

**Ms Elisa Roller**  
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Directorate General Maritime Affairs and  
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Date: 21 March 2017  
Our reference: 1617PAC/ 33  
Subject: Setting up informal Regional Member States Group and Commission  
representation at PELAC meetings

Dear Ms Roller,

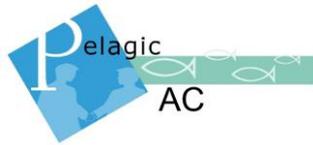
Following the meeting in Brussels on 6 February 2017 between representatives from the NWW, the SWW and the NS High Level Groups and the Pelagic AC, kindly hosted by the Commission, it is with great disappointment that we have to inform you that no progress has been made to setup an informal Member States group to deal with the widely distributed small pelagic stocks. From the perspective of the Pelagic AC having such a coordination body is essential to secure consistency and to guarantee a level-playing field across European regional seas.

Prior to the 2013 reform of the CFP, based on several years of dedicated effort from both the Commission and the Pelagic AC, a good collaboration had been established to manage pelagic stocks. The progress made in regards to building trust between members of the Pelagic AC and policy-makers is now under severe pressure and we see a real risk that the successes of the past will not survive the currently dysfunctional pelagic regionalization process.

The Pelagic AC therefore strongly urges the Commission to assist in setting up an informal group to deal with the widely distributed small pelagic stocks. In our view the practical implementation in relation to managing these stocks is falling short since regionalization is not being undertaken at the appropriate scale. If it is not possible to get the regional groups to agree such an informal structure which is the preferred option, the Pelagic AC then requests that the Commission acts as the overseer to ensure consistency in approach and a level playing field amongst the three regional Member States groupings when they are proposing pelagic discards plans or management plans.

At the recent Pelagic AC meeting on 28 February 2017 in The Hague we noticed with disappointment that no Commission representative attended that meeting. We are certain that the absence of a Commission representative was due to unforeseen circumstances and we would like to use this opportunity to express our gratitude for the Commission's continuous support. The expertise provided





by the Commission is invaluable for the functioning of the Pelagic AC and hence we consider it of the utmost importance to regularly engage with the Commission and to receive guidance on the various issues we are dealing with.

Therefore, we are looking forward to welcoming a Commission representative again at our next meeting on 25 April 2017 in Dublin.

We are looking forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jesper Raakjær".

Jesper Raakjær  
Chairman Pelagic AC

