



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director General

Brussels,
ADV/D3 D (2017)

Pelagic AC
Mr. O'Donoghue
Chairman Working Group II
Braillelaan 80
2719 EK Zoetermeer
The Netherlands

Subject: Natural mortality of horse mackerel

Your reference: 1617/PAC 102

Dear Mr O'Donoghue,

Thank you for your letter of 25 July 2017 in which you invite the Commission to submit a request to the ICES Working Group on Widely Distributed Stocks (WGWIDE) to evaluate alternative options for age varying natural mortality (M) and the possible impacts on the assessment of Western horse mackerel.

As you know a benchmarking exercise on the stock took place earlier this year. Normally an assessment of M is discussed as a parameter. As an estimation of M is a fundamental element of a stock assessment, it therefore seems that further work on the M parameter should be taken up in the course of a future benchmark. We will consequently incorporate your request, but for the next benchmarking exercise.

Let me thank you again for your cooperation and constructive input and assure you that the work carried out by the PELAC is particularly relevant for DG MARE and helps us to better assess our initiatives in the light of the CFP objectives. If you have any questions on this reply, you may contact Ms. Pascale Colson (pascale.colson@ec.europa.eu; +32 2 29 56273).

Yours sincerely,

João AGUIAR MACHADO

c.c.: Mmes Veits, Roller, Kirchner, Georgitsi, Colson, Groth-Rasmussen,
de Diego de la Vega
M. Daniel