



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,
MARE/B1/MR

Dear Ms Bermudez,

Thank you for submitting the advice of the Market Advisory Council (MAC) on 5 August, in preparation for the 37th session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries, which took place in Rome from 7 to 11 September 2026.

I trust that during your participation in the Committee on Fisheries, you were able to observe the extent to which the EU's balanced, science-based and practical approach, which pursues environmental sustainability, food security and economic resilience in parallel, was aligned with the key elements highlighted in the MAC advice.

At the Committee on Fisheries, the EU strongly promoted sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, interoperable and proportionate traceability systems, stronger action against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, open and predictable trade, effective implementation of international agreements, and targeted support for small-scale operators and developing countries.

The EU welcomed the SOFIA report and noted that science-based management delivers results. It supported continued reliance on scientific advice, stronger fisheries management, and enhanced regional and international cooperation. It reaffirmed its support for the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and its contribution to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 14.

The EU called for transparent and predictable trade, closer cooperation among the FAO, the WTO and regional fisheries management organisations (RFMOs), and stricter implementation of the WTO Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies. It continued to champion the fight against IUU fishing, calling for wider ratification and effective implementation of the FAO Port State Measures Agreement, stronger monitoring, control and surveillance, enhanced information exchange, and better implementation of flag State responsibilities. The EU also highlighted the importance of digital tools and supported the use of electronic monitoring and improved data collection, including in small-scale fisheries.

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The EU further emphasised the essential role of the FAO in providing technical assistance and capacity building in relation to the WTO Fisheries Subsidies Agreement, the BBNJ Agreement and CITES decisions concerning aquatic species. It underlined the importance of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of marine resources in areas beyond national jurisdiction, as well as close cooperation and coordination between the BBNJ Agreement and RFMOs in this regard.

On small-scale fisheries and aquaculture, the EU stressed the vital importance of these sectors for food security, nutrition and livelihoods. It reiterated its support for the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries and the Guidelines for Sustainable Aquaculture and encouraged participatory approaches. At the same time, it underlined that new traceability, reporting and digital tools should also represent an opportunity for small-scale operators to develop and access markets.

I look forward to our continued cooperation. Should you have any questions on the EU position at the Committee on Fisheries or this reply, please, contact Mr Marc Richir (marc.richir@ec.europa.eu), our coordinator for the FAO Committee on Fisheries, or Ms Julia Rubeck, our Advisory Councils coordinator via the functional mailbox MARE-AC@ec.europa.eu.

Yours sincerely

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