Director-General Ms Charlina Vitcheva,
D.G. for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
B-1049 Brussels
Belgium

5th December 2023

Subject: Joint-AC letter on ACs stakeholder input

Dear Ms. Charlina Vitcheva,

The Advisory Councils (ACs) would like to thank you for the increased frequency of Inter-AC meetings as well as production of written minutes and ensuring high-level Commission participation. This enhances the visibility and recognition of the important role of the ACs.

We wish to collectively share our thoughts on how to further improve the active engagement between the Commission and the ACs.

The European Union has established, and funds, the ACs with the task of providing the Commission and Member States with advice based on consensus between a broad membership of stakeholders, consisting of both industry and other interests' groups. Where reaching consensus is not possible, diverging opinions must be duly reflected in our advice.

Recently, during the Inter-AC meeting on 10th October 2023, AC members felt there would have been added value in the allocation of more time to Advisory Council representatives to have a discussion with you. We would have liked more time to provide input, particularly in relation to your opening address and discussion on the Control Regulation. Due to time constraints and limited active online participation, a comprehensive exchange between the Commission services and the full AC membership was not possible. Additionally, sharing the detailed topics for discussion well ahead of Inter-AC meetings would also allow ACs to formulate a joint response from their membership.

Regarding the Joint Special Group meeting on 6th October 2023 between the Commission services and the national administrations of the Member States, we appreciated very much the opportunity to participate as observers. We would, however, have valued to have been informed before the meeting of the time allocated to each AC and invited in person if the venue allowed it.

We avail ourselves of this opportunity to recall that, ACs have made recommendations to the Commission regarding concrete suggestions for actions to incentivise participation in the ACs and their visibility[1], and on contributions from Advisory Councils to EU public consultations[2].

[1] https://www.nwwac.ie/_fileupload/Correspondence/Year%2018/EN_Inter_AC_Draft_Letter_AC_promotion_signed.pdf

[2] https://marketac.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/2122PAC22-DRAFT_JointAC-Letter-weight-of-ACs-advice-consultations_signedFINAL.pdf

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In light of the above, and to facilitate the fulfilling of their advisory role, the ACs recommend to the Commission:

- to recognise that ACs have a special stakeholder status as laid down in the CFP,
- to consequently validate this status by allocating sufficient time, spots, and opportunities to ACs' representatives in meetings with the Commission,
- to inform the ACs before meetings on how the discussion will be organised, by providing clear and detailed agendas, information on the time available for ACs' interventions, and expectations in terms of input,
- to present important pieces of legislation in the ACs most concerned, regionally or by subject-matter, allowing for in-depth dialogue with members. From our side, the ACs will explore coordination possibilities to avoid duplication to the extent possible.

We thank you for your kind consideration of the above, and we would welcome an opportunity to discuss this matter further with you during the next Inter-AC meeting planned for the first semester of 2024.

Yours sincerely,



Emiel Brouckaert, Chair NWWAC

David Pavón, Chair CCRUP



Brian Thomsen, Chair AAC



Antonio Marzoa Notlevsen, Chair MEDAC



Sidor-Dragos Buhai, Chair BISAC



Sergio López, Chair CCSUD

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Jarek Zieliński, Chair BSAC



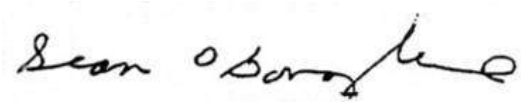
Iván Lopez, Chair LDAC



Kenn Skau Fischer, Chair NSAC



Yobana Bermúdez, Chair MAC



Sean O'Donoghue, Chair PELAC