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MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

B-1049 BRUSSELS

RACMED
Prot. N° 1781/E
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MK/pb CAB (2013) 1370573

Dear Mr Buonfiglio,

Thank you for your letter of 30 April 2013 outlining MEDRAC's position on discards and specifically the proposed introduction of the landing obligation under the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). I fully share your assessment that it is essential to avoid unwanted catches by improving the fishing techniques and selectivity of fishing gears.

In your letter you highlight that such measures are already included in Regulation (EC) No 1967/2006. On this basis you suggest that fisheries in the Mediterranean should be exempted from the landing obligation.

I have to point out that I cannot agree with this suggestion. Over the last years we have introduced a range of management measures and improvements to selectivity which have only been partially effective. Please note that in recognition of the specificities of fisheries in the Mediterranean I have proposed to limit the scope of the landing obligation to only those species currently subject to minimum landing sizes.

I do agree with you that the most appropriate vehicle for the sustainable management of fisheries is through management plans. Such an approach based on regionalised decision-making is strongly advocated in the reform of the CFP and is included under Regulation (EC) 1967/2006 for the Mediterranean.

Finally I would point out that the landing obligation has been endorsed by both the Council and the European Parliament with negotiation on the detail and timelines continuing. Since your letter was received, the Member States have reached agreement on a revised mandate following the Council meeting in May. I would therefore encourage MEDRAC to begin working on how to implement the landing obligation in Mediterranean fisheries. My services are ready to assist in any way possible.

Yours sincerely,

Maria

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