



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES  
THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

16.12.2009 D 14371

Brussels,  
D(2009)

North-Western Waters RAC  
Bord Iscaigh Mhara  
Crofton Road  
Dun Laoghaire  
co Dublin  
Ireland

**Subject: Survival rates in the Channel**

Dear Mr. Lambourn

I welcome your suggestion to develop studies on the survival rates of discards of certain species, as mentioned in your letter of 12 November 2009. I have decided to ask STECF to prepare a brief review of the state of knowledge on this topic, and to suggest specific studies that might be financed from the budget of the Union. Any such additional funding would not, however, be available immediately. The draft request is in annex.


Meanwhile, I would point out that STECF has already issued some advice on the conditions regarding the release of common skate, undulate ray, white skate and angel shark during the plenary meeting in May 2009. This document is available in: [http://fishnet.jrc.it/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?p\\_l\\_id=1807&folderId=176787&name=DLFE-23102.pdf](http://fishnet.jrc.it/c/document_library/get_file?p_l_id=1807&folderId=176787&name=DLFE-23102.pdf) (section 5.7)

You will also find references to some results that have been published in peer-reviewed journals.

Concerning cod in VIId, you will be aware that this stock is biologically linked to cod in areas IV and IIIa, where the cod TACs are normally jointly agreed with Norway. The TAC for VIId cod will have to be adjusted in the same proportion as that agreed for the North Sea and Skagerrak.

According to the new cod plan<sup>1</sup>, any reduction in discard rate that has been scientifically documented can lead to a higher cod TAC. It is not the case that TACs can be increased in order to reduce discarding. TACs can be increased once discarding has been reduced by technical means or cod avoidance measures.

Yours sincerely,



Fokion Fotiadis

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<sup>1</sup> Specifically, Article 7 of Regulation (EC) No 1342/2008 of 18 December 2008 establishing a long-term plan for cod stocks and the fisheries exploiting those stocks and repealing Regulation (EC) No 423/2004

## ANNEX: DRAFT REQUEST TO STECF

### **Background**

The NWWRAC has written to the Commission about the importance of improving knowledge on discard survival rates. The following concerns are raised:

1. improving knowledge on survival rates of skates and rays;
2. alternative methods for limiting discards of skates and rays (e.g. an MLS);
3. improving knowledge of the survival rate of discarded cod, particularly in VIId;
4. improving knowledge of the survival rate of plaice discards in VIId.

The purpose of such research would be to improve the assessments of the state of the stock and to better quantify the fishing opportunities corresponding to management objectives.

### **The Request**

STECF is requested to :

- 1) Briefly review the state of knowledge concerning the foregoing, beyond that already described in STECF Plenary report PLEN-09-01 for all gear types and operational procedures of the fisheries concerned.
- 2) Having regard to the state of knowledge, suggest what research fields could best contribute to the four aims outlined above.