Ref. Ares(2020)7576344 - 14/12/2020

EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,
MARE/D3/JS/sd/Ares (2020)

Mr E. Brouckaert
NWWAC Chairman
mo.mathies@nwwac.ie

Mr. Jesper Raakjaer
Chairman Pelagic AC
l.meer@pelagic-ac.org

Mr. Kenn Skau Fischer
Chairman
NSAC Executive Committee
tamarat@nsrac.org

Subject: **NWWAC, PELAC and NSAC advice for a non-recurrent request to ICES on the impact of marine wind energy developments on commercial fish stocks**

Ref.no. PELAC: 2021PAC06
Ref.no. NSAC: 16-1920

Dear Mr. Brouckaert, dear Mr. Raakjaer, dear Mr. Skau Fischer,

Many thanks for your letter of 4 November 2020 regarding a non-recurrent request to ICES on the impacts of marine wind energy developments on commercial fish stocks. In your letter, you underline the necessity of independent scientific research on such possible impacts and encourage the development of scientific expertise by ICES in this field, and recommend that DG MARE sends a non-recurrent request for advice to this scientific advisory body.

In our assessment, a non-recurrent advice request to ICES would not be an appropriate way forward as such a request would not fit into the scope and timeframe envisaged in the cooperation we have in place with ICES. The yearly grant agreement DG MARE concludes with ICES is dedicated to advisory services. ICES is asked to produce scientific advice for stock management on a yearly basis or to give a one-off advice fitting into a similar scope, during a circumscribed timeframe and within a limited budget. Furthermore, the problem of non-recurrent requests under the grant agreement is that they create a one-off advice, which is not necessarily followed-up in the advisory body's future activity and therefore not necessarily create extensive and new scientific expertise in ICES. The issues identified in your letter are quite extensive and complex.

We hence believe that it will not be possible for ICES to reasonably address these issues within this scientific advisory framework.

We would however be happy to discuss with you potential other options to measure the impact of marine wind energy developments on commercial fish stocks. One option could be that your very pertinent questions would be tackled under a study under the Framework Contract on biological, economic and legal issues related to the effects of offshore installation.

In this context, we would like to inform you that DG MARE has commissioned a scientific study on the effects of offshore wind farms on fisheries and aquaculture, which will provide an overview of the results of existing studies and projects, as well as expert views and experiences. The study considers a wide scope of aspects, ranging from ecological effects over management implications and legal aspects to socio-economic effects for the fisheries and aquaculture sectors. It should be finalised by the end of the first quarter of 2021.

I suggest that my collaborators would be in touch with you shortly on this matter. Let me thank you for your commitment and valuable input. Looking forward to our continued cooperation, I invite you to take contact with Ms Pascale Colson, coordinator of the ACs (Pascale.Colson@ec.europa.eu; +32 2 29 56273), should you have any question on this reply.

Yours Sincerely,

Charlina VITCHEVA

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Electronically signed on 12/12/2020 23:29 (UTC+01) in accordance with article 11 of Commission Decision C(2020) 4482