

ANNEX I

WORK PROGRAMME FOR LDAC Year 10

1 June 2016- 30 May 2017

Background: Legislative framework, mission and objectives

The Long Distance Advisory Council (LDAC) is an EU fisheries stakeholder-led body that provides evidence-based advice to the European Commission and the Member States in relation to various issues on management of fishing resources outside EU waters. Its role and functioning is defined in the CFP Regulation (UE) No 1380/2013, namely articles 43-45 and Annex III; completed with the Delegated Regulation (EU) 2015/242. Furthermore, it is recognised as an organisation aiming a European interest and is beneficiary of co-funding by the European Commission in accordance with recital 84 and article 89 of EMFF Regulation (EU) No 508/2014.

The LDAC is fully operational since 31 May 2007. It is currently made up by 50 member organisations from 12 EU coastal Member States having fleet with presence in the EEZ of third countries, high seas and international waters. It has a 60:40 composition of fishing sector organisations (including catching, processing and marketing sectors, and trade unions), and other groups of interest (environmental NGOs and civil society), respectively.

The LDAC's main goal is to promote the conservation of marine biodiversity and the sustainable use and management of fishing resources outside EU waters. The LDAC will continue in Year 10 assisting and supporting the European Commission and Member States to develop and implement the external dimension of the Common Fisheries Policy as well as to improve international ocean governance and follow up progress, negotiations and agreements reached on external relations with regards to third countries, regional fisheries organisations (RFMOs) and international organisations (UN/FAO, ILO...).

In order to contribute to the achievement of this goal, the LDAC plans to discuss topics of interest both at regular plenary meetings (see work calendar below) and through online consultations by email or Web conference. The aim is to ensure continuity of work and development of proposals and recommendations under the LDAC's own initiative or at request of the European Institutions (European Commission and European Parliament) and Member States, on matters such as:

- Sustainable Fisheries and Partnership Agreements with Third Countries (non-EU);
- Regional Fisheries Organizations (RFOs) in which the EU is a contracting or signatory party;
- Fight against Illegal, Unregulated and Undeclared Fishing (IUU);
- Agreements and resolutions reached at international organizations in whose waters the EU long distance fleet operates;
- International Trade relations (e.g. Economic Partnership Agreements, Preferential Trade Agreements) and the common market issues (e.g. traceability, catch certificates, labeling, processing...) for fishing products.
- Policy developments in global fora, such as the UNGA, FAO or WTO.

To be noted that all questions related to the CMO (organisation of the sector, market instruments, marketing and market intelligence), trade and trade-related issues and sanitary issues currently dealt with by the LDAC will be discussed in coordination and, if possible, through delimitation of competencies with the newly created Market Advisory Council (MAC) once this latter becomes operational. The LDAC work programme might need to be amended accordingly once these developments have taken place.

Administrative and procedural matters

The LDAC held substantive discussions during Year 9 aiming to an update of its internal rules of procedure (statutes) in order to incorporate those necessary amendments that reflect the current improved working practices of the organisation as well as to align its content with the EC governing rules, namely the provisions of the CFP Basic Regulation and the Commission's Delegated Act on the Functioning of the ACs (see quote above). The LDAC Secretariat has been in regular contact throughout Year 9 with the coordinator of DG MARE to make sure it has the prior approval from the European Commission before its adoption by the General Assembly.

Following agreement reached at the General Assembly (expected for 31 May 2016), the LDAC Secretariat will carry out the necessary administrative procedural steps and requirements so that these changes are duly reflected in the Spanish register of associations and comply with the relevant provisions of Spanish Company Law. It will also update and register the changes occurred in the LDAC Executive Committee for the positions of Chair, Vice-Chairs and Members as a result of the elections that will take place in the Annual General Assembly meeting in Lisbon on 31 May 2016.

Work planning for Year 10

The LDAC will discuss topics of relevance and issue proposals and recommendations within the remit of its five (both area-based and topic-based) working groups:

Working Group 1: Highly migratory fish stocks in the Regional Fisheries Organisations

- Coordination of Monitoring, Control and Surveillance measures and strategies for a more effective implementation of the Control and IUU Regulations.
- Continuation of promotion of the Tuna Transparency Initiative led by French and Spanish purse seine industry and exploration of possible projects to join as participant or partner for the Atlantic and Indian Ocean.
- Discussion on a common approach or strategy of the European Union in the annual session of these organisations.
- Development of specific proposals on core policy subjects such as >
 - Fisheries management plans
 - Technical measures (including closures)
 - Discard avoidance and by-catch mitigation strategies
 - Regulation and use of Fishing Aggregated Devices (FAD)
 - Review and definition of Marine Protected Areas and Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems
- Increase of selectivity and reduction of catches of immature tuna and other by-catches by tuna purse seiners and longline fisheries.
- Reinforcement and harmonisation of the control effectiveness of the management measures in force at the different RFOs (e.g. ICCAT, IOTC, WCPFC, IATTC...) and coordination between them for a common approach regarding to fleet capacity management, FADs, discards, etc.

