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EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,
MARE/D3/GM

Dear Mr Sverdrup-Jensen,

Thank you for your letter of 18 June 2026 on the Commission proposal for the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2028-2034 and for sharing the PelAC's views on the future of EU financing for fisheries and aquaculture. Let me also thank you for your participation and valuable contributions at the Inter-AC meeting held on 15 July.

The Commission fully recognises that fisheries is a strategic sector for the Union's food security and remains a vital economic, social and cultural pillar for many coastal and island communities. The Commission also acknowledges the importance of sustained investment to support the sector's energy transition, innovation, improved safety and working conditions, better scientific knowledge and data, as well as stronger resilience to climate, environmental and geopolitical pressures.

The proposal for the next MFF forms part of a broader redesign of the EU budget architecture aimed at making EU spending more integrated, more flexible and more impactful. In this context, the proposed framework for the Member States' National and Regional Partnership Plans (NRPPs) is intended to streamline programming and implementation through a more coherent structure and a single set of delivery rules, while ensuring that EU priorities and common policies are effectively implemented.

As regards the level of funding reserved for our sectors, the Commission proposal provides for a ring-fenced amount of EUR 2 billion for certain activities under the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). This amount is intended to ensure that Member States dedicate a minimum level of funding to activities linked to sustainability, the conservation of marine biological resources, innovation and the Common Market Organisation. This provides a safeguarded basis for support to core CFP-related actions.

This amount should be understood as a minimum and not as a ceiling. Member States will be able to complement this dedicated amount from the overall envelope of their NRPPs to address additional needs related to fisheries, aquaculture, coastal communities, the wider blue economy and the ocean. Depending on Member States' programming choices, this may allow support for relevant investments to go beyond the dedicated minimum and potentially exceed the level currently available under the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF).

In that context, the Commission takes note of your concerns regarding the possible impact of the new architecture on the overall level of support available to the sector, as

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well as your observations on competition with other sectors for funding and the need to preserve a level playing field across Member States. The purpose of the proposed approach is to allow Member States to build more integrated responses and stronger synergies across policy areas, while remaining aligned with EU objectives, including those of the CFP and the European Ocean Pact. This should make it possible to tailor support more effectively to national and regional circumstances, including the specific needs of fisheries-dependent regions and marine basins.

Moreover, a core objective of the proposed new MFF architecture is simplification. Moving towards one national plan per Member State under a single set of delivery rules will reduce the administrative burden and facilitate access to funding for businesses and local actors, including in coastal territories. This is particularly relevant for operators and communities that need timely and accessible support to invest in innovation, resilience and the energy transition.

I also take careful note of the PelAC's emphasis on the need for adequate support for fisheries data collection, scientific advice, ecosystem-based fisheries management, conservation and restoration efforts, by-catch reduction, the implementation of the Control Regulation, and the fleet's energy transition. These priorities are closely aligned with the Commission's objective of fostering a sustainable, competitive and resilient fisheries sector and are included in our reflections on the current work to develop the Vision 2040 for fisheries and aquaculture. In particular, the Commission recognises the importance of robust scientific knowledge and reliable data for evidence-based decision-making under the CFP, as well as the value of stakeholder participation in the design and implementation of fisheries policy.

Concerning Advisory Councils specifically, I note your call for continuity of support and for appropriate recognition of their contribution to participatory governance in the fisheries field. The need for appropriate involvement of stakeholders, in particular Advisory Councils, at all stages – from conception to implementation of the measures – is also provided for in the principles of good governance laid down in the CFP Regulation. The Commission appreciates the longstanding role played by Advisory Councils in providing advice on fisheries, aquaculture and market matters, and in facilitating structured dialogue among stakeholders and public authorities. Your input, including on the practical conditions needed for effective stakeholder engagement under the future framework, will continue to be important in the discussions ahead.

In conclusion, I welcome the PelAC's constructive contribution and encourage you to continue providing concrete input on the investment priorities most important for your sector, including in relation to future programming under the NRPPs.

I look forward to our continued fruitful cooperation. Should you have any 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,

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Electronically signed on 31/07/2026 00:23 (UTC+02) in accordance with Article 11 of Commission Decision (EU) 2021/2121