



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Brussels, 14.07.2009 D 08245
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Subject: Status of proposed legislation for technical conservation measures and discards

Dear Mr Lambourn,

Thank you for your letter of 7 June regarding the NWWRAC request for clarification on the status of the new proposed Technical Measures Regulation and the EC discards policy.

The proposed Technical Measures Regulation is still in discussion with Member States, as there are different opinions regarding the structure of the proposal to be resolved. The Commission maintains its position on the need for flexible methods to manage the regulation in order to follow efficiently the natural evolution of different fisheries. The Commission is open to resuming dialogue with Member States under the Swedish Presidency.

Regarding its discards policy, the Commission considers that the idea of a fishery-by-fishery approach on the basis of defined discard reduction targets was not ambitious enough. Discards must be eliminated, and in the shortest practical timeframe. The Commission has not yet proposed specific measures for reducing discards in western waters. Nevertheless, the high-grading ban already established in the North Sea and Skagerrak will be extended from 2010 to all Community waters. The Commission is also considering additional measures, such as incentivising pilot studies to test practical discard reductions, promoting selective gears, using new instruments such as real-time closures, laying down the obligation to move fishing grounds when a percentage of undesirable catch is caught, abolishing minimum landing size (MLS) in many species and, last but not least, reducing overall fishing effort.

I look forward to continued close co-operation with the NWWRAC in developing and establishing technical measures that would deliver sustainable fisheries.

Yours faithfully,

Fokion FOTIADIS

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