ABMT) and capacity development vis-à-vis technology transfer in developing countries. In addition, in February an event on the environmental impact will take place for stakeholders, and the LDAC has been invited to attend.

Besides, there is the ban on harmful fisheries subsidies that contribute to overcapacity or illegal fishing. She believes it is essential to reach an agreement at the end of the year and to present it at the WTO Ministerial Conference in Kazakhstan in June 2020 to meet SDG target 14.6.

She then informs that there are important FAO events, such as the 25th anniversary of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, a symposium with a statement ensuring sustainability and in November-December the review of the FAO Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA).

Finally, she invites the LDAC to participate in a specific event on ocean governance in April, where a public consultation will be launched on where to go in the future.

- **Regional processes:**

They wish to promote fisheries management within the CFP in order to achieve sustainable fisheries. One of the challenges is to manage to bring some of the CFP policies within RFMOs to achieve a level playing field for the European industry vis-à-vis other fleets operating in international waters subject to these RFMOs’ jurisdiction.

In her opinion, the EU shall continue leading as far as drafting of proposals is concerned, in addition to improving the implementation of policies (relating to plastic, for instance) and to using analysis tools that will assess the different Member States.

Another important issue for RFMOs is climate change, avoiding that discussions on the allocation of fisheries resources prevent them from moving towards this great aim. She informs that at the FAO Symposium, finding flexibility mechanisms in the allocation of resources was discussed. She believes that the RFMO network ought to be expanded to cover most international waters, and that CECAF (Fisheries Committee for the Eastern Central Atlantic) has to be awarded full membership status and have its competencies reinforced. In addition, the EU influence and strength has to be enhanced by becoming a member of more RFMOs, such as NPFC in the North Pacific, other existing gaps in fisheries management have to be covered and the fisheries sector shall be called on to fulfil the measures set.

In the Antarctic, CCLAMLR (Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources) is already operational, although it has reduced its ambitions, and she believes that a study shall be carried out on the way to achieve agreements with countries which are now against certain key measures in Marine Protected Areas, such as Russia and China.

A fisheries agreement has already been negotiated in the Arctic, the ratification of which is on the way so that it can come into force. In addition, she highlights that they have a specific policy regarding resources in terms of safety and access.

- **Bilateral processes:**

As for bilateral relations, she mentions SFPAs and dialogues against IUU fishing.

She points out that in the last few years they have tried to build up a network of fisheries agreements from a regional point of view, particularly in West Africa and in the Indian Ocean. Moreover, efforts have been made to align SFPAs with the CFP principles and elements such as access to surplus, exclusivity clauses, non discrimination and respect for human rights. They will continue working on it and enhancing transparency and they will seek further consistency and the support of Member States.

Negotiations are currently taking place to renew fisheries agreements with Mauritania and Greenland, next year they will do so with Liberia and Cook Islands. She adds that renegotiation of SFPAs is an issue she will discuss with the new Commissioner.

Besides, she highlights that Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) are very important, pointing out the following as examples of priorities for the new Commissioner: Chile, Australia, New Zealand and the Mercosur Agreement. Attention will be drawn to the clause on sustainability.

Regarding the fight against IUU fishing, talks with third countries are important to implement fleet control regulations, as well as the yellow and red carding system. There are currently seven countries that have received a yellow card, including Ecuador. As for Vietnam, she went there recently and it is a country that is taking political action for the yellow card to be withdrawn. It is improving, although they still have a long way to go.

Regarding the improved application of the IUU Regulation, she explains that they are going to focus on digitising the catch documentation scheme (CDS). Furthermore, they are considering defining joint strategies and partnerships with key markets such as USA, China or Japan.

Questions asked by the members:

Mr. Iván López asks about the EU position regarding harmful fisheries subsidies.

Ms. Veits replies that she is not going to comment on this issue, although she highlights that they are observing that many vessels have been ordered, even though the money offered is limited. They will analyse this policy taking into account the CFP review report of 2022. She also says that defining overcapacity was avoided (the WTO prefers not to define it).

Mr. Raúl García enquires about the role of sectoral support in the new SFPAs.

Ms. Veits replies that efforts are being made to find a way to increase its effective use. She highlights the need to have improved coordination with DG DEVCO with a specific mechanism linking it to development cooperation policies.

