



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

The Director-General

Brussels,  
MARE/B2/MV/Ares(2024)

**Subject: RE: Recommendation n° 49 - EU-Maldives discussions for Maldives to join the interim Economic Partnership Agreement of the Eastern and Southern Africa group with the European Union**

Dear Mr Pavón, dear David,

Thank you for your recommendation n° 49 on the EU-Maldives discussions concerning the request by Maldives to join the interim Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) of the Eastern and Southern Africa group with the European Union.

Although there are currently no ongoing formal negotiations regarding the accession of Maldives to the EPA, as indicated by email of 25 June 2024 (Ares ref. (2024)4577800), I would like to respond to some of the concerns raised in recommendation n° 49.

The EU is well aware of the sensitivity of the potential removal of all taxes on Maldives tuna exports to the European Union and its potential impact on artisanal fisheries and associated communities in EU's outermost regions. DG MARE has systematically raised these elements in the context of the internal coordination with the European Union External Action Service, the leading service for our bilateral exchange with the Maldives and for our relations with the Organization of African, Caribbean, and Pacific States.

In the same line, in the context of the various Senior Officials Meeting between the European Union (EU) and the Maldives, the EU has systematically linked the on-going discussions with Maldives to the negotiations in the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission, covering various aspects, including the future quota allocation criteria.

You may stand reassured that the EU will continue its dialogue with the Maldives balancing out these different elements and defending the best interest of the EU,

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including that of the artisanal fisheries and associated communities in EU's outermost regions.

I am looking forward to our continued fruitful cooperation. Should you have any further questions on this reply, please contact our Advisory Councils coordinator, Julia Rubeck, via the functional mailbox [MARE-AC@ec.europa.eu](mailto:MARE-AC@ec.europa.eu).

Yours sincerely,

Charlina VITCHEVA

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