



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,  
MARE/Unit/ER

Dear Mr Brouckaert,

Thank you for your advice on the Communication on the functioning of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) <sup>(1)</sup> – our reference Ares(2023)8424850. The North Western Waters Advisory Council (NWWAC) gives insightful and vital recommendations on the various topics touched upon in the Communication.

Let me come back to you on certain topics the NWWAC requests further information on.

First of all, you have asked for more information regarding the ‘Fisheries and Oceans Pact’. This pact is not a product in itself to be finalised. Rather, it is the call for a commitment of all those involved in fisheries to a continued comprehensive and constructive dialogue and cooperation to address the key challenges for Europe’s fisheries today. This dialogue has intensified during 2023 with the Council presidency conclusions <sup>(2)</sup>, the opinion of the Committee of Regions <sup>(3)</sup>, the own-initiative reports of the European Parliament <sup>(4)</sup>, Member State contributions and recommendations of the Advisory Councils and sets the basis for reflections on how to advance the policy, make full use of the opportunities and achievements to date and how to bring the policy and its implementation forward in a meaningful way. Your recommendation and the detailed reflections therein exactly fit that purpose. To have a joint reflection and dialogue on matters most relevant for you in the CFP and its implementation.

Our upcoming InterAC meeting of 6 February will also be part of this dialogue and will help us in defining the way ahead. I can assure you that we are looking at recommendations such as these in full detail and in the months ahead we will be coming back in further details to all those contributing.

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<sup>(1)</sup> COM(2023) 103 final

<sup>(2)</sup> <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-11053-2023-INIT/en/pdf>

<sup>(3)</sup> <https://cor.europa.eu/en/our-work/Pages/OpinionTimeline.aspx?opId=CDR-1876-2023>

<sup>(4)</sup> 2023/2049(INI), 2023/2124(INI), 2021/2169(INI)

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With this in mind, at this stage, let me come back to you on some of the main elements and questions.

Firstly, to answer your questions regarding the foresight study on Fishers of the Future and the study supporting the evaluation of the landing obligation, and the question if stakeholders including Advisory Councils will be consulted. Both these studies have been launched and will indeed include stakeholder consultation.

The EU-wide participatory foresight project “Fishers of the Future” aims to forecast the role of fishers in society in 2050 as a basis to inform fisheries decisions in the coming years. Fishers are facing a multitude of new challenges: climate change, more and more competition for maritime space, rising costs and the need to transition to greener energies amongst others. This project wants to look ahead and understand how fishers envisage their future. The study will run through 2024 and will be based on desk study, interviews, events and dialogue. A questionnaire presenting some of the preliminary results will be shared in the coming days with a broad range of stakeholders, foremost among which the Advisory Councils. In parallel, the contractor and DG MARE are preparing a further presentation and discussion during a hybrid event on the 19 March 2023 for which all Advisory Councils will receive an invitation shortly.

The study supporting the landing obligation started early January 2024. The final report is due to be submitted in January 2025. Stakeholders will likely be consulted in the second and third quarter of 2024. These consultations will be done through e-surveys and interviews.

For both studies we have asked the contractors to foresee enough time for ACs to provide their inputs so that you are able to discuss internally and that your feedback and answers are including your realities and perspective.

Another important topic touched upon in your advice and our Communication is climate change which is essential for all our work. The CFP includes rules for managing fisheries to limit the impact of fisheries on the environment, which has a positive effect in terms of climate mitigation. It contains provisions towards adaptation providing management tool to climate-proof fisheries management and improve ecosystem resilience, in particular by reducing fishing pressure and governing EU fleets. It provides tools to assist adaptation in response to shifts in stock distribution and adverse climate impacts through science-based management strategies, flexible quota management and targeted structural support. The CFP Communication includes already reflections on this topic based on studies carried out in 2022. The inputs from Member States and stakeholders and in particular recommendations like yours help us in the reflections ahead and I would like to thank you for those.

Finally, let me underline that the Commission acknowledges the need to carefully monitor future developments and to take them into account in any future policy changes. New technologies, innovation and research are key for adaptation and mitigation towards climate change.

I am looking 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](mailto:MARE-AC@ec.europa.eu).

Yours sincerely,

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