



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

International Ocean Governance and Sustainable Fisheries
The Director

Brussels,
MARE D3/PCO-mb/Ares (2019)

**TO THE CHAIRPERSONS OF THE
BALTIC SEA ADVISORY COUNCIL
BLACK SEA ADVISORY COUNCIL
LONG DISTANCE ADVISORY COUNCIL
MEDITERRANEAN SEA ADVISORY COUNCIL
NORTH SEA ADVISORY COUNCIL
NORTH WESTERN WATERS ADVISORY COUNCIL
PELAGIC ADVISORY COUNCIL
SOUTH WESTERN WATERS ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Subject: Place of Small-Scale Fisheries in Advisory Councils

We are writing to you regarding the place dedicated to Small Scale Fisheries (SSF) in Advisory Councils. Small Scale Fisheries represent 75% of the EU fishing fleet, employing almost 80 000 fishers, thereby contributing to 48% of employment in EU fisheries. Their place is especially important in the Mediterranean, where over half of the EU's SSF is concentrated and where the sector has been playing a dominant role in the livelihoods of coastal communities for centuries.

Given the important social, environmental and cultural role SSF play in Europe, it is essential to ensure that their voice is properly heard in Advisory Councils and ensure their effective participation in Advisory Councils' meetings.

The Commission Delegated Regulation 2015/242 laying down detailed rules on the functioning of the Advisory Councils under the CFP¹ introduced some rules aiming at encouraging the participation of SSF in Advisory Councils. These rules are as follows:

- 1) While the Executive Committee (Ex-COM) includes normally up to 25 members, *the General Assembly (GA), after consultation of the Commission, may decide to appoint an Ex-COM of up to 30 members to ensure an appropriate representation of SSF.*
- 2) *The GA and the Ex-COM shall ensure a balanced and wide representation of all stakeholders, with emphasis on SSF where appropriate. The number of representatives of SSF should reflect the share of SSF within the fishing sector of the Member States concerned.*
- 3) *Each AC shall seek to ensure the efficiency and full participation of all members through [...] the provision of interpretation and translation services.*

¹ OJ L 41, 17.2.2015, p.1

4) *Each AC shall offer additional compensation to fishermen representing SSF organisations for their efficient participation to its work on top of the reimbursement of their travel and accommodation expenses. Such compensation shall be duly justified for each case.*

More than 4 years after the entry into force of those rules, we would like to know up to which extent they were implemented, which difficulties were encountered and/or how the situation could be improved. We would be grateful for you to come back to us on these questions by end of November 2019.

Let me thank you in advance for your collaboration. Should you have any question regarding this letter, I invite you to contact Ms Pascale Colson, coordinator of the ACs (Pascale.Colson@ec.europa.eu; +32 2 2956273).

Yours sincerely,

Veronika VEITS