



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

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THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Brussels,  
D(2011)

Ms Aukje Coers  
Pelagic RAC  
Treubstraat 17  
PO Box 72  
2280 AB Rijswijk  
The Netherlands

**Subject: Fishing Opportunitites for 2012**

Dear Ms Coers,

I would like to thank the Pelagic Regional Advisory Council for providing a written reply to our Communication "Consultation on Fishing Opportunities". In addition to the ongoing and frequent discussions with the Pelagic RAC on a variety of stock management issues, let me reply to you on a few general points.


The Commission has taken due note of all the comments received in making the "Fishing Opportunities" proposal for 2012. An explanation of the consultation exercise and a summary of the Commission's response is included in the explanatory memorandum accompanying that proposal.

In particular, you will see that the Commission has refined its approach to TAC-setting for data poor species and has introduced a differentiation such that some quotas are proposed to be reduced by 15% while the more difficult cases are subject to proposals for 25% reductions. In relation to the horse mackerel question you raise, I can confirm that the Commission always makes TAC proposals that are consistent with its proposals concerning long-term plans.

We are trying to solve or mitigate the "data poor" stock problem that you refer to in several ways. We are considering ways to improve data collection and scientific analysis for advisory purposes amongst others, within the context of the preparation of the new European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. We have also started a discussion with the directors of European Fisheries and Aquaculture Research Institutes about improving efficiencies in the use of scientific resources. Also, we have asked ICES to further develop its advisory framework concerning stocks in data-poor situations, so that an advice can be formulated that takes account of whatever information may be available. ICES has responded by convening two groups next year (WKPOOR and WKFRAME) where I understand observers will be admitted.

I count on your continued commitment to address these very important issues.

Yours sincerely,

  
Lowri EVANS