



EP(16)41

4th May 2016

Dear Mrs. Veits,

During the meeting of the NAFO working group tasked with evaluating strategies for Greenland halibut management, which took place in the Faroe Islands on 4th-6th April, there was a difference of opinion regarding the scientific studies examining this evaluation.

Owing to the delay in implementing the work that Scientific Council have in the pipeline and other additional difficulties (such as agreeing on a catch estimate for the period 2011-2014), this working group decided to postpone any revision of the Harvest Control Rule (HCR) of Greenland halibut for one year. Even though this possibility was unacceptable for Canada, the EU was in favour of it.

It is important to point out that Europêche is not in favour of this postponement and would like to propose that appropriate measures are taken to ensure that the revision of Greenland halibut is completed during this year and that the new HCR can come into force at the beginning of 2018.

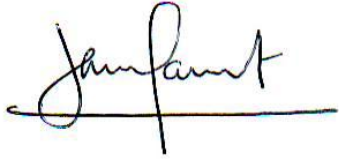
In reference to the above, we would greatly appreciate it if you could raise the issue within the Commission and in the Scientific Council of NAFO with the suggestion to organise an ad-hoc meeting of the latter in Varadero (Cuba), two days before the 38th Annual Meeting of NAFO, which would be dedicated solely to this issue, the basis of which would of course have to be prepared in advance.

Our perception of the situation of the fishing ground in question, coupled with the positive view of the Canadians regarding the increase of the biomass in the stock, is leading the entire fishing sector to ask their respective governments to implement the necessary scientific work to avoid further delays in reviewing the HCR and stock status.

It is important to bear in mind that the delegation of Japan, responding to an agreement from the fishing industry, proposed to NAFO the possibility of having an independent scientific team collaborate with the Scientific Council on this matter, so that we can move towards a much-needed solution (see NAFO / BC15 / 17 Revised). When subcontracting this independent scientific team, the industries of Canada, Spain, Portugal and Japan could also cooperate.

It would be greatly appreciated if you could give this request due consideration and please do not hesitate to contact us for further information.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Javier Garat", with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Javier Garat,
President of Europêche