Mr. Juanma Trujillo asks a question about the work of DG MARE regarding the social dimension of the CFP for 2020.

Ms. Veits replies that, although the Regulation to combat IUU fishing cannot deal with social issues directly, a conversation may take place in parallel to raise awareness. She points out the need for more countries to ratify ILO Convention 188. However, the European Directive on this convention will come into force in November, so they have to study the way to transpose applicable provisions and their compliance in the different EU Member States.

Regarding the conference of the parties on biodiversity, Mr. Javier Garat, CEPESCA, asks the way to address the EC for said communication.

Ms. Veits, EC, replies that DG Environment is in charge of it and that their strategy is expected to be sent in the first quarter of 2020. In the event that there is interest in participating in this consultation, she offers DG MARE's collaboration to channel this proposal.

The following **ACTIONS** are agreed:

- **To draft a letter to DG MARE requesting that DG Environment provides us with input for the strategy on biodiversity.**
(The Conference on biodiversity will take place in October).
- **To study the way to have a communication channel with DG Environment to work together (it would be very positive to have a good relationship with this DG as we have with DG MARE) and to have representatives from DG Environment attending the LDAC meetings, as it is the case with DG MARE.**
- **To send a welcome letter to the new Commissioner, including in it the request for a meeting with the LDAC delegation.**

Mr. Raúl García, WWF, highlights the pressing needs to move forward regarding conservation policies, underlining the importance of all policies being consistent. He asks how all strategies are going to be developed, insofar as there is a growing lack of personnel within the EC with fewer delegations for RFMO meetings. He also asks whether the EC services dealing with international governance could be increased.

Ms. Veronika Veits, EC, says she expects an increase in personnel within the multiannual plan, and that they are aware that the number of files managed by each person shall be reduced.

Ms. Béatrice Gorez, CFFA-CAPE, insists on the importance of fisheries within the blue economy, and on the importance of reducing the pressure exercised by human activities on the oceans in general terms. She also asks about collaborative work between the European Commission and FAO in this field, since FAO has a different strategy, suggesting this issue be addressed at the next COFI. Moreover, she voices her concern for the growing role of fishmeal industries which are supplied with huge amounts of wild caught fish that is suitable for human consumption.

Ms. Veits points out the importance of the role of fisheries and of coastal communities depending on this activity, indicating that it is necessary to promote sustainability at all levels, since pressure on the use of the maritime space among different users and the exploitation of marine resources by different economic sectors and industries has significantly increased in the last decades. It should be borne in mind that fisheries is not the only activity performed in the sea, a holistic and integrated approach ought to be adopted and a review of regulations on renewable energy activities such as tidal or wind energy needs to be performed, as well as in the case of hydrocarbon and metal extraction activities in the seabed. It is essential that policy-makers base their decisions on scientific evidence. Another instrument to be used are environmental impact assessments in the high seas, although this is a complicated issue since powers are not always exclusive. Finally, she informs that some guidelines on aquaculture will also be reviewed.

Mr. Julio Morón, OPAGAC, enquires about FAO guidelines for the whole fisheries chain.

Regarding biodiversity and the BBNJ negotiation, Ms. Despina Symons, EBCD, says that 2020 Aichi targets and post-2020 Aichi targets have to be aligned, and that there will be a consultation on CBD. EBCD is participating through the fisheries expert group (FEG) of IUCN. Official negotiations will start in China in February 2020.

Regarding BBNJ, Mr. Marc Ghiglia, UAPF/CNPMEM, points out two components: compliance in decision-making and the inclusion of RFMOs in opinions. In his opinion, many things can be done in marine protected areas. He believes that in this process the role of scientific committees within RFMOs is not known or does not receive sufficient recognition.

Mr. Sean O'Donoghue, KFO, asks whether there have been developments regarding the definition of overcapacity to address the debate on harmful fisheries subsidies at the WTO. In his opinion, it should be defined at international level.

