



Karmenu VELLA
Member of the European Commission

Rue de la Loi, 200
B-1049 Brussels
Tel. +32 2 295 57 25
karmenu.vella@ec.europa.eu

Brussels, 25. 11. 2016
Ref. Ares(2016)6570747

Mr Brian O' Riordan
Deputy Director
Low Impact Fishers of Europe (LIFE)
Rue Cuypers, 3
1040 Brussels

Dear Mr O'Riordan,

Thank you very much for your letter of 17 October 2016 regarding the quota of Bluefin tuna (BFT) to be allocated to small scale fishermen.

Let me first share your satisfaction concerning the success of the BFT recovery plan in ICCAT. This success has been made possible by the important efforts and sacrifices made by fishermen, including many small scale fishermen, as well as administrations. As a result, for the last two years, the TAC for BFT has been steadily increased by 20% each year and recently ICCAT decided to increase it by another 20% for 2017.

In 2015, ICCAT adopted the non-binding Resolution 15-13 concerning criteria for quota allocation. However, this refers to the criteria which should be considered when deciding on the allocation of a quota between ICCAT CPCs, not the allocation of fishing opportunities between various sectors within a given CPC.

At the same time, the recently adopted Regulation 2016/1627 on a multiannual recovery plan for bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and the Mediterranean, foresees that, in accordance with Article 17 of Regulation 1380/2013, when allocating the fishing opportunities available to them, EU Member States shall use transparent and objective criteria, including those of an environmental, social and economic nature, and *shall also endeavour to distribute national quotas fairly among the various fleet segments giving consideration to traditional and artisanal fisheries, and to provide incentives to Union fishing vessels deploying selective fishing gear or using fishing techniques with reduced environmental impact.*

It is for the Member States to decide on how BFT fishing opportunities are allocated within these limits. I am confident that Member States will give full considerations to these provisions and I can assure you that the Commission will continue to address this regularly with Member States to ensure that these provisions are correctly applied.

Yours sincerely,

