



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

Fisheries Policy Atlantic, North Sea, Baltic and Outermost Regions  
**The Director**

Brussels,  
MARE.C.3/OS/ae

Dear Mr Pavón González,

I would like to follow-up on your letter of 9 February (ARES(2022)1134154) which references the ICES Azores Ecoregion – Ecosystem Overview. I would like first to thank you for your comments on the overview provided by ICES on the Azores Ecoregion, which the Commission finds useful.

We understand that the Executive Committee of the Outermost Regions Advisory Council (CCRUP) has adopted a recommendation proposing that the European Commission “cooperates with ICES to update this report”.

We are happy to bring your valuable comments to the attention of ICES but we would like to remind you that ICES is an advisory body which provides advice to the European Commission in complete independence. Although the European Commission finances the ecosystem overviews, together with other ICES members, it does not influence the ICES advice release processes, which are solely regulated by this organization, according to its transparent assessment and quality of advice framework, and DG MARE firmly supports the impartiality of advice provided by ICES. It is also important to take into consideration that the Ecosystem Overview provided by ICES has already benefited from the input of Portuguese scientists, at the drafting and the reviewing stage.

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,

[e-signed]

Charlina Vitcheva

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