



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,
MARE/D3/PCO/mb/Ares (2019)

Mr. Jesper Raakjær
Pelagic Advisory Council
Louis Braillelaan 80 2719 EK
Zoetermeer
The Netherlands

Subject: Update on additional blue whiting evaluations

Your reference: 1920/PAC01

Dear Mr Raakjær,

I would like to thank you for your letter dated 29 August 2019 by which you sent us the final report of the evaluation commissioned by PELAC on blue whiting, which assesses the potential implications on stocks of different types of harvest control rules.

Unfortunately, as the ICES WG WIDE met on 28 August, we could not transmit this evaluation to them on time. Despite this, we are aware that the presentation was made during the WG WIDE meeting summarising the results of the report. Let me however provide you with our own comments on this evaluation.

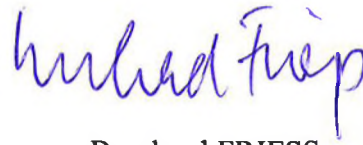
First of all, industry led initiatives are important in the implementation of the CFP and DG MARE welcomes such initiatives in pursuit of achieving the CFP objectives.

We note that the harvest control rules tested show similar results to the one, which is defined as the so called ICES MSY rule. We also take note of the fact established in the report that the implementation of the TAC constraints system does not adequately react to the rapid stock development and leads to the collapse of blue whiting stock. Such system was primarily developed and introduced considering the need for the industry to have some stability in fishing opportunities so that activities of the industry could be better planned. If in the light of new scientific assessment it becomes clear that such constraint system drives the stock outside safe biological limits we should consider, as one of the options, disregarding it.

My services will use this report as a background document during discussions on future long term management strategies for the blue whiting stock. I would encourage you to continue discussions on the alternative management strategy options within the respective scientific groups including ICES.

Let me thank you again for your commitment and constructive input. I am looking forward to our continued cooperation. Should you have any question regarding this letter, you may contact Ms Pascale Colson, coordinator of the ACs, (pascale.colson@ec.europa.eu; + 32 2 29 56273).

Yours sincerely,



Bernhard FRIESS
acting Director-General