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Rome, 8 March 2024

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

Dear Director General,

First of all, let me thank you for the Inter-AC meeting held last February 6, as well as the information and explanations given in your presentation.

But I also want to take the opportunity to draw your attention to some aspects that, if possible, have generated some concern.

Although, days before the meeting, we were asked to present questions/issues and this with the intention that you could know them in advance and so be able to answer along the session, finally it was decided that would be given 2 to 3 minutes to each Advisory Council, so that they could ask some of the questions they deemed appropriate in that short time.

This caused a significant reduction in the number of questions by each AC and so MEDAC asked only 2 of the various that were sent days before.

The first was on the possibility of using EMFAF to support modernization and decarbonization for fleets considered out of balance.

The second regarded a request from several commercial fisheries organizations that, given the social and economic situation faced by some fleets under the WestMed and Adriatic MAPs, are enquiring about the allocation of funds for scrapping or permanent cessation.

With this we also convey the need to reflect on what is happening to the sector and on the effects of the application of WestMed and Adriatic MAPs. While we acknowledge the results on fish stocks recovery, we cannot ignore the fact that producers affected by these policies wants to leave their activity. The transition towards sustainable fisheries is also impacting other structures that provide support and services to the micro-companies and their crews, and that support fishing activity. Structures without which fishing is not possible such as the French Prud'Homies, the Italian Cooperatives, the Spanish Cofradías and the Producer Organizations.

We believe that we did not receive an adequate response to any of the questions asked.

Perhaps the problem was found in the speed of our presentation and the consequent difficulties for the translation services and, most certainly, in the limited time available for the presentation.

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But what caused us the greatest concern was what we experienced after the break, when discussing about the Control Regulation. It seems that the new Control Regulation has become excessively complex.

In order not to extend more, we would like to say that we hope to receive a written response to the various questions submitted, prior to the meeting, to the services of DG MARE in response, precisely, to their instructions and to the questions and reflections raised during the meeting.

Yours sincerely.

The Chair

Antonio Marzoa Notlevsen

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