



Ms Charlina Vitcheva
Director-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
European Commission
Josef II-straat 99
1000 Brussel
Belgium

Dun Laoghaire, 04 May 2021

RE: Consultation on the roadmap for the *Action plan to conserve fisheries resources and protect marine ecosystems* (Ares(2021)2549415)

Dear Ms Vitcheva,

The North Western Waters Advisory Council (NWWAC) took note of the publication of the roadmap for the Action plan to conserve fisheries resources and protect marine ecosystems. Since its inception, NWWAC members have worked together to provide consensus advice on all aspects of fisheries management in the North Western Waters. Recent years have seen an increase in advice being provided across all three pillars of sustainability as members have become increasingly aware of their role and potential contribution not only to specific fisheries related management issues.

NWWAC members are actively working in multiple Focus Groups related to topics identified in this roadmap, for example the Focus Group Climate & Environment, FG Landing Obligation, FG Scallops, FG Whelk, FG Skates & Rays to mention but a few. These Focus Groups are often extended to include members of other ACs to enable joint initiatives on cross-cutting issues.

In February of this year, the NWWAC submitted its [response](#) to the Commission's request regarding the preparation of the Technical Measures implementation report (Ares(2020_7500428). This response identifies that relevant advice on several items contained in the Commission's questionnaire can be found in existing NWWAC advice, such as the advice on Fishing Opportunities and the advice on choke risks in the NWW which this AC produces on an annual basis. Incidentally, the NWWAC is still awaiting the Commission's response to both its [Fishing Opportunities 2021 advice](#) as well as its [advice on addressing choke risks in the NWW after exemptions](#).

NWWAC members are primed to assist the Commission regarding the work on all aspects identified in this roadmap through their deep knowledge and expertise and believe that continual meaningful involvement of all Advisory Councils in the development of actions is essential.

I look forward to your response and thank you again for the collaboration we continue to receive from the EC, which is crucial for our work.

Yours sincerely,

Emiel Brouckaert, Chairman Executive Committee

