



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,  
MARE/C5/EL/vr/Ares(2021)

Dear Mr Brouckaert,  
Dear Mr Skau Fischer,

Thank you for your letter on 8 November 2021 regarding your joint NWWAC/NSAC advice on management measures for seabass in 2022.

I am grateful for your very comprehensive assessment and very timely delivery, given that the consultations between the EU and the UK are taking place during these weeks. I also note that you have not been in a position to provide consensual advice, but that should not detract from the very useful recommendations, including those stated in minority positions.

I fully concur with you that a priority action should be to revise and substantially improve the ICES Catches Allocation Tool. This is indeed necessary before it can be put to good use, in a comprehensive way, for the exercise of discussing seabass management measures for commercial fisheries and recreational fisheries. This is something that both the EU and UK discussed at length earlier this year, and is fully reflected in the Written Record for 2021, and will again be on the table in the ongoing consultations for 2022.

I took very good note of your majority and minority positions for possible management measures for 2022. While the stock has no TAC-based management, it is nonetheless MSY assessed. ICES provided positive advice of a 10% increase in overall fishing opportunities for 2022. However, given the agreed increased fishing opportunities for 2021 and the need to update the ICES tool for catch management support, it means that we should remain rather cautious in seeking any increased fishing opportunities. Any possible adjustment to current measures will nevertheless be discussed with the UK.

I fully concur with you that catch monitoring and data collection form an essential part of proper management of the stock. This is important for both the commercial and recreational fisheries. It is also clear that any measures put in place are only effective if fully controlled and enforced. We will indeed seek continued improvements in this area, together with Member States and the UK, and continue to count on your support in this context.

Mr Brouckaert,  
Chair of the NWWAC

Mr Skau Fischer  
Chair of the NSAC Executive Committee

Commission européenne/Europese Commissie, 1049 Bruxelles/Brussel, BELGIQUE/BELGIË - Tel. +32 22991111  
Office: J-99 05/014 - Tel. direct line +32 229-50483

charlina.vitcheva@ec.europa.eu

Let me thank you once again for your advice and your continued commitment to working on these very important issues. I am looking forward to our continued fruitful cooperation. Should you have any further questions on this reply, please contact Ms Pascale COLSON, coordinator of the Advisory Councils (Pascale.COLSON@ec.europa.eu; +32.2.295.62.73), who will forward it to relevant colleagues.

Yours sincerely,

Charlina VITCHEVA