



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES
International Ocean Governance and Sustainable Fisheries
The Director

Brussels
MARE.B.2/MV

Mr Iván López van der Veen
LDAC Chair
c/ Núñez de Balboa 49-3^o izquierda
28001 Madrid, Spain

Subject: LDAC's Request for Clarification on DG MARE Participation

Dear Mr López van der Veen,

Thank you for your letter of 7 October 2025. First, please accept my apologies should there have been a lack of response to your outreach in February. Our records show a letter from 7 February, to which a reply was sent on February 19. But if there was any other correspondence that we missed I would be happy to rectify that. Let me reassure you that I value greatly the relationship with the Long Distance Advisory Council (LDAC).

I understand fully the importance of ensuring that LDAC's contributions are reflected in the lead-up to the Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) Annual Meetings. However, as I had the occasion to set out before in my intervention to LDAC, there are multiple advisory councils that are involved for several RFMOs. Furthermore, in line with transparency standards, these stakeholder meetings should be inclusive and open to all stakeholders. As such, this process is conducted through dedicated stakeholders' meetings, which aim to gather a wide range of perspectives and inputs for the preparation of the draft EU negotiation mandate and which are open to all stakeholders, which naturally includes (and indeed gives special consideration to) members of advisory councils, including LDAC. Beyond the opportunity to interact in the context of the stakeholder meeting, we greatly value the input of the advisory councils through the advice they send, including on issues that their members find particularly salient when it comes to the preparation of annual meetings of most RFMOs. In this context, I would particularly like to thank LDAC for the efforts it made to deliver such advice at an earlier stage. This has allowed DG MARE better to take into account elements raised by LDAC in the proposed draft mandate.

I want to reaffirm that DG MARE is committed to ensuring an effective channel of communication with LDAC and to ensure that its expertise is duly taken into account in

our work. For this reason, we are always open to providing detailed debriefings on the outcomes of RFMOs Annual Meetings and to do so in a systematic way during LDAC WG1 and WG2 meetings. Fully in line with the discussions that have taken place with DG MARE over the past years, however, we do ask advisory councils that share an interest in certain RFMOs to cooperate and organise themselves in order to allow for a single and joint debrief of relevant RFMO meetings. This in our view should allow covering in a timely manner the conclusions of all relevant RFMOs deliberations.

Against this background, I have asked Stijn Billiet, Head of Unit for RFMOs (MARE.B2), to attend next week's LDAC WG Meeting to further detail the approach to RFMO meetings. During his intervention, he will confirm and explain our approach while relevant B2 colleagues will provide specific feedback on the outcome of the most recent Annual Meetings of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) and the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO).

I trust that this approach will ensure a participative and transparent dialogue where your contributions are duly acknowledged and incorporated into our ongoing work, aligning with the EU's negotiating strategies.

I look forward to fostering our collaboration, working towards common objectives in international ocean governance and sustainable fisheries.

Yours sincerely,



Fernando ANDRESEN GUIMARÃES

c.c.: MARE AC; Isabelle Garzon (MARE.B); Stijn Billiet (MARE.B2);
Alexandre Rodriguez (LDAC Secretariat)