Working Group 2: Regional Fisheries Organisations and North Atlantic agreements

- Follow up on the Northern Fisheries Bilateral Agreements with Norway, Iceland, Faroe Islands and Greenland including annual fishing opportunities, EEA negotiations and Svalbard. The LDAC shall ensure that Community vessels are not discriminated in the sustainable management of resources and it will focus to improve scientific research in this area. A high profile event might be organised in the first quarter of 2017 to look at how to effectively implement the new External Dimension of the CFP with a specific focus in the North Atlantic. This is a similar initiative than the Las Palmas Conference held in September 2015. In any case, the organisation of such an event will depend on the level of sponsorship received by relevant national administrations and/or fishing companies.
- North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission (NEAFC):
 - Follow up on Coastal States consultations.
 - Provide advice on issues such as management of deepsea species, protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems, scientific work for stock assessments, etc.
 - Exchange views and work with the Community Fisheries Control Agency in relation to control strategies and joint deployment plans (JDPs) in the area.
- Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organisation (NAFO):
 - Scientific aspects to help underpin TACs (total allowable catches)
 - Existing Risk based management strategies, control measures and the protection of the ecosystem.
 - Conservation plans for Cod 3M and Greenland Halibut.
 - LDAC Participation in NAFO meetings (Annual Meeting, Scientific Council...).

The LDAC is committed to continue cooperating with the European Commission delegation in order to safeguard the EU's leadership in NAFO. It will work on a preparatory report for the Annual meeting recommending measures for the sustainable management of resources, considering the best projections of the Scientific Council, with special reference to the existing and future plans for recovery, control measures and ecosystem protection.

- Implementation of landing obligation (art. 15 CFP Reg.): preparation of a LDAC position on a future discard plan (or several ones) to be developed by Member States and/or the European Commission for demersal species caught by EU fleets in NAFO and NEAFC areas. The LDAC will develop a technical report assessing the scope, species and/or fisheries affected, possible exemptions, derogations to the LO, application of flexibilities and *de minimis* rules. Furthermore, the LDAC will endeavor to agree on proposals for management measures to minimise discards in coordination with MS Regional Group (if created) and the European Commission within the framework of existing regulations and rules in RFOs and international waters to ensure level playing field amongst fleets.

Working Group 3: Other Regional Fisheries Organisations and high seas not covered by a RFMO

- Follow up of work of non-tuna RFMOs (SEAFO, CCAMLR, SPRFMO...).
- Protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems in the SW Atlantic zone.
- Implementation of landing obligation in relevant RFOs / international waters.
- Evaluation of Review of UN New York Fish Stocks Agreements 1995.
- Following of FAO-GEF program on sustainable fisheries management and biodiversity conservation measures in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ)

Working Group 4: Bilateral relations with third countries

- Monitoring and follow up of negotiations and meetings carried out by the European Commission and third countries, in relation to the review, renewal or adoption of new bilateral fisheries agreements in the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans.
- Assessment and advice on specific aspects and elements of bilateral fisheries agreements (e.g. quota allocation and possibilities, technical categories, sectorial support...), under LDAC's own initiative or at the request of the European Commission; Enhanced communication with national Administration representatives, industrial and artisanal fishermen, civil society and stakeholders in third countries.
- Analysis of constituent elements of bilateral public and private fishing agreements as a tool for transparency and good governance in third coastal countries and at regional level.
- Advice on EC Proposal of Regulation for a new Fishing Authorization Regulation (FAR). Participation at European Parliament public hearings and consultations if requested.
- Ad-hoc meetings will be organized when necessary to discuss issues arising from the implementation of the CFP reform in the context of future sustainable fisheries agreements, drafting advice, and monitoring the reform implementation.
- Support the development of coherent regional fisheries strategies for promoting sustainable fisheries in the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific Oceans, looking at the various EU policies that have an impact on these regions: Fisheries (CFP External Dimension including SFPAs), Development Cooperation, Environment, Labour, Trade, etc.

In that context, the LDAC is committed to strengthen cooperation and carrying out joint initiatives and activities in West Africa in cooperation with its strategic regional partner in the area, namely the Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation among African States bordering the Atlantic Ocean (ATLAFCO-COMHAFAT), in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding signed between both organisations in September 2013¹. In particular, the LDAC will continue assisting ATLAFCO-COMHAFAT in the drafting and shaping the terms of reference and guidelines for a regional observer programme at sea and a regional control and inspection scheme at ports. Support and active collaboration will be sought from the European Commission (DG MARE and DG DEVCO), the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA), control and governmental authorities from EU Member States and African coastal states, as well as scientists.

