

Ref.:335/2018

Rome, 10 December 2018

To João Aguiar Machado
Director General
Directorate-General for
Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
European Commission
1049 Brussel
Belgium

Dear Mr Machado,

Referring to your letter - Ref. Ares(2018)6308147 - 07/12/2018 promptly forwarded to all members of our Advisory Council - in which I was surprised to read that, *“just before the vote in the PECH Committee, the MEDAC Secretariat wrote to the European Parliament on the draft Multi-Annual Plan for Demersal stocks in the Western Mediterranean Sea, asking for support of the MEP for a joint statement draft by 3 Italian organizations, and providing an opinion on the Commission proposal”*.

First of all, I can assure you that this did not happen. The MEDAC Secretariat has never written to the EP asking for support on statements from certain members, and I am well aware that this would be against the AC rules and as such would be completely unacceptable.

The Secretariat addresses, and only ever addresses, the Institutions (EC, MS, EP) to transmit positions or opinions of the MEDAC, that have already been discussed and approved by the Executive Committee of the Advisory Council, with or without minority statements (and published, as is customary, on the web site).

Whoever raised this "issue" obviously did not read with due care the document they came into possession of and passed on incorrect information to you.

The MEDAC Secretariat, among its activities, has always facilitated relations and communications among its members (independently of 60% or 40%), creating a bridge on many occasions to foster dialogue. I would like to stress that the email was only an internal communication between members which the MEDAC Secretariat could be considered “guilty” of having transmitted to the French and Spanish organisations on behalf of three Italian organisations. It was in actual fact a request for support in writing by the Italians (and not by the MEDAC) to Spanish and French colleagues.

One of the Spanish organisations, not the MEDAC, had forwarded this email exchange to some MEPs. On reading the "offending" document carefully, this intention is absolutely clear and unequivocal.

The statement regarding the vote by PECH on the MAP proposal on demersal species in WMed was then officially transmitted by the Alliance of Italian Cooperatives (ACI) only after it had been agreed on by some Italian, French and Spanish organisations, to all the MEP of the Fisheries Commission (PECH).

To avoid this type of misunderstanding or any such confusion from being repeated and used to discredit the work of the MEDAC in the eyes of DG MARE, other institutions or public opinion (it is not the first time that this has happened), I have already instructed the Secretariat not accept the role of facilitator of internal dialogue (a role that I had considered useful and positive) so as not to leave "traces" in the email transmissions. These internal rules shall be added to the draft agenda of the forthcoming General Assembly meeting for formalisation.

I hope to have fully explained what happened, please do not hesitate to request any further clarification.

Yours sincerely,



Giampaolo Buonfiglio
President

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



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