



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels  
MARE.D.1/CO

**Subject: Reply to MedAC letter Ref. 66/2023**

Dear Mr Marzoa Notlevsen,

I would like to thank you for your letter 66/2023 with the Mediterranean Advisory Council's opinion on the need for an ecosystem approach implementation with regard to Adriatic small pelagics.

As you recalled, the scientific advice for Adriatic anchovy and sardine was not encouraging in 2022, in particular for sardine, due to the uncertainty in the scientific advice. This has changed with the updated assessment and a new evaluation endorsed by SAC in June 2023. The state of both anchovy and sardines, now including data of 2022, remains not positive owing to some of the lowest points in the spawning biomass in the recent periods and to an increasing fishing mortality for anchovy in the last two years. Advancing to the long term MAP (GFCM/44/2021/20) is needed. This will operate on the basis of the harvest control rules defined with the management strategy evaluation, to be completed by next GFCM Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) in June 2024. It is clear that we need to progress with the implementation of this MAP to ensure that all the mechanisms to advance towards a healthy and profitable state of the stocks are put in place.

I take this opportunity to recall that for the long-term MAP there are clear flexibilities to account for a degree of species mixing between sardines and anchovies. However, it is established by the MAP that the stocks are managed separately on the basis of separate scientific evaluations and harvest control rules.

There are many positive elements in the summary of the FAIRSEA project including the ecosystem approach, the climate effects for Adriatic small pelagics and the encouraging effects of reductions of fishing mortality. As expressed in my letter in reply to MEDAC opinion 73/2023, it would be important that such scientific work is presented in GFCM for formal evaluation by the Sub Regional Committee for the Adriatic (SRC-AS) and SAC.

I look forward to more MEDAC specific opinions for possible harvest control rules for these two important small pelagics in the Adriatic and to a constructive support to the GFCM working group on management strategy evaluation (WKMSE) work in the coming months.

Mr Antonio Marzoa Notlevsen  
MEDAC  
presidente@med-ac.eu  
c/o Ministero delle Politiche Agricole, Alimentari, Forestali e del Turismo  
Via XX Settembre, 20  
00187 Roma  
ITALY

Should you have any further questions on this reply, please contact our Advisory Council Coordinator, Ms Julia RUBECK via the functional mailbox of the Advisory Councils [MARE-AC@ec.europa.eu](mailto:MARE-AC@ec.europa.eu).

Yours sincerely,

Charlina VITCHEVA

c.c.: Rosa Caggiano [r.caggiano@med-ac.eu](mailto:r.caggiano@med-ac.eu)  
[segreteria@med-ac.eu](mailto:segreteria@med-ac.eu); [admin@med-ac.eu](mailto:admin@med-ac.eu)