**MAC WG2 Meeting- 24 January 2018**

* **Setting up of a Task force for a joint MAC/LDAC advice on carding process**

Agreed recommendations and actions for improving industry engagement in the carding process and reactions from members of the MAC:

* *Establishment of ongoing dialogue between industry representatives and the European Commission on the carding process with a view to inter alia identifying opportunities for joined up action and priority areas where industry should focus their efforts in third countries. This could take place through the creation of a dedicated multi-stakeholder task force, or via existing channels.*

Members highlighted the importance of involving the sector, civil society and scientific bodies in the carding process; the need for confidentiality in sharing commercial information and the creation of a joint MAC / LDAC Task Force to channel this dialogue.

* *Establishment of a procedure or mechanism for ensuring that local industry partners are provided with accurate information on concerns raised by the Commission under the carding process, based on which they can take action in-country. Likewise, establish necessary mechanisms for the feeding back of information from local partners to the Commission.*

Once the carding takes place, all non-commercially sensitive or data protected information should be made publicly available to fisheries stakeholders including amongst others the “ex ante” reports, the elements analysed, objectives and implementation plan, risk based strategies, and rationale underlying the carding process.

* *Creation of an online database broadly accessible to all EU businesses, managed by the Commission, where all companies are given the opportunity to supply information confidentially on where they operate. This would provide the Commission with relevant information to engage with business operators at the earliest possible stage regarding the status of a country’s compliance with international requirements.*

The EU database would cover information from sector organisations involved in a particular country on how they operate there. This database could be linked to the one foreseen in the Regulation on the sustainable management of external fishing fleets (2017/2403).

* *Provision of detailed case studies by the Commission on countries that have been yellow, red and green carded, in order to provide greater clarity on the key tipping points that have led to carding decisions so far.*

Members agreed with this initiative.

* *Provision of information to industry on the products that have been rejected at EU borders and from where they originated, to allow for real-time information on countries that may be failing to effectively address IUU fishing.*

By disclosing both the rejections and the reasons for them, companies would be more reluctant to buy from a specific supplier/factory that does not comply with rules in terms of IUU. There is an inherent difficulty in implementing this suggested action given that the only information available regarding a country penalised under the carding system is the legal, administrative and operational constraints of the country itself, not the companies operating in that country. Consistency in implementation across MS would help, as well as sharing information on what national authorities do.

* *Increased transparency around the flag State notification process under Article 20 of the EU IUU Regulation. Specifically, the sharing of information by the Commission on the commitments made by third countries under this process, and how responsibility for addressing the various aspects of IUU fishing is divided between competent authorities.*

Members agreed with this initiative.