¹<http://www.comhafat.org/en/parteneriat.php>

The LDAC will identify best practices and existing tools for improving capacity building and training / up skilling, as well as be active in engaging with other organisations to reinforce transparency and stakeholder participation in decision making process and evaluation and review of implementation of fisheries agreements (e.g. use of funds for sectorial support).

The LDAC will also look into engaging in a future Smart Fish 2 Project in the Indian Ocean and analyse potential steps for undertaking a similar program in Western Africa and how it could potentially support it.

Working Group 5: Horizontal matters

- Ensuring on-going stakeholders' participation and continuation in the provision of advice in relation to consultations launched by from the Commission, EFCA and the Member States on the review and the effective implementation of three key legal instruments:
 - Fisheries Control Regulation (EC) 1224/2009
 - IUU Regulation (EC) No 1005/2008
 - Commission's proposal of Regulation on a Fisheries Authorisation Regulation (FAR)
- Guiding principles and general considerations for the implementation of landing obligation for the long distance fleets in non-EU waters (RFMOs, high seas).
- Respect and observance of social, labour and human rights for crews and fish workers.
- Monitoring of issues concerning the competitiveness of European catching and processing industry, in a context of the promotion of sustainable fisheries.
- Provision of expert opinions and assert a position on market access issues, including rules of origin in preferential systems; economic, environmental, social impacts such preferential agreements have on the third countries concerned and the EU fishing and processing sectors.
- Monitoring of the implementation of the SPS regulation regarding third countries imports.
- Monitoring of the negotiation and implementation of the Economic Partnership Agreements, Free Trade agreements (ASEAN, GSP+ beneficiaries, etc.).
- Supply of third countries and EU markets (food security) and health (food safety).
- Collaboration with international organizations and development of activities on areas and scope of cooperation with UN, FAO, WTO, ILO, and other relevant organisations.

Summary

The LDAC will work on promoting sustainable fisheries whilst achieving a level playing field and improving the competitiveness of EU's Member States fleets. It will also look at how to improve expert scientific and technical opinions and certain fishing in non-community waters and it will analyse the European Union's Regulations proposal on matters of its competence. The LDAC shall actively approach Member States on issues related to the scope of its work and present itself as a proactive and contributing advisory body providing the knowledge and expertise of the stakeholders represented. It will mainly address those areas of work laid down in article 18 of CFP Regulation under the new regional process of cooperation among MS, where Advisory Councils must be consulted (e.g. mixed fisheries multiannual management plans, technical measures and discards policy/landing obligation).

PRIORITIES

As mentioned above, the main goal of the LDAC is to promote the conservation of marine biodiversity and the sustainable use and management of fisheries resources whilst achieving a level playing field and improving the competitiveness of EU's Member States fleets. To develop this goal, the LDAC will work in Year 10 on a number of areas identified by its members as priorities. These are:

1. Fighting against Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, including dialogue and engagement with the European Commission (DG MARE) and the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) for improving coordination of MCS (Monitoring, Control and Surveillance) systems and advocating moving towards an integrated electronic central database (e-catch certificates, e-logbooks, VMS, AIS, etc.)
2. Promoting Policy coherence for development, between fisheries and other EU policies, environment, health and food safety, labour and trade; to avoid duplicity of efforts or inefficiencies in the completion of tasks or use of EU and international funding, and to ensure the result of all EU policies is the promotion of sustainable fisheries.
3. Developing joint initiatives and activities with ATLAFCO-COMHAFAT in the framework of the MoU signed in May 2013 in the field of MCS, transparency and good governance and improving networks and dialogue with African countries (both policy makers, representatives of the fishing sector and civil society).
4. Organising a 2nd International Workshop on the Practical Implementation of the External Dimension of the Common Fisheries Policy focused on building partnerships and collaboration between the EU and North Atlantic countries (Norway, Iceland, Faroe, Greenland...).
5. Improving transparency and good governance in decision-making in fisheries management through initiatives such as FiTI, H2020 projects or the Tuna Transparency Initiative (TTI) in the Indian and Atlantic Oceans.
6. Advisory work with relevant DG MARE teams/units that will act as negotiators on behalf of the EU in the framework of the RFMOs. Some of the expected main topics to address will be conservation and management measures and plans (e.g. NAFO HCR for Greenland Halibut, or review of MSE for Cod 3M...), fleet capacity, allocation criteria or FADs within the tuna and tuna-like (e.g. ICCAT...) or impact of fishing and other economic activities (oil and gas) in the seafloor and environment (VMEs, MPAs, licenses for extractive industries...).
7. Following up on the development of the new modality of Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements (SFPAs) and monitoring renewal of the existing protocols. A core idea is to develop the idea of a regional approach of SFPAs and also to the Northern Agreements.
8. Screening of Commercial and Trade Agreements: EPAs and FTAs negotiations, as well as other trade international negotiations.
9. Preparing with the Commission issues related to the UN agreements (e.g. New York FSA...), FAO Resolutions (Port State Measures Agreement) and ILO Conventions (C188).