Ms. Veronika Veits, EC, explains that subsidies shall not contribute to increasing the fishing capacity. Something they have observed is that many vessels have been ordered, although the sums offered are limited. They are going to review their policy taking into account the CFP review report of 2022. As for the definition, she replies that defining overcapacity was avoided at the WTO. Currently, subsidies elements are being identified to make a non-exhaustive list of those considered as harmful fisheries subsidies. Furthermore, she indicates that there is a clear methodology in the EU set by the STECF based on effort limits, with guidelines in progress. Out of the 255 fleet segments analysed, there are still 190 that are suffering imbalance.

Ms. Béatrice Gorez, CFFA-CAPE, believes that sectoral support in SFPAs should focus on the impact on the social and economic development of local communities in third countries. In her opinion, it is a tool that could be used in many initiatives linked to development cooperation, environmental sustainability, transparency enhancement, etc.

She thinks that the LDAC could focus on the distribution of RFMOs and on developing countries also having access to resources, as long as they provide data. As for free trade agreements, they need a mechanism ensuring there will be sanctions by the EU if regulations are not met. In her opinion, this aspect could also be addressed within the Market Advisory Council (MAC).

Ms. Justine Guiny, Birdlife Europe, points out the importance of coordinating development funding tools with the sectoral support in SFPAs. Regarding the environmental impact, she highlights that not only impacts on target species or on those of commercial interest have to be taken into account, but also on other by-catches, birds and sea turtles or mammals... In this sense she recalls that the new Regulation on Technical Measures requires Member States to adopt measures to mitigate by-catches in EU waters, and the application of this principle also in SFPAs should be seriously considered.

Ms. Veronika Veits, EC, informs that they are working on the possibility of increasing sectoral support in the new funding instrument including fisheries. She believes that a mechanism is required to improve coordination with DG DEVCO. Besides, **she invites the LDAC to work on the new Regulation on technical measures and to suggest ideas for their implementation in the long distance fleet. In addition, she thinks that the LDAC can provide examples of sectoral support in the different countries, identifying those actions that were correctly carried out and those that were not.** Moreover, she explains that they are going to start reflecting upon flexible distribution mechanisms in order to manage a changing situation.

As suggested by the Chair and First Vice-Chair of the Executive Committee, the following **ACTIONS** are proposed:

- **To work on providing examples of sectoral support (positive and negative) in the countries benefiting from agreements with the EU, identifying actions to be improved.**
- **To study the effects of the new Regulation on technical measures on the activities of the EU long distance fleet. To analyse the possibility of using the COMHAFAT-ATLAFCO platform in third countries in order to achieve a broader level playing field in social issues and to improve coordination of SFPAs and compliance with measures adopted by RFMOs.**

Ms. Veronika Veits, EC, clarifies that the social dimension cannot be addressed under the Regulation against IUU fishing. However, a conversation may take place in parallel to raise awareness in this regard, something that they are already trying to do in Vietnam. She points out that further ratification of international regulations is required, and that in November a Directive on Convention C188 will come into force. Therefore, the way in which to transpose compliance provisions has to be studied.

After discussion among the members, the following **ACTION** is agreed on:

- **To study the possibility of requesting Director Veits to inform about the priority issues where they would need input from the LDAC in order to be included in current and/or future LDAC work programmes.**

5. Follow up of recommendations of LDAC Performance Review Strategic Report No 1:

a. Chair's proposal of review on structure and number of Working Groups

The Chair, Iván López, explains the proposal for having Working Group 3 reabsorbed by Working Group 2. In addition, he encourages more coordination of contents and work between the

agendas of Working 1 and 4, which sometimes include issues of common interest. Finally, he suggests that the Executive Committee should have increased workload and that all strategic topics related to International Ocean Governance should be addressed there. This would involve an increase in the number and/or duration of the meetings, with extra sessions when working groups meet to minimise trips and be more cost-effective. This idea is in line with one of the key recommendations included in the performance review report.

On the other hand, he recalls that in the next working group meetings, the election of chairs and vice-chairs of each one of the 4 working groups will take place.

After discussion among the members, the Chair, Mr. Iván López, highlights that whenever focus groups are set up with a specific mandate in terms of issues to be addressed, the composition of the panel of experts shall be balanced, and the meetings have to be open, following the LDAC total transparency policy.

The LDAC Vice-Chair, Béatrice Gorez, agrees with the approach proposed by the Chair in principle, but thinks that adaptive review mechanisms have to be set to optimise the performance of Working Groups. She also believes we need to reflect upon the relationship that WG5 and the LDAC have with the Market Advisory Council (MAC) when issues related to trade agreements, imports or reaching a level playing field between EU and non EU fisheries operators are discussed, among other.

