



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,
MARE C3/MS/ae/Ares(2021)

Dear Mr Raakjaer,

Thank you for your letter with the reference 2021PAC16 of 15 February 2021. You highlight the Pelagic Advisory Council's work on genetics projects and underline the importance of including the relevant methods into the data collection multiannual programme, currently under revision.

The multiannual programme lists the biological, environmental, technical and socioeconomic data to be collected, as well as the mandatory research surveys to be carried out. However, the sampling methods, plans and protocols are defined by the EU Member States. Coordination of the Member States' data collection at sea basin level is done through the Regional Coordination Groups (RGGs).

The RCG for North Atlantic, North Sea and Eastern Arctic works closely with its major end user of scientific data, ICES, on appropriate methods for statistically sound sampling schemes. New technological developments related to genetics are frequently discussed points in the group's agenda (cf. RCG NANSEA 2020 report, available at the DCF website¹).

Through the EMFF, the Commission supports various studies on using such technologies in scientific assessments and data collection. In addition to the project mentioned in your letter, this includes SPELMED (Evaluation of the population status and specific management alternatives for the small pelagic fish stocks in the Northwestern

¹ <https://datacollection.jrc.ec.europa.eu/docs/rcg>

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Mediterranean Sea², published in October 2020), and FISHGENOME (Improving cost-efficiency of fisheries surveys and assessments using next-generation genetic methods, still in progress).

I am looking forward to our continued fruitful cooperation. Should you have any further questions on this reply, please contact Ms Pascale COLSON, coordinator of the Advisory Councils (Pascale.COLSON@ec.europa.eu; +32.2.295.62.73), who will forward it to relevant colleagues.

Yours sincerely,

Charlina VITCHEVA

c.c.:

Joost Paardekooper, Valerie Tankink, Pascale Colson.

² <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/f1bd2c63-084e-11eb-a511-01aa75ed71a1>