



Ms Maria Damanaki
European Commissioner for Maritime affairs
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Date: 20 August 2010
Our reference: 1011PRAC01/AC
Subject: Distressing situation regarding mackerel management
CC: Ms Lowri Evans, Ms Isabelle Viallon; (by e-mail)

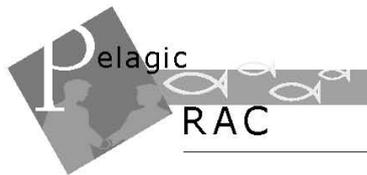
Dear Ms Damanaki,

With great regret, the Pelagic RAC again feels the necessity to write to the Commission to plea for strong action against the irresponsible decisions taken by Iceland, and now also the Faroese Islands, to set excessively high autonomous mackerel TACs for their respective fleets. This is putting the health of this stock at great risk.

In November 2009, the Pelagic RAC wrote to the Commission regarding the mackerel management issue twice, but neither letters contained an actual recommendation on the management of the resource, because the Pelagic RAC members considered this to be futile in light of a management situation which seemed to be in complete anarchy. The Pelagic RAC with great dismay observes that the situation has still not improved and it still cannot fulfil the function for which it was established, i.e. to provide recommendations on the sustainable management of this stock.

Admittedly, an agreement has been reached in the mean time with Norway, which has brought back some stability and a solution of part of the problem in the longer term. However, with this agreement, the Commission at the same time allowed Norway to legitimise part of Norway's autonomously set TAC as well as to carry over a substantial amount of uncaught quota of 2009 which went contrary to principles that had been agreed in the past. For all of this, as the members of the Pelagic RAC see it, the EU got nothing in return and thus relatively speaking, the EU fleet was substantially disadvantaged.

Let this event not set a precedent for resolving similar situations elsewhere. The pelagic RAC is still hopeful that the Commission will take the necessary action to guarantee the sustainability of this stock, by bringing to a halt the irresponsible actions of Iceland and the Faroese Islands, with whichever political means necessary, but without further compromising the interests of the EU pelagic fishing fleet.



The Pelagic RAC is still hopeful that the Commission, on behalf of the EU fishermen (which historically have together by far been the largest stakeholder in this fishery), should be able to yield enough power to take back control over the situation.

If you have any questions, please contact the secretariat. Looking forward to your response,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Aukje Coers', written over a horizontal line.

Ms Aukje Coers
Pelagic RAC secretariat