



The Director-General

Brussels,
MARE/D3-C1/PCO-CB/mh (2019)

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

Subject: *Request evaluation Monitoring TAC Celtic Sea herring*
Your reference: 1819/PAC70

Dear Mr Raakjær,

I would like to thank you for your letter of 13 May 2019 regarding your request for ICES to evaluate the possibility of a monitoring TAC for the Celtic Sea herring.

We have taken the time to analyse the ICES advice published on 28 June 2019. As you know, the state of the stock is preoccupying, with a zero catch advice for 2020 following the MSY approach, and no scenario where ICES could foresee a rebuilding of the stock above Blim by 2021.

As you are aware, we are bound by our legal obligations to manage all of our stocks at the MSY exploitation rate by 2020. Nevertheless, we understand your concern that the complete closure of the fishery and the resulting interruption in the gathering of catch data could affect future stock assessments.

For this reason, we have decided to raise this pressing matter with ICES. My services will request advice on what could be a potential minimum amount of catches that ICES would need in order to continue providing relevant scientific data to assess the state of the stock without interruptions, while still allowing a recovery of the stock as soon as possible.

We will keep you informed once we have obtained clarity on this important issue. Should you have any further questions regarding this letter, I invite you to contact Ms Pascale Colson, coordinator of the ACs (pascale.colson@ec.europa.eu; + 32 2 29 56273).

Yours sincerely,

João AGUIAR MACHADO