



Executive Director

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Vigo,

Mr Emiel Brouckaer
Chairman of the Executive Committee of
the North Western Waters Advisory
Council
c/o Bord Iascaigh Mhara
Crofton Road - Dun Laoghaire
Ireland

Subject: Request for release of full report on evaluation of compliance with the Landing Obligation North Western Waters 2016 – 2017

Dear Mr. Brouckaert,

First of all, I would like to thank you for the cooperation of the NWWAC with EFCA. As you know, the MS control expert group (CEG) for the NWW region, currently under the Chairmanship of Spain, formally requested the assistance of EFCA in carrying out a compliance evaluation with the provisions of the Landing Obligation (LO) in the NWW region in a letter sent to the EFCA on 25 October 2017.

For this purpose, EFCA used a standard methodology for compliance evaluation with the LO agreed by the EFCA's Administrative Board and used for similar exercises in other regions. EFCA, in cooperation with the concerned Member States (MS), finalised and delivered the compliance evaluation report for demersal fisheries in NWW for the period 2016-2017 with a focus on the LO.

Given the specifics of the LO, this evaluation involved looking at compliance from different perspectives, and using quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative methods included discard estimates derived from sea inspections of observed catch compositions in the last haul (LH) and from data collected under the EU Fisheries Dependent Information (FDI) obtained from the STECF. In addition, ICES discard estimates reported by area and stocks concerned were also taken into account. An analysis of suspected infringements reported during the study period was also performed. Qualitative methods included a survey of the control experts and fishing sector.

As you correctly state, results indicate that for certain towed gears used in certain areas, mainly segments NWW01 (bottom trawls < 100mm) and NWW02 (bottom trawls ≥ 100mm) non-compliance with the LO appeared to have been widespread during the evaluation period.

As reported in the executive summary, the overall evaluation is normally relying on direct observations in the form of LH inspections. It is highlighted that some results of the analyses

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presented should be taken with caution and compared with similar LH data in following years. Nevertheless, observations derived from the LH were supplemented to a certain extent with the findings with both STECF and ICES discard data estimates. In addition, the likelihood of discarding is considered very high in these trawling demersal segments by the Member States expert's in the context of the Regional Risk Assessment on fisheries compliance conducted by EFCA. Lastly, intelligence from MS control experts of the NWW CEG who cooperated closely with EFCA in this evaluation also supported these results.

The full report was completed and agreed with the NWW CEG, and adopted by the NWW High Level Group (HLG) in 2019. The HLG requested that EFCA should publish an executive summary of this evaluation. In this sense, EFCA is not authorised to distribute the full report of this exercise. As you properly indicate, the executive summary was drafted in order not to disclose sensitive inspection data and other confidential details contained in the full report not suitable for external publication.

Finally, my services are already in contact with your Secretariat in order to organise a joint workshop between EFCA and the NWWAC with participation of the NWW CEG MS, the European Commission, scientific representatives and other stakeholders to present and detail the results of the compliance evaluation. It would be also an occasion to discuss other control issues regarding the implementation of the LO in NWW and how to improve the situation. In this sense, also as outcome of this evaluation, the use of Remote Electronic Monitoring (REM) as a tool for monitoring the implementation of the LO is recommended, to further improve compliance and provide further reference data that would allow to more firmly assess compliance with LO provisions.

As you know, EFCA considers a priority the cooperation with stakeholders and is fully committed to a continuous dialogue in order to improve the implementation of the CFP.

Yours sincerely,

(e-signed)

Pascal SAVOURET