

Ms Charlina Vitcheva

Director General

Directorate General Maritime Affairs
and Fisheries

Rue de la Loi 200

1049 Brussels

BELGIUM

Date: 6 October 2022

PelAC reference: 2223PAC07

Subject: Call for acceptance rebuilding plan Western horse mackerel in bilateral discussions EU-UK

Dear Ms. Charlina Vitcheva,

Since 2015, the Pelagic Advisory Council (PelAC) has spent a significant amount of effort into developing a rebuilding plan for Western horse mackerel. This plan was finalized and submitted to the Commission in 2020, and is the result of a collaborate effort between PelAC members (including former UK colleagues), with contributions from scientists from a number of scientific institutions. As you know, this rebuilding plan was evaluated by ICES in 2021 and deemed precautionary.

In its 2022 TAC recommendations for this stock, the PelAC therefore advised the Commission to discuss the rebuilding plan catch option with the UK during bilateral negotiations. As this plan has not yet been accepted by both parties, the final TAC agreed at December 2021 Council followed the ICES MSY advice.

The recent ICES advice for this stock¹, published last week Friday 30 September 2022, recommends zero catches in 2023. This advice reflects the urgent need to step up efforts in adopting this plan as soon as possible. The purpose of the rebuilding plan is to ensure stock recovery to safe biomass levels as well as a long-term stock exploitation with the objective of achieving MSY.

In addition to considering the PelAC recommendations on 2023 TACs for the stocks under its remit, which are expected to be released over the coming days, the PelAC would be grateful if the Commission could pursue, **as a matter of urgency**, the acceptance of the rebuilding plan for this stock in its negotiations with the UK during the next meeting of the *Specialized Committee on Fisheries* (SCF) organized by the end of October.

We thank you in advance for your kind consideration of the above, and look forward to your response.

Kind regards,

¹https://iceslibrary.figshare.com/articles/report/Horse_mackerel_Trachurus_trachurus_in_Subarea_8_and_divisions_2_a_4_a_5_b_6_a_7_a_c_and_7_e_k_Northeast_Atlantic_/19772383/1





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