



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director General

Brussels,
MARE.D/

Mr Giampolo Buonfiglio
Chairman
Mediterranean Advisory Council
Via XX Settembre 20
c/o MIPAAF
00187 Roma
ITALY

Subject: MEDAC message to the EP regarding the Multi-Annual Plan for Demersal stocks in the West Mediterranean Sea

Dear Mr Buonfiglio,

The Commission adopted on 8 March 2018 a proposal for a Multi-Annual Plan for the fisheries exploiting demersal stocks in the Western Mediterranean Sea, which is currently being discussed by co-legislators.

MEDAC has contributed to the preparation of this proposal through the organisation of specific meetings as well as through the adoption of an opinion delivered in November 2017¹, most recommendations of which have been included in the proposal. Following the adoption of the Commission proposal, a second MEDAC opinion was delivered in July 2018², to which we answered that all the information provided would be taken into account in the context of the discussions with the European Parliament and with the Council.

It was therefore very surprising to learn that the MEDAC Secretariat wrote to the European Parliament just before the vote in the PECH Committee on this proposal on 27th November, asking for the MEPs support for a joint statement prepared by 3 Italian organisations, and providing an opinion on the Commission proposal.

This practice is unacceptable. In no case should the secretariat of an Advisory Council be used to support a position that has not been subject to a discussion and an agreement by all members of the Advisory Council.

¹ Opinion for a multiannual plan (MAP) for the fisheries exploiting demersal stocks in the western Mediterranean Sea. Rome (MEDAC(2017)270, 7.11.2017).

² MEDAC opinion 189/2018

Let me remind you the following principles applicable to all Advisory Councils, which all come from the CFP Regulation No 1380/2013:

- Recommendations shall be adopted by consensus. If no consensus can be reached, dissenting opinions expressed by members shall be recorded in the recommendations adopted by the majority of the members present and voting;
- The chairperson shall act impartially;
- Each Advisory Council shall adopt the measures necessary to ensure transparency and the respect of all opinions expressed.

Seeking the EP support on a text that has been neither discussed nor approved among all MEDAC members on a proposal from 3 Italian organisations is in breach of all these rules.

In addition, in conformity with the general obligations included in the Framework Partnership agreement we signed with MEDAC³, the partner must “*maintain relations of mutual co-operation and regular and transparent exchanges of information with the Commission [...]*” and “*comply with any legal obligations it is bound by under applicable EU [...] law*”. Failing to comply with these obligations might be a ground for suspending payments to the partner.

I would be grateful for you to forward this letter to all members of the MEDAC. Looking forward to our continued cooperation and trustful in your capacity to remedy the situation, I invite you to inform the Commission of how such a situation occurred and on how you intend to address it as soon as possible, so that this will not happen again.

Yours sincerely,

João AGUIAR MACHADO

C.c.: Ms Veits, Roller, Lainé, Vaigauskaite, Colson, de Diego, Genzbigelyte, Perez Perera (MARE); MEDAC Segretaria (MEDAC)

³ See Article II.2 b) and c) of the General conditions.