



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,  
MARE Ares (2017)

Mr Niels Wichmann  
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Centre  
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Aberdeen, AB11 6YG  
The United Kingdom

Dear Chair of the Advisory Council,

I am taking this opportunity to write to you in your capacity as Chair of the Advisory Council in order to draw your attention to a special request concerning the state of European eel, which the Commission sent to the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES) earlier this year.

In the meantime we received scientific advice by ICES on 8 May 2017. You may be aware of the fact that ICES issued a warning that this stock is in an alarming state. ICES therefore advised "... *that when the precautionary approach is applied for European eel, all anthropogenic mortality (e.g. recreational and commercial fishing on all stages, hydropower, pumping stations, and pollution) decreasing production and escapement of silver eels should be reduced to – or kept as close to – zero as possible.*" The full ICES advice from 8 May 2017 is attached to this letter for your good information.

It therefore seems necessary to take more effective management measures to help improve the situation of this important stock for the sake of the fishermen and their families that depend on this fishery for their livelihood.

The Commission would therefore like to consult all Advisory Councils and hear your views on possible ways forward. Taking into account the ICES advice the management measures could be for example a zero TAC or a very low TAC or a prohibition to fishing eels. We would also welcome your assessment on how such measures could affect the fishermen engaged in the eel fishery.

I would appreciate if you could consult your members on this important matter and if could send us the position of your Advisory Council by 4 September 2017 at the latest.

Yours sincerely,

João AGUIAR MACHADO

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