



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels  
MARE.C.5/CB/vr/Ares(2021)

**Subject: Your letter of 15 February 2021 on your request to ask ICES to review the EASME genetics sampling report.**

Ref: 2021PAC15

Dear Mr Raakjaer,

Thank you for your letter of 15 February 2021 regarding your request to have the EASME genetic sampling report reviewed by ICES.

Herring in divisions 6.a, 7.b and 7.c is now a shared stock between the EU and the United Kingdom. With the TCA in application, management measures for this stock need to be discussed by both Parties. The Commission and the UK have been negotiating intensively on the 2021 fishing opportunities since January.

The discussions on this herring stock will need to take place in the framework of the Specialised Committee on Fisheries, which will be starting to meet once the annual TAC negotiations are concluded. Reaching an agreement on the current fishing opportunities remains the top priority, and the Commission is doing its utmost to fulfil this objective.

In parallel, the Commission has been developing the setup and process for this Specialised Committee on Fisheries, and further organisation will be discussed with the UK authorities to enable the work to start by the summer.

A formal review of the study has not been requested to ICES, but the study is now publically available on the Commission's [website](#) for possible reference. With this

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publication the study will also be available in time for the upcoming benchmark process planned this year within ICES. The continued scientific work around the stock may benefit from the available data and study as commissioned by DG MARE. After the benchmark process is finalised, the Commission and the UK authorities will then be able to assess and discuss the results of the benchmark and carefully consider the best management and policy choices to make for this stock, including possible future specific requests to ICES.

We hope that this clarifies the current situation. Should you have any further questions on this reply, please contact Ms Pascale COLSON, coordinator of the Advisory Councils ([Pascale.COLSON@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Pascale.COLSON@ec.europa.eu)), who will forward it to relevant colleagues.

Yours faithfully,

Charlina Vitcheva