



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Brussels, 24 AVR. 2015
MARE D2/FD/SSC (2015) 1749030

Dear Kay, Derek and Jill,

Thank you for your email of 2 April sharing your views on the Commission's proposal for a prohibition of driftnets.

Let me stress that during the preparation phase of this proposal particular attention was paid to the quality and scope of the impact assessment. A wide public consultation took place, complemented by a number of studies and analyses.

Despite our efforts, not all stakeholders were able to provide, at that time, detailed information about the use of driftnets and their impact on protected species. This may have prevented the Commission from having an inclusive picture of the situation, including in the UK and more particularly in Wales. This was also an indicator that the monitoring of these activities are far from perfect and that more efforts need to be undertaken by the relevant authorities in the future for such monitoring.

Therefore, further information has been sought by the Commission in an additional effort to offer a more comprehensive view of the likely consequences of a total ban.

I am pleased to inform you that the Welsh National Assembly recently transmitted additional information related to the possible impact of the Commission's proposal on the small scale fishing activities taking place in Wales. We have also received detailed clarifications from the UK government and these additional elements prove to be extremely valuable to understand how the fishery operates and the economic aspects of such activities. Your message confirms that there are indeed a high number of small scale activities in the area.

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The discussions in the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers of the proposal for a prohibition of driftnets have not yet been conclusive and no decision has been taken by these institutions. We have been working closely with them, in particular after receiving the additional information I was referring to earlier, to ensure that EU rules do not have a negative impact on sustainable activities. It will be now up to both institutions to work on the final text of a Regulation. I am confident that the ongoing discussions will allow for further consideration of the different concerns that are emerging with regard to sustainable and small scale driftnet activities.

Please find attached an unofficial Welsh reply.

Yours sincerely,



Lowri Evans