



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,
MARE/C1/UK/ds/Ares (2021)

David Pavón Gonzalez
President of the Executive
Committee of CC RUP
info@ccrup.eu

Subject: Your letter of 20 November 2020 concerning the protection of deep-sea cartilaginous fish species

Dear Mr Pavón Gonzalez,

Thank you for your letter dated 20 November 2020 in which you share CC-RUPs concerns with regard to the protection of deep-sea cartilaginous fish species.

I fully share your concerns and confirm that the EU has a great interest in the protection of deep-sea cartilaginous species. The EU follows the ICES advice on these species and has a prohibition for deep-sea sharks in place¹.

For deep-sea sharks, the prohibition was coupled with a small by-catch quota of 7 t (reduced from 10 to 7 in 2018 when the prohibition was introduced) for the black scabbardfish long line fishery in Azores. Regulation (EC) N° 2025/2018 contained an obligation for the development of regional management measures for fishing of black scabbardfish with a view to reduce by-catches of sharks and an obligation to establish specific data collection measures for deep-sea sharks in order to ensure that those stocks are closely monitored. The Commission has been communicating with the relevant Member State over the last two years. Azores has made some efforts to assess the sustainability of by-catch of deep-sea sharks, to contribute to an improved gear selectivity, to implement and promote good practice on board, and to collect spatial information and biometric and biological data in order to ensure close monitoring of deep-sea sharks.

The Commission will look into the impact of these measures, and work with the relevant Member State to further advance the data collection and any other potential management measures, in light of the relevant scientific advice.

I trust that you welcome the renewal of the prohibition for deep-sea sharks but without any by-catch TAC for 2021-2022, adopted by the Agri-Fish Council of 16-17 December 2020.

¹ Regulation on deep-sea fishing opportunities 2021-2022 (to be published) and Reg. (EU) n° 1241/2019

Be ensured that the Commission is committed to protecting deep-sea sharks and will insist on strong measures in this respect.

I am looking forward to our continued fruitful cooperation and invite you to take contact with Ms Pascale Colson (Pascale.Colson@ec.europa.eu; + 32 2 29 56273) should you have any further question on this reply.

Yours sincerely,

Charlina VITCHEVA