

Rt Hon Mark Drakeford MS

First Minister for Wales

29 September 2023

Dear Mark,

As you are aware, the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee is responsible for monitoring the implementation of non-trade international agreements in the Sixth Senedd.

During our meeting on 11 September 2023, we considered the Protocol amending the International Convention on the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (the "Palma Protocol"). The Palma Protocol amends the scope of the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (the "Convention") to cover sharks and other elasmobranchs that are oceanic, pelagic, and highly migratory found in the Atlantic Ocean. It also makes changes to the working procedures of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (the "Commission").

Although international relations is a reserved matter, changes made by the Palma Protocol to the Convention could affect devolved matters, for example, if devolved governments were required to observe and implement recommendations of the Commission relating to devolved matters. As outlined in our report, the Palma Protocol's Explanatory Memorandum notes that the UK Government consulted with the devolved governments and that officials from Wales, as well as Scotland and Northern Ireland, confirmed that they were content for the UK Government to ratify the agreement.

We would welcome your view of the Protocol, and would be grateful if you could please provide more information on:

- the intergovernmental engagement described in the Explanatory Memorandum;

- what internal arrangements are in place to monitor, observe and implement recommendations of the Protocol's Commission in devolved areas; and
- your assessment of whether any steps, including changes, are needed at this stage to ensure Wales is compliant with the amendments made by the Protocol in devolved areas.

I would be grateful to receive a response by 19 October 2023.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee.

Yours sincerely,

*Huw Irranca-Davies*

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Chair

