



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Brussels,  
MARE/ (2016)

Mr. Ivan Lopez van der Veen  
Chairman  
Long Distance Advisory Council  
C/del Doctor Fleming 7, 2º derecha  
28036 Madrid  
SPAIN

**Subject: Transparency and accountability of the SFPAs sectorial support**

*Your letter dated 4 November 2016*

Dear Mr. Lopez,

Thank you for sending us the LDAC recommendations on transparency and accountability of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements' (SFPAs) sectorial support. We highly appreciate your valuable contributions and innovative ideas as well as the smooth cooperation with the LDAC and the constructive exchange of views on the SFPAs at our bi-annual meetings.

We agree with the LDAC opinion that sectorial support is a key pillar in the EU financial package for the SFPAs partner countries. More than 135 million EUR are earmarked from the EU budget for the SFPAs, where 46% on average is devoted to the sectorial support for the sustainable development of the fisheries sector of the partner countries. In line with the recommendations of the Court of Auditors report on the SFPAs, efficient and transparent use of the sectorial support funds, as well as accountability of the partner countries, are high priorities for the EU in the SFPAs implementation.

Concerning the publicity on the use of the sectorial support, there is certainly scope for improvement. DG MARE has already taken specific steps in that direction, leading to better communication: we have published the SFPAs infographic and improved the content of DG MARE public website.

In order to further develop the dissemination of the information on how the sectorial support funds are employed as well as their impact on the partner countries, particularly on the local communities, we consider the following actions:

- Ensure thorough analysis of the use of sectorial support in the ex-ante and ex-post evaluations of the SFPAs that will be launched from 2017 onwards.
- Systematically address the application of sectorial support at the bi-annual LDAC Working Group 4 meetings. As discussed in the last LDAC Working Group 4 meeting, we favour your idea to organise a separate *ad hoc* meeting on the use of sectorial support, where DG MARE would provide LDAC members with detailed information on the use of sectorial support, concrete examples and success stories and where together we could explore different ideas in this regard and look for the best possible solutions.
- Present main deliverables for the SFPAs in a form of synthetic summary of specific actions foreseen in the sectorial support annual programmes for each SFPa partner country. This information could be published on the DG MARE public website area dedicated to the SFPAs.
- Widely disseminate the booklet on the SFPAs, which is expected to be finalised at the beginning of 2017. The booklet is a complementary communication tool to the SFPa infographic. It will contain information on the main areas of the sectorial support application (reinforcing monitoring and control, strengthening administrative capacities, assistance to small-scale fisheries) together with examples of success stories in the SFPa partner countries.
- Encourage the SFPa partner countries to disseminate information on the use of sectorial support via their own communication channels.

Thank you again for your constructive input. If you have any questions on this reply, you may contact Ms. Evangelia Georgitsi ([evangelia.georgitsi@ec.europa.eu](mailto:evangelia.georgitsi@ec.europa.eu); +32.2.295.04.43) or Ms. Ramune Genzbigelyte-Venturi ([ramune.genzbigelyte-venturi@ec.europa.eu](mailto:ramune.genzbigelyte-venturi@ec.europa.eu); +32 2 29 85043).

Yours sincerely,

  
João AGUIAR MACHADO