



LONG DISTANCE FLEET REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Mr. Fokion Fotiadis
Director General
DG Fisheries and Maritime Affairs
B-1049 BRUSSELS

Topic. **Comments to the NAFO meeting held in Bergen (Norway) during the week from September 21st to 25th.**

Dear General Director,

The LDRAC wishes to send you a series of comments in writing following the NAFO meeting held in Bergen, from the 20th to 25th of September, 2009.

As the stakeholders in the fishing industry, we would have liked to see a greater coordination between the Commission and the sector. The representative of the LDRAC attended the meeting upon an invitation from the European Commission, and he informed that he was fully capable to act as liaison between the head of the Community delegation and the members of the RAC present. Surprisingly, his assistance was not requested, while he could have been the spokesperson for the industry's position, which was nonetheless expressed with great harmony and coherence at the preparatory meeting held in Brussels on the 8th of September.

We understand that the absence of scientific data relevant to the Greenland halibut, due to a breakdown of the Canadian research vessel whereby it was not possible to cover the entire area for the stock during the 2008 campaign, should have led to the Commission considering that in this case the precautionary criterion ought to have applied, bearing in mind the social and economic aspects as well as the environmental ones.¹

The industry represented at this meeting saw how the European Commission was on its own defending a reduction by 15% to the TAC of Greenland halibut, without scientific data and without bearing in mind the social and economic consequences, especially given the current serious economic crisis.

Therefore, we remain totally open to a greater coordination with the Commission services in charge of these issues to pursue the consideration, if possible based on consensus, for all the positions, including that of the scientists as well as of the administrations, the industry's and other stakeholders', before attending such type of meetings.

With best regards,



Antonio Schiappa Cabral
Chairman

¹ Sections 1 and 2 of article 7.5 of the International Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, FAO (1995)