



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Brussels,
MARE Ares (2017)

Mrs Verena Ohms
Executive Secretary Pelagic
Advisory Council
Louis Braillelaan 80
2719 EK Zoetermeer
THE NETHERLANDS

Subject: Extending the footnotes in the 2017 TAC and Quota Regulation with the objective to solve by-catch problems in pelagic fisheries under the landing obligation

Your ref.: 1617/PAC 24

Dear Ms. Ohms,

Thank you for your letter of 30 November 2016 on the fishing opportunities for 2017. The Commission values your input on the challenges regarding the introduction of the landing obligation. My services are actively looking into ways to ensure that the landing obligation is implemented in accordance with the CFP and in a way that is as practical as possible for the fishing industry. The issue of choke species or insufficient quota availability is a key concern for the Commission.

Commission proposals on fishing opportunities are based on the best available scientific advice. As ICES continues to advise that discards are negligible in the pelagic fisheries, no basis has been found for proposing top-ups for these fisheries. The reformed CFP introduced the 9 % interspecies flexibility precisely to address these kind of issues. It is important that there is a continued, constructive dialogue on the application of this flexibility.

Regarding the introduction of footnotes, Council has decided to invite Member States to send catch data to substantiate their requests to DG MARE by 28 February 2017. On the basis of a scientific review we will look into possibilities for extending the current footnotes.

I look forward to our continued cooperation with the Pelagic AC on this matter. If you have any further questions on this reply, you may contact Ms. Evangelia Georgitsi (evangelia.georgitsi@ec.europa.eu; +32.2.295.04.43).

Yours sincerely,

João AGUIAR MACHADO