



European Commission
Directorate-General Fisheries
c/o Mr. Fokion Fotiadis
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Date: 16 July 2007
Our reference: PRAC07.19/IH
Subject: Pelagic RAC recommendations SACs

Dear Mr. Fotiadis,

In reply to your request to give comments on a proposal forwarded by the Irish authorities in November 2006 on their intention to declare four marine areas within the West and Southwest of Ireland as Special Conservation Areas (SACs), the Pelagic RAC would like to state the following:

The Pelagic RAC agrees that, based on the limited information presented, there appears to be scientific justification relating to presence of corals in the proposed four SACs.

There is some pelagic fishing activity in the proximity of the proposed SACs. Accordingly, we wish to reiterate our previous recommendation (dated 22 February 2007) that the Pelagic RAC requests that pelagic fishing vessels fishing mid-water (as is the norm for pelagic vessels) be exempted from any closures proposed for areas unless scientific reports show that pelagic fisheries have an impact, and specifically be exempted from the proposed Irish SACs.

We would like to express our contentment with the fact that the Pelagic RAC has been included in the decision-making process over this issue and we are looking forward to positive results.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ingvild Harkes", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Ingvild Harkes
PELAGIC RAC

c.c. Mr Kenneth Patterson, Mr Emmanouil Papaioannou, Mr Poul Degnbol, Ms Miriam Garcia-Ferrer