



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,  
MARE D3-C1/PCO-RI/Ares(2020)

To all Advisory Councils and all the  
Regional Groups

**Subject: Involvement of Advisory Councils in the preparation of Joint Recommendations under the Common Fisheries Policy Regulation 1380/2013**

Dear Madam, Sir,

I would like to draw your attention to the importance of the involvement of Advisory Councils in the preparation of joint recommendations under the CFP Regulation. I wish to stress that under Article 18(2) of the CFP, the Advisory Councils (ACs) play an important role in the regionalisation process. In line with the provisions of the CFP, Member States shall consult the relevant ACs when preparing Joint Recommendations.

These Joint Recommendations **must be based on the best available scientific advice** and accompanied by **supporting scientific evidence**. Stakeholders' involvement in the preparation of joint recommendations is crucial, and **it is therefore essential that all ACs are associated early on in the process of their preparation**. We strongly encourage each Regional Group of Member States to make sure that the ACs are fully informed and involved, and that they are regularly kept up-to-date with any relevant information.

Obtaining a balanced representation of all stakeholders' views is precisely the reason why the Advisory Councils were created. Therefore, all ACs should submit recommendations, or, if a consensus-based recommendation cannot be agreed, to provide a detailed overview of the arguments of the different parties (including those of scientific nature).

The Commission issued guidance on the establishment of conservation measures under the CFP for Natura 2000 sites and for Marine Strategy Framework Directive purposes (Staff Working Document SWD(2018)288<sup>1</sup>). This describes good practices when developing the Art.11 joint recommendations, including the early and meaningful consultations with all relevant stakeholders, and the transparency of the procedures.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/sites/fisheries/files/swd\\_2018\\_288\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/sites/fisheries/files/swd_2018_288_en.pdf)

I am confident that the Advisory Councils, Regional Groups and the Commission will continue working closely for a proper implementation of the CFP Regulation.

Should you have any question on this letter, I invite you to contact Ms Pascale COLSON, coordinator of the Advisory Councils ([pascale.colson@ec.europa.eu](mailto:pascale.colson@ec.europa.eu); +32.2.295.62.73).

Yours faithfully,

Bernhard FRIESS  
Acting Director-General