MEDAC - Registered Office Via XX Settembre, 20 - c/o MASAF - 00187 Rome (Italy) - Tax identification number 97534810581 - Association registered with the Prefecture of Rome as a legal entity n.1224/2017

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Rome, 14 June 2024

Charlina Vitcheva
Director General
DG MARE (Maritime Affairs and Fisheries)

Veronica Manfredi
Director General
DG ENVI (Environment)

Subject: Lack of engagement of MEDAC members in Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) processes

Dear Ms Manfredi and Ms Vitcheva,

MEDAC has recently conducted a survey and some consultations, during WG3 meetings, among their members to assess their involvement in national Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) processes and EU-funded MSP projects.
Regrettably, the findings reveal a concerning lack of engagement among MEDAC members in both national and European initiatives related to MSP.
The survey results, indicate that MEDAC members representatives have not been actively involved or consulted in the decision-making processes of national MSP initiatives or EU-funded MSP projects.
This lack of engagement has left MEDAC members, as primary stakeholders in the maritime sector, feeling marginalized and disregarded in matters that directly impact their livelihoods, their values and the natural resources they depend on.

1. **National MSP Processes**:
   - No MEDAC members reported active engagement in national MSP processes.
   - None of felt their opinions were taken into account or adopted in the decision-making process related to MSP.
2. **EU-Funded MSP Projects**:
   - No MEDAC members reported active engagement in EU-funded MSP projects.
   - None of felt their opinions were sought or adopted in the decision-making.

Reasons for Concern: MEDAC members possess knowledge and practical experience concerning the marine environment, including seasonal variations, migratory patterns of marine species, and potential conflicts with other maritime activities. This valuable expertise has not been included, despite the potential benefits it could bring to the success and sustainability of MSP initiatives.

Request for Action: MEDAC members the European Commission to take immediate action to rectify this oversight. We believe that involving MEDAC members in MSP processes is crucial for the effective and sustainable management of maritime activities. Our community is eager to contribute to the development of marine spatial plans that balance MSP objectives with the needs of the fishing

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industry. So, the involvement of the MEDAC members in the process of MSP is essential also in the MSs where it is still ongoing because the contribution of the AC can speed up the process.

Specific Requests:

1. Initiate a dialogue with MEDAC members' representative organizations to foster collaboration in MSP processes.
2. Establish mechanisms to ensure active participation of MEDAC members in national and EU-funded MSP initiatives.
3. Incorporate the knowledge and expertise of MEDAC members in the decision-making processes related to MSP.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to a positive response. We believe that by working together, we can achieve a more inclusive and effective approach to Marine Spatial Planning that benefits both the marine environment and the livelihoods of MEDAC members.
Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Antonio Marzoa Notlevsen

MEDAC Chair

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