



## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR FISHERIES AND MARITIME AFFAIRS

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Ms Ingvild Harkes  
Pelagic RAC secretariat  
Treubstraat 17  
Po Box 72  
2280 AB Rijswijk  
The Netherlands

**Subject: Technical conservation measures**

Dear Ms. Harkes,

Thank you for the input of the Pelagic RAC (reference PRAC06.32/IH) in response to the non-paper on technical measures for the North East Atlantic and the North Sea.

Concerning simplification, we have noted your recommendations firstly to include all technical measures defined in different regulations in only one document, and secondly that the competence to make amendments to the technical measures should continue, with the exception of specific and well-defined cases, to lie with the Council.

One of the objectives of the proposal for the new Regulation is to put together all the specific provisions on the pelagic fisheries. It is expected that this presentation will improve the clarification and comprehension of the document.

We have well noted your recommendations to delete the rules on minimum or maximum mesh sizes in pelagic fisheries. Without prejudging what will be included in the legislative document, we may propose to maintain a maximum mesh size, not for conservation purposes but because of the need to used for the necessary differentiate between pelagic and bottom trawls in the Regulation.

The closed areas/seasons are currently in an STECF evaluation process. After that consultation, and as explained in the non-paper, the Commission will maintain only those areas where benefits for conservation have been identified.

You have clearly expressed your recommendation to have no change concerning the minimum landing sizes for pelagic fish. The minimum landing size of marine organisms are partially a cause of discarding fish but it can influence the fishermen's strategies who

will try avoiding the catches of juveniles increasing by this way the conservation of stocks.

One of the priorities of the Commission is to reduce and eliminate discards. As you mentioned a level of discards exists in pelagic fisheries and we understand that you are agree to reduce such discards. Measures will be proposed by the Commission to reduce discards but not before the end of the consultation with members States and the RACs.

Thank you again for your constructive input for preparing the new technical measures for the Atlantic and the North Sea. The Commission will carefully study your recommendations when preparing the legislative proposal on technical measures.

Yours sincerely,

Reinhard Priebe  
*(signed)*