

MARIA DAMANAKI

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MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 14. 07. 2014
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Dear Mr Garat,

Thank you for your letter putting forward the expectations of Européche for the 2014 ICCAT Annual Meeting with regards to the eastern bluefin tuna stock.

As you mentioned in your letter, the Standing Committee for Statistics and Research (SCRS) advice last year revealed positive trends in the recovery of the Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean bluefin tuna stock. The SCRS also underlined that this advice was subject to a certain degree of uncertainty and, for that reason, could not recommend an increase in the TAC for this stock at that time.

The SCRS has planned to update in 2014 the last assessment pertaining to this stock by taking into consideration new available information, including data gathered within the GBYP¹ programme, to which you include a reference in your letter. This updating exercise is expected to provide a clearer diagnostic on the actual state of the stock by early October 2014.

I am fully committed to continue the EU's leadership in ICCAT and the promotion of strong science, enhanced compliance and better governance also at the 2014 Annual Meeting. Our approach to the conservation and management of species under the purview of ICCAT will follow scientific advice and be based on the precautionary approach. We will seek also to further strengthen control and enforcement measures.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Javier Garat, President
EUROPECHE
Association of National Organisations of Fishing Enterprises in the EU
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¹ ICCAT Atlantic-Wide Research Programme for Bluefin Tuna