



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,
MARE/D3

Dear Mr Marzoa Notlevsen,

I would like to thank the Mediterranean Advisory Council (MEDAC) for its interest in the Commission Communication for enhanced transparency and good governance in the allocation of fishing opportunities by Member States ([C/2025/6227](#)) as well as the presentation and exchange of views in Naples. Let me use the opportunity to reply to your letter of 17 March 2026.

As regards the concept to “*least environmentally damaging*”, I understand that this was already touched upon during the meeting in Naples. There is not a single definition as this concept is highly context-dependent and must therefore be assessed on a case-by-case basis. As mentioned in the Communication, “*it is clear that a ‘one size fits all’ approach would not provide a suitable solution*”. The Commission cannot say to Member States that adverse impact on certain components of the environment should prevail over others. Determining what is the least damaging way of fishing requires a specific assessment of the considered activities that are taking place in the same ecosystem. Member States should then balance or decide what kind of trade-offs are more appropriate to their realities, within the boundaries set by the existing EU, regional, national and local legislation.

On the second point, the Communication referred to “*fishing opportunities*” as defined in the Control Regulation (Article 4(32) of Council Regulation (EC) No 1224/2009) – see footnote 1 of the Communication (*‘fishing opportunity’ means a quantifies legal entitlement to fish, expressed in terms of catches and/or fishing effort.* Legal entitlement to fish can also include technical and geographical limitations on how, when and where fishing operations can take place.). Therefore, Member States are invited to provide information on the methods used to allocate all fishing opportunities accordingly to the system in place, i.e. allocation of quotas and allocation of fishing effort.

I look forward to our continued fruitful cooperation on this very important issue. Should you have any further questions on this reply, please contact Ms Julia Rubeck, our Advisory Councils coordinator, via the functional mailbox MARE-AC@ec.europa.eu.

Yours sincerely,

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