



Brussels, 24 OCT 2013
A2/EG D(2013) 3330506

Subject: Implementation of the new CFP – measures to minimise unwanted catches

Dear Chairman,

Advisory Councils (ACs) have a vital role to play in implementing many elements of the new Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). In particular the AC will have an active role in developing regionalised management measures for the implementation of the landing obligation and also (at a later stage) in the preparation of multiannual plans. We are noticing with satisfaction that most of the ACs are picking up on the challenge, in particular in preparation of the landing obligation.

In the context of the preparation of the implementation of the landing obligation, I would like to bring to your attention the importance of developing measures that minimise unwanted catches for which the landing obligation should be a driver. It is still apparent that many legal gears in EU fisheries are not selective enough, leading to unwanted catches.

I recognize that considerable efforts and sacrifices have been made by the industry in Member States in recent years to improve selectivity. It is also clear that in many mixed fisheries regulating gear selectivity alone will not suffice to achieve sustainable exploitation patterns. In addition to technical selectivity improvements, we need to consider measures to avoid these unwanted catches. Strategies such as real-time closures and moving-on provisions can be particularly effective, in combination with improvements to gear selectivity. The advice from the ACs to Member States and the Commission on how to achieve this will be crucial in implementing the landing obligation where such changes to exploitation patterns are needed. In the longer-term these measures should be incorporated into multiannual plans.

ACs can provide essential input in three specific areas. Firstly we need the expertise of the ACs to help us design and develop a new technical measures framework that better fits the regional specificities of the different EU fisheries. We will launch a consultation phase to discuss the general approach and principles, objectives and structure of this technical measures framework in the near future.

Secondly, ACs should look into intensified participation in industry/science partnership projects across Member States. This will help to improve the knowledge base on different fisheries and may feed industry experience into pilot projects and studies that

different fisheries and may feed industry experience into pilot projects and studies that will be eligible for funding under the new EMFF – in particular projects aimed at testing new gears and adaptations to fishing strategies.

Thirdly, I expect the ACs to provide the framework that will encourage the industry to take more responsibility for its activities and to promote self-regulation and a culture of compliance. As we move away from the old micromanagement model for the implementation of the CFP towards a result-based management model, there is an opportunity for a *quid pro quo* in the amending or abolition of certain technical rules or effort restrictions. This will provide a real incentive for industry buy-in.

We look forward to discussing these issues further and I trust we can count on your continuing support and cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lowri Evans', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lowri Evans