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MY REFERENCE 614-61108/0010

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**Subject: Discard plan for the pelagic fisheries**

Dear Mr MacSween,

First of all I would like to wish you a happy and prosperous New Year. Chairing the Scheveningen Group in 2014, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you very much for your participation in our meeting on 10 December 2013 in Copenhagen and to invite you to engage in a continuous and close dialogue during the whole German presidency. Good cooperation between stakeholders and authorities will be fundamental in coping with the main challenge before us, namely the successful implementation the landing obligation.

As you are very well aware, the landing obligation for the pelagic fisheries will enter into force by 1 January 2015. This means that the discard plans will have to be submitted to the Commission by the end of June 2014 at the very latest. Consequently, the first drafts will have to be ready for discussion in the Scheveningen Group no later than March 2014.

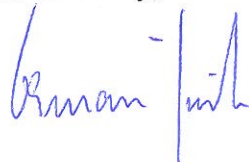
Timely input from the Pelagic RAC, e.g. concerning flexibility measures and de minimis rules, will be essential for ensuring a well-functioning discard plan consistent with the requirements of the fishing industry.

Considering the above-mentioned deadline, I would therefore urge you to submit the RAC's input concerning the discard plan for the pelagic fisheries to the Scheveningen group no later than the end of February.

This will allow us to discuss the necessary adaptations within the group and with the stakeholders before submitting our proposal to the Commission in order to achieve the best result for all parties involved.

I know that the Pelagic RAC has already put a great amount of work into preparing for the introduction of the landing obligation and I therefore look forward very much to receiving your input.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Roman" followed by a vertical line and a flourish.