



Ref.: 62/2026

Rome, 3RD March 2026

Costas Kadis
Commissioner for Fisheries and
Oceans
European Commission

cc. Charlina Vitcheva
Director-General for Maritime
Affairs and Fisheries
DG MARE
European Commission

Subject: European Ocean Board

Dear Commissioner,

Following the publication on 11 February 2026 of the Call for Applications for the selection of members of the Commission “European Ocean Board” High-Level Expert Group, the Advisory Councils of the European Union (AAC, BISAC, CCRUP, MEDAC, NWWAC, SWWAC) would like to seek clarification on several aspects of the call.

From the published text, it appears that the Ocean Board is intended to complement existing sectoral expertise, explicitly referring to the Advisory Councils established under the Common Fisheries Policy, the European Blue Forum, and the regional sea conventions. However, this reference does not seem to explicitly exclude Advisory Councils from applying for membership.

On the contrary, the Call specifies that the Board shall be composed of up to 25 stakeholder organisations operating and representing stakeholders at Union level, with broad competence in ocean policy, the maritime economy, and marine and coastal matters, including fisheries and aquaculture. Nothing is specified about the composition of these 25 organisations, which may or may not be balanced depending on the type of applicants (such as fishery sector, NGOs, energy, transport, mining). It further requires strong geographical representativeness across EU maritime regions and representation at a high level (President, Secretary-General, Director-General, or equivalent). In principle, Advisory Councils appear to meet these criteria.

We do not identify any incompatibility that would prevent an Advisory Council from applying as a Type C member organization. Nevertheless, the wording indicating that the Ocean Board would

“complement” the Advisory Councils raises some important question and we would appreciate clarification on the following points:

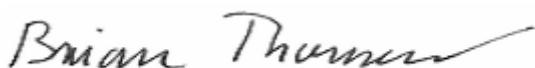
- if you confirm if the Advisory Councils are eligible to apply as organizations under the Call;
- if the ACs will be out how the EU Commission envisages the articulation and division of roles between the European Ocean Board and the Advisory Council system;
- how the Commission intends to balance stakeholder consultation taking into consideration the type of stakeholders

In recent years, several new consultation and dialogue structures have been established, including high-level boards and implementation dialogues. While these initiatives are valuable, their increasing number makes it more challenging to understand how stakeholder input—particularly from the Advisory Councils—is integrated, prioritized, and reflected across the wide range of marine and maritime policy initiatives.

We would therefore welcome further clarification to ensure transparency, coherence, and complementarity between the different governance and consultation mechanisms.

We remain, as always, at your disposal for constructive dialogue and cooperation.

Yours sincerely,



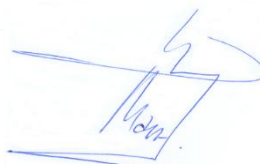
AAC – Brian Thomsen



BLSAC - Yordan Gospodinov



CCRUP – Ruben Farias



MEDAC- Antonio Marzoa Notlevsen



NWWAC - Alexandra Philippe



SWWAC - Sergio López