OTHER ISSUES OF INTEREST

In order to become more proactive and better align Commission and LDAC work agenda and priorities, the LDAC would like to ask the Commission:

- To ensure that relevant EC representatives (DG MARE, DG DEVCO, DG ENV) requested by the Secretariat can attend and participate at LDAC meetings provided that the Secretariat gives sufficient notice and clarity on their role (agenda items to be presented and meetings) in due advance.

It must be noted that the LDAC has done efforts in minimising travel disruptions for EC officials and facilitated their participation by holding its two series of meetings (generally in March and October) in Schuman-Brussels.

- To share with the LDAC members, in a timely manner and through official channels, the information regarding the main topics/consultations on strategic issues allowing sufficient time (8 weeks/2 months) for discussing this topic and preparing its advice.
- To keep the LDAC updated on its meetings calendar (e.g. Inter-AC coordination meetings, STECF, workshops...) so the LDAC can adapt its calendar and work methods to fully engage with the Commission and satisfy the information requirements by the EC.
- To enhance communication of the Advisory Council both through official press notes and releases and social media (Twitter and LinkedIn accounts...), to recognise the work done by the ACs and reach a broader audience and grassroots. The LDAC is currently developing a multiannual Communications Strategy and has increased considerably its presence in specialised press, media and social networks such as its Twitter account which has grown from 50 to over 350 followers in a year.

PROVISIONAL PLANNING

Title of the meeting	Date	Place	Issue to be discussed
COMHAFAT Workshop on SFPAs as a tool for transparency and good governance in African coastal states	2-3 June 2016	El Jadida (Morocco)	Collaboration of the LDAC as a result of its MoU with COMHAFAT in the organisation and participation (as panellists / speakers) at this event funded by the EU.
Chairs / Vice Chairs Steering Group on Horizontal Issues	June / July 2016	Madrid (tbc)	Development of proposals for advice in relation to high profile issues which must be dealt with by the LDAC prior to its next round of Working Groups (e.g. Fishing Authorisation Regulation, Social and Labour Rights, Landing Obligation...)
Focus Group with Member States on Discards	June/July 2016	Brussels, Madrid (tbc)	Presentation to EU MS Permanent Representatives on work done by the LDAC to date debate on work plan for MS Group / way forward
Technical Meeting EC-LDAC on NAFO	End of August 2016	Brussels	NAFO Annual meeting, setting of fishing opportunities and TACs
Coordination Meeting between Advisory Councils and Commission (Inter AC)	September/ October 2016 (tbc)	Brussels	Administrative and Financial Issues related to the functioning of the ACs, consultations on Review of Control Regulation, Implementation of Landing Obligation, horizontal issues
Technical Meeting EC-LDAC on ICCAT	Mid-October 2016	Brussels	Preparation of ICCAT Annual Meeting, setting of fishing opportunities and TACs
Working Groups 1, 2, 4 and 5	2nd half of October 2016	Brussels	Items related and important for each WG (see above)
Executive Committee	Last week of November 2016	To be confirmed	Administrative, communication and financial issues. Adoption of advices.
Annual Meeting between ICES and the ACs (MIACO)	January 2017	To be confirmed	Review of ICES participation in AC meetings, AC input in ICES Advisory Process, requests for advice, format of advice, communication, etc.

Title of the meeting	Date	Place	Issue to be discussed
International Workshop on External Dimension of the CFP: North Atlantic waters	1st quarter of 2017	Iceland / Norway / Faroe (tbc)	To achieve a better understanding of how the CFP external dimension is implemented in practice, to promote good governance and level playing field for responsible fisheries. To highlight the pivotal role of the LDAC in providing advice to EU institutions regarding stakeholders' view of current issues / proposed solutions re bilateral agreements with third countries and RFMOs. To provide concrete examples of case studies / projects that highlight successful cooperation between the EU and North Atlantic countries and/or RFMOs.
Working Groups 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5	1st half of March 2017	Brussels	Items related and important for each WG (see above)
Executive Committee	Last week of May 2017	To be confirmed	Administrative, communication and financial issues. Adoption of advices.
General Assembly	Last week of May 2017	To be confirmed	Global view of the AC year, actions, and advices adopted, summary
Ad-hoc Focus Group /Horizontal WG meetings	During the year (at request of the members)	To be confirmed	Topic-based meetings identified as important or relevant by the LDAC members (budget depending)