



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

Director general

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Mr Antonio Cabral
LDRAC secretariat
C/ Velazquez 41, 4° C
28 001 Madrid
Spain

Dear Mr Cabral,

Thank you for the letters sent on 28 April 2008 on behalf of the Long Distance RAC.

Concerning your request on **Redfish**, the Commission agrees with the LDRAC that it is regrettable that it was not possible to achieve a wider consensus for a real management measure restricting fisheries for the redfish in the Irminger Sea and adjacent waters to a real TAC. Nevertheless, we were pleased to be able to ensure that a more restrictive measure for 2008 than for 2007 could be agreed.

As soon as the agreement had been reached by the coastal States and other interested NEAFC Parties, the Commission urgently prepared the necessary measures for a Commission regulation in readiness for the confirmation of the decision at NEAFC level. This NEAFC decision became binding on the Contracting Parties from 8 April and entered into force on 8 May. To this end, the Commission sent out a fax to Member States at the earliest possible opportunity confirming that the regulation would be agreed by the Commission. In view of the legal provisions surrounding this decision, the Commission was unable to send this confirmation to Member States any earlier. I regret that this was after the start of the possible fishery.

In your letter, you also requested updated information on **negotiations with the Faeroes and Iceland**.

The Commission values the bilateral fisheries agreement with the Faeroe Islands and the closer cooperation that has resulted from it. To this end, we would like to see the existing arrangements retained as much as possible when the agreement comes up for renewal in 2012.

Commission européenne, B-1049 Bruxelles / Europese Commissie, B-1049 Brussel - Belgium. Telephone: (32-2) 299 11 11.
Office: J 99. Telephone: direct line (32-2) 2956212.

E-mail: isabelle.viallon@ec.europa.eu

The Community and Iceland reached agreement on a fisheries arrangement for 2008 in Reykjavik on 10 April 2008. The current agreement is due for renewal in December 2009. The Community has already indicated to Iceland its concern that the current agreement does not appear to give mutual satisfaction to both Parties despite some improvements in the fishing conditions in recent years. In view of this, the Commission is seriously considering its strategy as regards the approach to take during the remainder of 2008 to the agreement's renewal.

As regards the **Extraordinary Meeting of NAFO in May 2008**, I would draw your attention to the fact that this particular item was not included in the LDRAC agenda that was circulated to the Commission prior to the LDRAC meeting of 9 April 2008. The Commission was therefore not aware that the LDRAC wished to discuss NAFO related matters on this particular occasion, and had in consequence not foreseen that any Commission expert on the matter needed to be present during the LDRAC meeting.

I would also draw your attention to the fact that, in any case, the Commission would not have been able to disclose its negotiation position regarding the NAFO meeting at the LDRAC meeting in question. Community negotiation positions for RFMO meetings, drawn up by the Commission in consultation with Member States, are in fact strictly confidential and cannot be disclosed beyond that circle in advance of a particular RFMO meeting.

The Commission would nevertheless be happy, on request, to assist the LDRAC in obtaining the official documents which become available to the public in advance of an RFMO meeting. These documents are generally published on the official website of the RFMO in question.

Yours sincerely,



Fokion Fotiadis