Ref. Ares(2017)3445003 - 07/07/2017

EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Brussels,
MARE D3/PCO (2017)

Mr. Giampaolo Buonfiglio
Chairman
Mediterranean Advisory Council
Via Nazionale 243
Scala A interno 3
00184 Roma
ITALY

**Subject: Multi-annual plan for small pelagics in the Adriatic.**

*Your ref.: your letter 194/2017*

Dear Mr Buonfiglio,

Thank you for your letter of 26 June 2017, in which you raised the issue of the follow up to the MEDAC advice on the proposal for multi-annual plan for small pelagics in the Adriatic.

First of all, I would like to stress that we value and appreciate very much the role and inputs from the Advisory Councils in general, and from the MEDAC in particular. I am aware that the MEDAC is putting a lot of efforts in contributing to the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy in the Mediterranean, within the framework of both the EU Common Fisheries Policy and the Malta MedFish4Ever Declaration. I consider that your role is crucial in this regard, as you have acted and continue to act as a catalyst for stakeholders' engagements and contributions to the formulation of policy options and future management and conservation measures.

When it comes to the recent discussions in the PECH Committee of the European Parliament (21 June 2017) on the Commission proposal for a multi-annual plan for small pelagics in the Adriatic (MAP) I would like clarify that the intervention by the Commission representative was merely reflecting the assessment by the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) of the management approach (the so-called "traffic light approach") proposed by MEDAC as part of its opinion on the MAP.

We did in fact request STECF to evaluate whether this approach would deliver on reaching fishing mortality levels compatible with the Maximum Sustainable Yield

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(FMSY) by 2020, which - as you know - is the overall goal of the CFP and therefore should also be the objective for all the EU multiannual plans.

As already mentioned in my letter of June 2016[1] to you, STECF "was unable to identify the scientific basis for the proposal and as such cannot assess if it will deliver FMSY by 2020". On that occasion STECF also reiterated its advice that pelagic fisheries in the Mediterranean qualify for a TAC system (management of the "output" from the fisheries, i.e. catches or landings) whereas the measures proposed under the "traffic light approach" are based on the management of the "input" to the fisheries (fishing effort and/or technical measures). This is why we could not follow your approach in our proposal for a multiannual plan and what was reiterated in the PECH Committee.

Let me reassure you that the fact we do not necessarily share the same views on this specific matter does not in any way undermine our consideration of the pivotal role of MEDAC in our common endeavour to reverse the decline of fish stocks in the Mediterranean and to ensure social-economic sustainability for the fishing sector and coastal communities.

We remain fully available to further discuss these issues and I welcome the idea of a meeting. A possible occasion would be the upcoming visit to Rome of MARE D Director, Mrs Veronika Veits, on 10-11 July. I understand arrangements have already been made in this sense.

Let me once again thank you for your cooperation and I very much hope we can continue to count on your constructive inputs, in our mutual interest.

Thank you again for your constructive input. If you have any questions on this reply, you may contact Ms. Evangelia Georgitsi (evangelia.georgitsi@ec.europa.eu; +32.2.295.04.43) or Ms. Pascale Colson (pascale.colson@ec.europa.eu; +32 2 29 56273).

Yours sincerely,

João AGUIAR MACHADO

[1] Ares(2016)2611324 of 6 June 2016.



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