

MINUTES
HLG PESCAMED meeting
14 th March 2019, Rome

The MEDAC delegation was composed by the President Giampaolo Buonfiglio and the Executive Secretary participated at the meeting for one hour only (see attached the draft agenda of the meeting).

The President of Pescamed (Italian Director General) asked to MEDAC to inform about the MEDAC opinion on discard management plan on chamelea gallina.

We explained and illustrated the state of art, reminding that on 2015 the Italian Administration sent a letter to MEDAC asking for collaboration in drafting a recommendation on chamelea gallina to derogate the MCRS, on the basis of the art.15 a of the Omnibus Regulation. The MEDAC created an ad hoc WG and asked to the other members if they were interested, at that time the Spanish sector replied that they didn't detect problems associated with the sector that can be treated through a discard management plan. So, the MEDAC drafted an opinion related to the Italian chamelea gallina only. The Italian Administration sent a letter this year asking for collaboration in view of the expiration (31 december 2019) of the Commission Delegated Regulation 2376/2016. MEDAC created again the WG ad hoc and the Spanish members expressed their interest to participate in this group that met online. I informed that last week a "skype" meeting took place between representatives of Italian and Spanish research and it seemed that the issues related to the first reproduction of the clam and the effects on recruitment were clarified. We reminded that the MEDAC received a letter from the Italian Administration asking for a sudden acceleration for the receipt of the clam discard management plan. So, the MEDAC drafted an opinion related to the Italian discard management plan on chamelea gallina that has been approved by the ExCom members with the contrary votes of the Spanish sector and WWF, and with the abstention of EAA. Moreover, we informed that we contacted the MAC to organize jointly a meeting related to the market issues. We added that during the meeting between the Italian and the Spanish scientists underlined, however, that the state of the two stocks is different depending on the different environmental and density factors and that no problem had been raised for the Italian discard management plan, except for the commercial problems reported by Spain. Finally, we informed about the positive conclusions of the MEDAC opinion about the impact of discard management plan on chamelea gallina on the basis of the updated available scientific studies.

The Spanish Administration declared that they do not want to modify the MCRS of chamelea gallina, because this modification is not considered necessary by Spanish scientists, while undoubtedly the reduction of the MCRS in Italy has a negative impact on the Spanish seafood sector because unbalanced competition has been created for marketing purposes. She concluded its intervention saying that there is not only a market issue but also a problem of control related to the conservation measures since it is impossible to reinforce the Spanish rules with the presence of Italian product in the Spanish market.

The President of Pescamed replied to the Spanish Administration that referring to market problems it is a fact that there are different sizes in the Atlantic and Mediterranean Sea, such as for swordfish and anchovy. Referring to the control problems raised up he gave its availability to find some solution on it with Spain.

Valerie Lainé reminded that during the Expert Group in 2015 no MS was against the Italian proposal, Spain declared that was not a problem because the competence on this stock is regional. She also reminded that the STECF in 2016 raised some scientific doubts on the proposed Italian discard management plan on chamelea gallina and the Italian Administration replied with several measures (such as the reduction of fishing effort, the restocking of undersized specimens, control and traceability). The EC is now waiting for a joint recommendation from Italy and Spain, or a recommendation from Italy concerning Italian waters only. The deadline to receive the recommendation is the end of March.
