



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,
MARE.c5/EL/vr/Ares(2022)

Dear Mr. Brouckaert,

Thank you for your email concerning the Catches Allocation Tool for the Northern seabass. It was also a pleasure to meet you in Oostende.

I fully concur with your expressed view of the importance of a revision and substantial improvement of the current tool. During the last two annual consultations between the EU and the UK we have not been in a situation to make use of the tool. Hence, we have not been able to fully assess whether our currently agreed management measures are in line with the MSY advice as provided by ICES.

We have a clear joint commitment between the two Parties to update the tool, as clearly set out in the Written Records for 2021 and 2022. We are currently engaging with the UK in the Specialised Committee on Fisheries (SCF) to agree on a terms of reference, requesting ICES to adapt and improve the tool, with the aim of having an well-functioning tool ready for the next round of consultations. The Commission has taken very good note of your specific recommendations and will ensure that these are included in our ongoing discussions with the UK.

In your letter you also make reference to the STECF expert working group, which has been established to work on non-quota species. This is a new strand of work that aims to support our work in the SCF, specifically improving the data and knowledge on the assessment and advice for non-quota stocks to support the development of multi-year strategies. It is important to note, however, that this working group will not be discussing the request to ICES on updating tool, as confirmed in the respective terms of reference found on <https://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/ewg2204>.

Thank you again for your continued interest and support. The Commission will continue to ensure that you are kept updated on any further developments.

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I am looking 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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