



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels, 15 February, 2022
MARE C.5/AL/il/Ares (2022)

Dear Mr Brouckaert,

Thank you for your letter of 11 October 2021 on the seine fishing activity in the Eastern Channel (ICES division 7d). I sincerely apologise for the delay in my reply.

You report on increasingly frequent conflicts among fishermen operating with diverse gears in the Eastern Channel and you state the urgent need for a joint sustainable management of seine fishing in this area, while recognising that efficient management measures should be duly based on scientific fisheries data.

The NWWAC advises the Commission to request an analysis of the seine fishing activity in the Eastern Channel from ICES, with focus on fishing effort and catch composition by demersal seines (Danish anchor seine, Scottish seine and Scottish pair seine), comparison with demersal trawling, and status of the main non-quota species concerned. You consider that this could facilitate agreement between stakeholders.

Avoidance of conflicts of use for space and resources between fishing gears is extremely important in fisheries of shared and common resources. I encourage the participation and commitment of the relevant stakeholders in reaching agreements for this purpose, which remains a top priority of my services. An improved understanding and further knowledge on these issues can contribute to achieving this objective.

The fisheries you refer to concern also stocks which are not managed under TACs and quotas. Conservation of non-quota stocks (NQS) requires gathering of additional data and knowledge to underpin the most appropriate fishery management measures. NQS management is becoming a priority subject in the coming months. An Expert Working Group (EWG) is being asked to provide assessment and advice for NQS. The EWG is now scheduled in the work programme for 2022 of the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF).

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Additionally, in light of the sea basin and waters concerned, there is a link to the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA)¹. Additional scientific work is also expected under the Specialised Committee on Fisheries, as a follow up to the annual EU-UK consultations for 2022, and will be integrated into the development of multi-annual strategies for the NQS and management of this sea basin. This scientific work will be able to provide us with the scientific data you are requesting on the seine fishing activity in the Eastern Channel.

Thank you once again for your advice on this relevant issue. I look forward to our continued fruitful cooperation. Should you have any further questions on this reply, please contact Ms Pascale COLSON, coordinator of the Advisory Councils (Pascale.COLSON@ec.europa.eu; +32.2.295.62.73), who will forward them to relevant colleagues.

Yours sincerely,

[e-signed]
Charlina VITCHEVA

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¹ Trade and Cooperation agreement between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community, of the one part, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, of the other part, OJ L 149, 30.04.2021, p. 10.