

Ms Charlina Vitcheva

Director General

Directorate General Maritime Affairs
and Fisheries

Rue de la Loi 200

1049 Brussels

BELGIUM

Date: 22 December 2022

PelAC reference: 2223PAC14

Subject: Call for urgent benchmark meeting for Western horse mackerel in 2023

Dear Ms. Charlina Vitcheva,

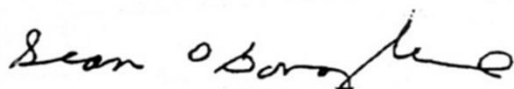
Following up on our 2023 TAC recommendations (reference2223PAC08) sent on 10 October 2022, the Pelagic Advisory Council (PelAC) wishes to reiterate its request to expedite, as a matter of urgency, an ICES (inter) benchmark meeting in 2023 that is jointly dedicated to the three horse mackerel stocks (Western, Southern and North Sea) combined, in order to ensure the outcomes are available to both secure an updated evaluation of the PelAC rebuilding plan for Western horse mackerel, as well as enable timely preparations of the negotiations for 2024 TACs.

In accordance with our 2023 TAC recommendations, the PelAC underlines that such a benchmark meeting should take into account ongoing stock-ID genetics work in relation to these stocks. The PelAC would be grateful if the Commission could prioritise this benchmark in its discussions with ICES.

Furthermore, the PelAC continues to emphasise the importance of developing joint science and data collection plans at EU and UK level through the Inter-AC Brexit Forum.

We thank you in advance for your kind consideration of the above, and look forward to your response.

Kind regards,



Sean O'Donoghue
Chairman Pelagic AC