

Brussels, 28.05.2013

MK/pb Ares (2013) 1557135

Dear Messrs MacSween, Olesen and O'Donoghue,

Thank you for your letter dated 6 May 2013 outlining the position of the Pelagic RAC on discards and specifically the proposed introduction of the landing obligation under the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) as well as for your active engagement in how to implement the landing obligation in the pelagic fisheries.

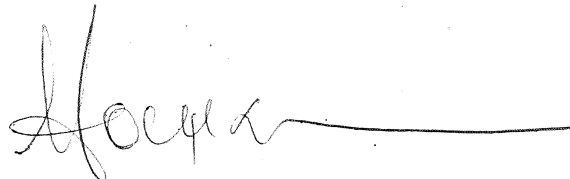
In your letter you highlight legal and practical uncertainties related to the implementation of the landing obligation. This partly stems from the fact that the modalities of the discard ban are still under negotiation by the European Parliament and the Council. My services are currently working through these issues and we have also requested STECF and ICES for advice on operational and practical issues associated with the landing obligation.

I understand your concerns regarding the proposed entry into force of the landing obligation for the pelagic fisheries of 1 January 2014. The decision is in the hands of the European Parliament and the Council.

As you are no doubt aware the Member States have reached agreement on a revised negotiating mandate at the Council meeting in May, in which they propose to move the start date back to 1 January 2015. This will be further discussed with the Parliament and the Commission and we trust that more clarity will come in the following weeks.

I would encourage you to continue to engage with the Member States involved and the Commission, building on the discussions at your meeting in April. In this regard my services remain at your disposal to assist in any way possible.

Yours sincerely,



Pelagic RAC
Treubstraat 17
PO Box 72
2280 AB Rijswijk
The Netherlands