



Ms Maria Damanaki
European Commissioner
Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
B-1049 BRUSSELS
Belgium

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

Tel: +31 (0)70 336 9624
Fax: +31 (0)70 399 3004
E-mail: info@pelagic-rac.org
<http://www.pelagic-rac.org>

Date: 20 November 2013
Our reference: 1314/PRAC29
Subject: Member State group for pelagic fisheries
CC : Ms Lowri Evans, Mr Ernesto Penas-Lado, Ms Evangelia Georgitsi (by email)

Dear Ms Damanaki,

It has come to our attention that in light of regionalisation under the new CFP, Member States have decided to form regional groups to manage fisheries, e.g. the "Scheveningen Group" for the North Sea and others for other sea basins.

We understood that it is the intention of the Member States in these regional groupings to split up the pelagic stocks into different regional groups. This development is a major cause of concern for the Pelagic RAC and would be detrimental to the good management of the pelagic stocks which have to be regarded as having a unique biology of these often highly migratory species. The unique nature of pelagic stocks is fully recognised both in the existing and new CFP with an establishment of the Pelagic RAC covering five species. The Pelagic RAC therefore urgently calls upon the Member States to set up a separate group dealing exclusively with pelagic fisheries. We consider it should be possible to form a Member States grouping that participates in the Pelagic RAC.

As all Member States are very well aware the Pelagic RAC is putting tremendous efforts into collecting fisheries data and creating a discard atlas for the pelagic stocks which will provide the most important tool to design an all-encompassing discard plan and prepare the European pelagic fleet for the upcoming landing obligation on the 1st of January 2015. It makes no sense to the Pelagic RAC and will only lead to confusion, differing outcomes and unnecessary duplication if these efforts are jeopardized by the Member States not acknowledging the distinct nature of the pelagic complex and we end up having to possibly deal with four different groupings.

¹ This letter has also been sent to the Fisheries Ministers of Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.



We hope that you will take our concerns seriously and we are looking forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Iain MacSween".

Iain MacSween
President Pelagic RAC

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Christian Olesen".

Christian Olesen
Chairman Working Group I

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sean O'Donoghue".

Sean O'Donoghue
Chairman Working Group II