



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,
MARE D3/PCO/Ares (2020)

**TO THE CHAIRPERSONS OF THE
AQUACULTURE ADVISORY COUNCIL
BALTIC SEA ADVISORY COUNCIL
BLACK SEA ADVISORY COUNCIL
LONG DISTANCE ADVISORY COUNCIL
MARKET ADVISORY COUNCIL
MEDITERRANEAN SEA ADVISORY COUNCIL
NORTH SEA ADVISORY COUNCIL
NORTH WESTERN WATERS ADVISORY COUNCIL
OUTERMOST REGIONS ADVISORY COUNCIL
PELAGIC ADVISORY COUNCIL
SOUTH WESTERN WATERS ADVISORY COUNCIL**

SUBJECT: INTER-ACs COORDINATION MEETING POSTPONED TO NEXT JANUARY

Dear Sir, Madam,

On 15 October we informed you that the next inter-ACs meeting would be held on 25 November 2020. We regret to have to let you know that this inter-ACs coordination meeting has to be postponed to January 2021 given the most recent developments and the continued restrictions applicable in view of the Covid-19 situation. As originally planned, it will be a virtual meeting (via INTERACTIO) with six interpretation languages. However, interpretation cannot be organised fully virtually and this goes counter to the latest rules regarding Commission working arrangements.

The main objective for this meeting is to reflect together on ways of improving the functioning of the Advisory Councils, as a follow-up to the inter-ACs meeting held last year and my exchange with several ACs and NGOs. Advisory Councils are our main stakeholders' forum and have a crucial role to play in the Common Fisheries Policy. They have continuously delivered substantive opinions and advice and I would like to thank you for all the invested effort and commitment. Still, the recent developments have demonstrated that there are a number of concerns on the current functioning of the ACs and it is important to reflect on how we can best address these challenges and promote best practices instead.

Some amongst you have already contacted me recently expressing concerns and in reply, I welcomed receiving concrete ideas and proposals. Evidently, it is crucial to have the views of all and I consequently invite all ACs to send us their ideas and proposals on how to address the current challenges and increase transparency and mutual trust between members. Depending on the contributions we receive, we will explore potential modifications of the Delegated Regulation on the functioning of the Advisory Councils as relevant.

Thus, we will fully use the time until January to prepare substantive input and proposals to better inform the discussion at the meeting and make it richer, more structured and solutions-oriented.

I would like to ask you to circulate this letter to all Members and send your contributions by 11 December 2020, so that they can feed into our internal reflections.

We will come back to you as soon as possible with the exact date of the meeting (hopefully in person), the agenda, as well as, on the basis of the contributions we receive, our proposals for discussion to improve the functioning of the Advisory Councils.

Thanking you in advance for your commitment and efforts to harvest the lessons learned and share your ideas, I am looking forward to meeting you next January.

Yours faithfully,

Charlina VITCHEVA