Mr. Sean O'Donoghue agrees with the inclusion of WG3 issues, mainly those related to the South Atlantic, in WG2, which has members with knowledge about North Atlantic fisheries that may, therefore, benefit from this synergy.

As for the relationship with the MAC, he suggests that consideration should be given to the possibility of formalising a relationship between both ACs through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) clearly defining common working areas.

The acting Chair of WG1, Mr. Michel Goujon, ORTHONGEL, believes that the preparatory work prior to the drafting of opinions is very important and suggests that **it could be considered that, instead of having one vice-chair, each group should have two to give greater momentum and enhance follow-up of pending actions and to gather together all possible opinions in the draft documents in order to make the task easier for the Secretariat and the members themselves.**

The Chair, Mr. Iván López, thinks that the structure of WGs could have two vice-chairs if needed, but he does not consider it a priority. As for the preparation of draft opinions, he believes that the NAFO one is an example of good functioning and coordination. He thinks that a drafting group should be set up to carry out the initial versions of opinions.

After discussion among the members, the following **ACTIONS** are agreed on:

- **In February, the administrative procedure for the election of Working Group chairs and vice-chairs shall be sent to all members, and they will be elected at the next face-to-face meetings (initially planned for March 2020).**
- **Mr. Gerard van Balsfoort, DFTA, suggests that a list of key topics should be identified in the field of International Ocean Governance and they should be distributed to the relevant WG and the ExCom for their inclusion in the annual work programme. Once agreed, the way of moving forward on each topic will be discussed and the presentation timeline will be set.**

- Ms. Béatrice Gorez, CFFA-CAPE, suggests that, as general principle, it should be considered that all chairing positions should be held by representatives of both the industry and NGOs, so that there is a wider balance in their composition, in the preparation of agendas and in the supervision of opinions. In addition, she suggests that agendas should include comments, so that the members know the specific aspects to be addressed under each item of the agenda. She proposes to include this principle in a future review of the rules of procedure.

b. Identifying LDAC work priorities on a multiannual basis

Mr. Michel Goujon, ORTHONGEL, believes it is important that opinions can be sent at least two weeks prior to the meetings (e.g. ICCAT and IOTC).

Ms. Veronika Veits, EC, agrees that opinions should ideally be validated prior to the arrival of the EC position.

Mr. Alexandre Rodríguez, General Secretary, asks about RFMOs inter session meetings, since he thinks it would be positive to be able to coordinate this work between the members of the LDAC attending the latter and the EC in order to fine-tune the quality of preparatory work for the drafting of opinions on each of the RMFOs of relevance. Moreover, he asks whether we should follow a specific procedure or request to have member status within the EU delegation to participate in these meetings.

Ms. Veronika Veits, EC, replies that the most suitable way for LDAC members to participate in RFMO inter session meetings is by coordinating themselves with their respective contacts at the Administrations of the Member States, although it would be useful to receive input for decisive issues in a coordinated way through the Secretariat, for instance. In this sense, proactively receiving an opinion that is based on consensus insofar as possible would be most welcome.

She invites the LDAC to use these channels to communicate with the Member States. She believes that their informal advisory role by means of dialogue would be useful, and so would be coordinating their members beyond the technical coordination meetings they hold with the EC on an annual basis.

After discussion among the members, the following **ACTIONS** are agreed on:

- **To study the option of preparing multiannual work programmes (suggested period: 2-5 years), although annual work programmes will continue to be formally submitted to DG MARE in line with the requirements set by the type of operational subsidy allocated to Advisory Councils (grant for action).**
- **Mr. Iván López, Chair, suggests that common topics could be identified in the inter-AC meetings and distributed between the LDAC and the MAC. He proposes that Mr. Sean O'Donoghue, Ms. Béatrice Gorez and Mr. Alexandre Rodríguez explore the way to do so.**
- **To identify the main topics and needs of each WG and circulate them among the members.**

- The calendar of international meetings shall be taken into account before setting the dates for each WG/ExCom meeting. The Secretariat shall compile information about these meetings and inform the members on the relevant issues related to International Ocean Governance for their inclusion in the ExCom agenda.

