



Ms Charlina Vitcheva
Director-General
Directorate General Maritime Affairs and Fisheries
Rue de la Loi 200
1049 Brussels
BELGIUM

03 February 2023

Dear Ms Vitcheva,

Since their establishment under the Common Fisheries Policy, the Advisory Councils (ACs) have enjoyed diverse stakeholder participation with a rich and wide range of expertise in fisheries, aquaculture, processing and retail, including on conservation, and management matters. Though the number of members may fluctuate over the years, the ACs continue working to attract new members, either informally or strategically, which can be seen in the example presentations made by the Secretariat of the Market Advisory Council at the Inter-AC meeting in January 2021 ([link](#)), and by the Secretariat of the North Western Waters Advisory Council in November 2022 ([link](#)). Despite these efforts, public knowledge of the existence of ACs, their role and their work remains low.

In the discussions following these presentations, the Advisory Councils called on the European Commission to support their work on attracting new members by increasing the visibility of ACs as well as promoting their achievements. The ACs collectively feel there is a role for the Commission to play, and that efforts in this regard could be strengthened.

The ACs undersigning this letter, would therefore like to reiterate this request, and provide some concrete suggestions for actions the Commission could undertake in this regard:

- Develop and implement a social media campaign promoting the work of the Advisory Councils to raise awareness of their ongoing work and invite external stakeholders to address fisheries, aquaculture and marine environment related issues in the appropriate Advisory Council. Such campaigns could be developed in collaboration with all or specific ACs to highlight relevant efforts, particularly where work of the specific AC would benefit from extended civil and professional participation, and otherwise to raise awareness of the projects, group work, public events, etc.
- Publish an annual overview of the ACs' submissions (e.g., advice and recommendations) and their direct impact on policy development to show the value of the ACs' work; a call to visit ACs websites for further information on the functioning and policy impact.
- Encourage Member States to promote, support and interact with the ACs and participate in their meetings.



- Continue emphasising the work of the ACs in all communications with stakeholders, including the EU DG MARE monthly e-newsletter and social media accounts.
- When meeting bilaterally with external stakeholders active in fisheries and aquaculture matter, take the opportunity to encourage them to submit membership applications to the relevant Advisory Councils.
- Encourage external stakeholders to subscribe to existing AC newsletters¹ to keep abreast of AC developments, pertinent meetings, and events as well as reports from these meetings.

Raising awareness of the impact the Advisory Councils' work is vital to ensure that the value of this work is recognised by all stakeholders which will significantly add to the attractiveness of the ACs.

We would greatly appreciate the Commission following-up on this request and include it as an agenda item at the upcoming Inter-AC meeting in March.

We thank you for your continued cooperation and look forward to hearing from you soon. For any specific query, you can contact Mo Mathies, NWWAC Executive Secretary (mo.mathies@nwwac.ie).

¹ BSAC: <http://www.bsac.dk/BSAC-Resources/Documents-section/BSAC-Newsletter-latest>

LDAC: <https://ldac.eu/en/medias/newsletters>

NSAC: <https://www.nsrac.org/newsletter-archive/>

PelAC: [Contact Us - The Pelagic Advisory Council \(pelagic-ac.org\)](http://pelagic-ac.org)



Best regards,

Emiel Brouckaert

Chair NWWAC

Brian Thomsen

Chair AAC

Daniel Buhai

Chair BISAC

David Pavón

Chair CCRUP

Antonio Marzoa Notlevsen

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Chair BSAC

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Chair LDAC

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