



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Brussels,
A2/OB D(2013)

LDRAC
Mr Antonio Cabral (Chairperson)
C/ del Doctor Fleming 7,
2º derecha
28036 Madrid
Spain

Subject: Letter from the LDRAC on the cooperation between LDRAC and DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries

Ref: Your letter 8 April

Dear Mr Cabral,

Thank you for your letter which acknowledges the efforts made to improve the cooperation between DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries and LDRAC. We are indeed committed to work closely with the RACs.

You will find below our response, especially the follow-up that the Commission intends to give to the points raised. For sake of clarity, we will follow the structure of your letter.

Access to information

Regarding the preparatory work for the meetings of RFMOs, I would like to point out that the feedback and information provided by the LDRAC for the last NAFO annual meeting contributed decisively to its positive outcome. The same goes for the preparation of the last IOTC annual meeting.

Regarding your point on the short notice for the meeting organised by DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries to prepare the IOTC annual meeting, I am afraid that it would have been difficult to invite you earlier. Indeed, in this particular case, LDRAC was invited as soon as the meeting was scheduled and confirmed. I would like to remind you that we tried to organise the general coordination meeting with stakeholders through the LDRAC meeting but the dates proposed could not be accepted by the LDRAC secretariat due to other professional engagements of some of its members. At the end, this consultation was undertaken more than one month prior the general coordination meeting and LDRAC was officially invited to participate in this meeting two weeks before it took place.

Regarding the preparation of RFMOs' work with stakeholders – industry, NGOs, LDRAC, etc. – it is well established practice to consult them on the general strategy and the core substance of proposal, however without distributing the proposals themselves at an early stage of the decision making process. There is no reason to deviate from this

practice, which is also required to maintain the confidentiality of the EU's negotiation procedures.

Participation of representatives from the Commission to LDRAC's meetings

As you know, the Commission attaches great importance to the input from the RACs.

As you also know, it is not possible for the Commission to be at all RAC meetings, but we are doing our best to send the appropriate representatives where we can. For example in the last working groups held in Brussels (12-13 March) more than 10 persons from the Commission participated actively (including Bernhard Friess, the Director in charge of the Atlantic, Outermost Regions and Arctic). I am sure that you will agree that this shows a real commitment on the side of the Commission.

In reply to your letter, you can be reassured that we will continue to do our best to have Commission representatives to the LDRAC meetings. I would similarly ask you in your planning, particularly for the autumn period, to take full account of the agreed dates for the negotiations/ consultations already notified to you.

I thank you for your continued interest and constructive input. If you have any question on this reply, you can contact Mr Olivier Baudalet, coordinator of the Regional Advisory Councils (olivier.baudalet@ec.europa.eu; +32.2.295.68.70).

Yours sincerely,

Lowri Evans