6. Update on the 2nd part of the LDAC Performance Review:

Presentation of methodology and preliminary conclusions – BG Consulting

Mr. Benoit Guerin, BG Consulting, makes a presentation explaining developments regarding the preparation of the second part of the LDAC performance review. The presentation is available on the following link:

https://ldac.eu/images/Presentaci%C3%B3n_Benoit_ExCom-281119.pdf

The document is planned to be submitted in the first quarter of 2020.

7. Report on outcomes and actions of the Inter-AC meeting (Brussels, 8 November 2019)

The General Secretary, Mr. Alexandre Rodríguez, summarises what happened at the inter-AC meeting (and at the preparatory meeting held a few hours before) with the rest of Advisory Councils.

He informs that the LDAC made a presentation explaining the recommendations of the first part of the performance review, followed by one made by the Chair, Mr. Iván López, on the implementation of consensus and minority points of view within the LDAC.

The following presentations were then made:

- MEDAC: inshore fishing focusing on the Mediterranean.
- Pew: representation of other interest groups in ACs.
- NSAC: role of chairs of ACs.
- BSAC: how to ensure the good quality of opinions regarding time and form.
- DG MARE Unit C3: research in fisheries.
- NSAC: how to develop the work programme.
- NWWAC: communication of ACs.
- DG MARE Unit D3: Coordination of all ACs for issues of common interest
- DG MARE Unit D3: how opinions submitted in 2018 have been taken into account and an update on those of 2019.
- DG MARE D3: the role of ACs in the social dimension of the CFP.

On this point, the General Secretary, Mr. Alexandre Rodríguez, explains the LDAC programme together with the social dialogue committee and summarises the specific seminar on this issue.

- DG MARE Unit D3: administrative and financial topics related to ACs.

On this point an update of guidelines for ACs is requested, as well as a specific workshop in spring devoted to specific administrative and financial matters.

It is reported that the EC made all presentations available for the ACs, so any member interested in receiving any of them should send a request to the LDAC Secretariat.

STECF Annual Economic Report on the EU Fishing Fleet for 2019

a. Presentation of STECF AER: regional chapters of Distant Water Fleet (DWF) and methodology of Other Fishing Regions (OFR) - Michael Keatinge (Chair EWG AER)

Mr. Michael Keatinge, Chair EWG AER, makes a presentation that is available on the following link:
https://ldac.eu/images/LDAC_AER_Presentation_2019_2.pdf

The annual report for 2019 is available on:
<https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/web/stecf/reports/economic>

The Chair and the members congratulate the STECF again this year for the important work carried out, which serves as socio-economic basis or foundation when adopting management measures.

After a round of questions and some discussion, the following **ACTION** is agreed:

- **To ask the EC whether there could be a specific section for third countries on the STECF report that would also serve to enhance the fisheries industry and social issues.**

b. Report from LDAC General Secretary on his participation as expert at EWG: request for renewal of mandate to work on EWG for 2020

The General Secretary, Mr. Alexandre Rodríguez, reminds attendees of the importance of this work to improve knowledge of the economic performance and value in terms of employment and wealth generation of the European long distance fleet.

The following **ACTION** is then agreed:

- **It is agreed that Alexandre Rodríguez continues to participate in his capacity as expert and technical coordinator of the Distant Water Fleet (DWF) at the Expert Working Group (EWG) meetings of the STECF for the preparation of the Annual Economic Report (AER) of the fleet; and there is the possibility to invite someone else as reinforcement owing to the large amount of work it demands (about 3-4 weeks of full-time work a year per expert).**

8. The role of EU Fishing Investments in Third Countries (joint ventures)

8.1. Presentation of the LDAC questionnaire: next steps

Mr. Alexandre Rodríguez, General Secretary, explains the concept note and the questionnaire model prepared by the LDAC Secretariat that was sent to the associations of fishing companies investing abroad and that will also be sent to those NGOs interested in participating and that can offer socio-economic data.

