



March 1st, 2010

Mr. Fotiadis
Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE)
Director General
B- 1049 Brussels

Re: Participation of NWW RAC in the implementation of the “marine environmental strategy” framework directive

Dear Sirs,

A French professional fishery organisation, the CNPME (Comité National des Pêches Maritimes et des Elevages Marins), approached me in my position of chairman of the NWW RAC, with a request that I have been very mindful of.

The aim of 2008/56/CE Directive of June 17th, 2008, establishing a framework for community action in the field of marine environmental policy (“marine environmental strategy” framework directive) is that the marine environment reaches a good environmental status by 2020 at the latest.

As such, it constitutes the environmental pillar of the European Union’s integrated marine policy and the marine counterpart of the framework directive on water.

To achieve this good environmental status, annex 1 of this directive lists some descriptors, several of which are directly associated with professional fishing activities:

- “populations of all commercially exploited fish and shellfish are within safe biological limits, exhibiting a population age and size distribution that is indicative of a healthy stock”,
- “All elements of the marine food webs, to the extent that they are known, are present at levels of normal abundance and diversity, and capable of ensuring the long-term abundance of the species and the retention of their full reproductive capacity”,
- “the level of sea-floor integrity ensures that the structure and functions of the ecosystems are safeguarded and benthic ecosystems, in particular, are not adversely affected”.