



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,
MARE/A2/CF

Subject: NWWAC/PelAC Advice on the impact of Offshore Renewable Energy Developments on commercial fisheries

Dear Mr. Brouckaert, dear Mr. O'Donoghue,

Many thanks for your letter of 3 June 2025. I very much appreciate all the work by the Northwestern Waters AC (NWWAC) and the Pelagic AC (PelAC) on the important issue of co-existence between sectors at sea and Maritime Spatial Planning.

A few days after we received your advice, on the 5th of June 2025, the Commission presented the **European Ocean Pact**. The Pact is a European initiative bringing together European ocean policies into a single, cohesive framework, thereby yielding direct benefits for ocean protection and its ecosystems, coastal communities and the economy as a whole.

The Pact aims to take a holistic approach, promoting collaboration across EU Member States, regions, and stakeholders including fishers, other blue economy professionals, innovators, investors, scientists, and civil society. It sets out a series of flagship actions over the years to come. It ensures coherence and alignment, bringing together all ocean related policies - listed in the Annex of the Ocean Pact - like the Common Fisheries Policy, the Water Resilience Strategy or the aspirational Marine Action Plan, under a unified approach.

The aspirational Marine Action Plan is part of the 2023 Fisheries and Ocean Package whose intention was to **find a common ground for both fisheries, environmental and energy policies**, working together to pave the way for a **more sustainable and resilient fisheries sector**. The Commission therefore remains committed working together with Member State authorities, fishers and other stakeholders to implement solutions to make

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fisheries more resilient and sustainable; and to achieve our EU and global environmental goals and commitments.

The implementation of the Ocean Pact has started, including on the legislative proposal for an **Ocean Act** in 2026. The Ocean Act will build on the ongoing evaluation and revision of the **Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP)** Directive which will enhance cross-sectoral coordination and sea basin management.

In this context, several consultations are happening and will be happening next year. For example, an **Implementation Dialogue on the MSP Directive** was organised on 1 July 2025 ⁽¹⁾. It focused on the progress made in implementing existing measures, as well as the challenges and opportunities linked to MSP to help the EU in identifying bottlenecks, areas for simplification, and best practices. Fisheries representatives actively participated in this dialogue. A summary of the dialogue's conclusions is published on the Commission's dedicated page ⁽¹⁾.

I take very good note of **your recommendations** and, as you have seen, the Ocean Pact already addresses many of your points. I would like to reassure you that my services, together with other services of the Commission (e.g. ENV, ENER, EMPL), are working closely on these issues. You mentioned the **ICES advice** on “economic, social, and ecological impacts of offshore wind farms and floating offshore wind farms on fisheries in the Baltic Sea, Celtic Seas, and Greater North Sea”. This request for advice was developed by MARE, notably to address the **findings of the European Court of Auditors** that you also mention in your letter. We will continue our collaboration with ICES and other regional organisations (e.g. the North Seas Energy Cooperation ⁽²⁾ and the Greater North Sea Basin Initiative ⁽³⁾).

In addition, the Commission is carrying out an **in-depth analysis of the evolving job creation potential, employment trends and skill requirements** in offshore renewable energy. The analysis also covers other socio-economic implications of offshore renewable energy development such as energy supply, energy prices and distributional impacts, including at sectoral and regional levels, with a focus on the fisheries sector. The results of this analysis will be published by the Commission by the end of this year.

I look forward to our continuous cooperation. Should you have further questions on this reply, please contact Ms Julia Rubeck, our Advisory Councils coordinator, via the functional mailbox (MARE-AC@ec.europa.eu).

Yours sincerely,

Kestutis SADAUSKAS
p.o. Charlina VITCHEVA

⁽¹⁾ https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/events/implementation-dialogue-implementation-maritime-spatial-planning-directive-commissioner-costas-kadis-2025-07-01_en

⁽²⁾ https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/infrastructure/high-level-groups/north-seas-energy-cooperation_en

⁽³⁾ <https://maritime-spatial-planning.ec.europa.eu/news/new-milestone-greater-north-sea-initiative>

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