8.2 ToR for the creation of a dedicated LDAC task force / focus group

After discussion among the members, the following **ACTION** is agreed on:

- **The LDAC Secretariat will meet/contact with the member organisations which are associations of fishing companies investing abroad (ACEMIX, ANABAC, ANASCO, AGAC, and CEPESCA as a confederation) in order to move forward in this regard.**

- In addition, as a complementary idea, it is suggested that successful case studies related to public-private investments or partnerships showing the work of this type of companies in the different countries where they develop their activity could be identified and sent to DG DEVCO.

9. Decision on inter-AC letters and invitations received for EU research projects

The General Secretary, Mr. Alexandre Rodríguez, explains the two AC joint draft letters that were previously distributed among the members, which are the following:

- Letter requesting flexibility in terms of budgetary management of ACs.
- Letter on EMFF funding for scientific research projects.

After discussion among the members, the following **ACTION** is agreed on:

- **Both AC joint draft letters are approved, so the LDAC will be added as signer of them.**

10. Mid-term financial and activity report of LDAC Year 13 – Secretariat

The presentation is available on the following link:

https://ldac.eu/images/LDAC_Presentation_Mid_Term_Report_Y13_ExComMadrid28Nov19.pdf

What is more outstanding is the Spanish contribution on 15 May 2019 amounting to EUR 139,810, and this sum is incorporated to the annual budget, so it looks very similar to last year's.

The European Commission made the first payment of EUR 120,000, the next ones will come after submission of the financial economic report, and after having used over 70% of the first instalment, then they will make the second payment of EUR 120,000.

Regarding the fees, at this moment in time there are five Member States and eight member organisations with outstanding payments. However, the deadline has not been reached for such payments yet.

11. AOB - Closure of the meeting

Mr. Alexandre Rodríguez, General Secretary, comments on different initiatives to participate in various forums, and after some discussion the following **ACTION** is agreed on:

- **It is approved to send an LDAC proposal for International Maritime Day 2020 to be held in mid May in Cork (Ireland).**

With no other issues to address, the session is adjourned by the Chair thanking the interpreters for their work, the Secretary General for Fisheries of the Spanish Government and the Director of DG MARE for their active participation, and the LDAC Secretariat for their efforts in organising and coordinating logistics and documents, and all members for their attendance and participation.

END

ANNEX I: LIST OF ATTENDEES

Long Distance Advisory Council Executive Committee Madrid, 28 November 2019

ATTENDEES

1. Iván López. AGARBA/CEPESCA
2. Rocío Béjar. CEPESCA
3. Javier Garat. CEPESCA
4. Juan Manuel Liria. CEPESCA
5. Béatrice Gorez. CFFA-CAPE
6. Marc Ghiglia. UAPF/CNPMEM
7. Claus Ubl. DHV
8. Luis Vicente. ADAPI
9. Erik Olsen. Danish Society
10. Roberto Alonso. ANFACO-CECOPECA
11. Aivaras Labanauskas. Lithuanian Long Distance Fisheries Association
12. Gerard van Balsfoort. DPTFA
13. Despina Symons. EBCD
14. Sean O'Donoghue. KFO
15. Justine Guiny. Birdlife Europe
16. Raúl García. WWF
17. Max Schmid. EJF

CHAIRS AND VICE-CHAIRS OF WORKING GROUPS

18. Julio Morón. OPAGAC
19. Michel Goujon. ORTHONGEL

OBSERVERS

20. Manuel Domínguez. ANASCO
21. Michael Keatinge. Chair EWG AER CCTEP/STECF
22. Ian Gatt. SPFA
23. Edelmiro Ulloa. Anapa/Anamer/Acemix/Agarba
24. Alberto Martín. MSC
25. Benoit Guerin. BG SEA CONSULTING
26. Veronika Veits. Director DG MARE
27. Alicia Villauriz. Secretary General for Fisheries, Spain
28. Mar Fernández. Secretariat General for Fisheries, Spain
29. Margarita Mancebo. Secretariat General for Fisheries, Spain
30. Gema de Frutos Romo. Secretariat General for Fisheries, Spain
31. Carlos Ossorio. Secretariat General for Fisheries, Spain
32. Carmen Martín Paz. Secretariat General for Fisheries, Spain
33. Sonia Doblado. FarFish - LDAC
34. Alexandre Rodríguez. LDAC
35. Manuela Iglesias. LDAC
36. Marta de Lucas. LDAC