



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Brussels, 05 SEP. 2012 (ARES) 1032394

**Subject: Eastern Channel Cod**

Dear Mr Armstrong,

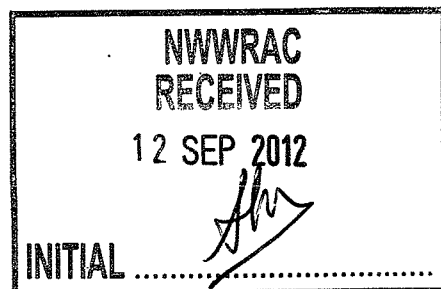
Thank you for your letter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> August regarding the uncertainty in the management of the stocks of cod in the Eastern Channel.

Regarding the interim measures for the amendment of the Cod Plan, the Commission intends to propose a number of amendments to the current cod plan and these should be submitted to the European Parliament and the Council in September. These amendments are intended to simplify the implementation of the plan and to allow for increased opportunity for cod avoidance practices to be developed and recognised.

Further down the road, any revised cod plan is expected to build upon an ecosystem based approach, as proposed within the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy, whereby management of cod is not based on a single species but incorporates technical and biological interactions with other species.

This presents a number of challenges in ensuring that both adequate scientific information is available and there is matching of management regimes to the distribution of stocks and fleets. The Commission has already begun the process of developing these plans and has sought the advice of STECF. In their initial advice ( Plenary Report July 2012<sup>1</sup>) STECF identify, on biological grounds, that it would be preferable to manage the Eastern Channel as part of the North Sea for several stocks including cod. The development of these plans is at a very early stage and more work is required to fully assess management regimes and structures before a decision can be made. It is unlikely that any proposal will be before early 2014.

Mr. Bertie Armstrong  
NWWRAC Chairman  
North Western Waters Regional Advisory Council  
c/o Bord Iascaigh Mhara  
Crofton Road  
Dun Laoghaire, Ireland



<sup>1</sup> <http://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/reports/plenary>

Regarding the current impasse between the Council and Parliament, the Commission is also eager to have this resolved and has made several suggestions to do so. We will continue to facilitate any possible opening.

We count on the continued positive and constructive involvement of the NWWRAC.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lowri Evans', with a stylized, cursive script.

Lowri EVANS