

*Attn. Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE)*  
European Commission - Rue de la Loi 200, 1049 Brussels - Belgium

**Subject: Joint LDAC-MAC-AAC request for clarification on role and involvement of Advisory Councils in Energy Transition Partnership (ETP) Support Group**

Madrid / Rome / Brussels, 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2024

Dear Energy Transition Team,

The above referred four co-signatories of this letter, the Long Distance Fisheries (LDAC), the Mediterranean (MEDAC) and the Aquaculture (AAC) Advisory Councils have been following the policy file on decarbonization of the fleet and the broader energy transition since its inception. We confirm our interest in this topic with a view to advancing these goals. We fully share DG MARE's commitment to achieving a sustainable energy transition and welcome the European Commission's Energy Transition Partnership (ETP) initiative.

We would like to remind the European Commission of its commitment to develop, by 2024 in close cooperation with the ETP for the EU fisheries and aquaculture sector, a roadmap for the energy transition towards climate neutrality by 2050.

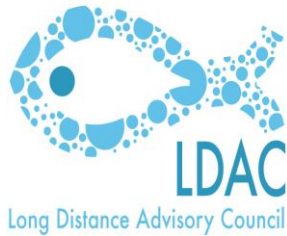
After reviewing the framework of the ETP Support Group, we support its objectives but would like to express some concerns:

**Delays in delivering the roadmap, as well as the lack of clarity in the process since its inception.**

**Tight timeline to provide AC recommendations:** We believe the proposed timeline for AC recommendations may be too short and ambitious and could affect the quality of the outcomes.

**Lack of capacity, heavy workload and lack of funding:** The initiative places a substantial burden on the selected coordinators without offering any financial support from the Commission, which may create challenges in managing the workload effectively affecting the performance of the ACs and its Secretariats in terms of fulfillment of other policy areas committed in their Annual Work Programmes.

**Lack of clarity on the extent to which Advisory Councils can join different working groups:** The working groups separate stakeholders that are part of Advisory Councils making it difficult for ACs to target their participation in those (e.g. small-scale fisheries, large scale fisheries, distant water fisheries, processing, NGOs, inland aquaculture, offshore aquaculture...).



**Lack of provision of translation and interpretation into different languages:** if the main language of this Group is English only this could be de facto a limiting factor and even an exclusion criteria for ensuring widespread participation of several experts on the ground. Therefore, adequate means should be put in place to ensure that all support group working group meetings will be facilitated by direct simultaneous interpretation services and/or software translation. Furthermore, all reports and recommendations stemming from these meetings should be translated into the languages required to foster understanding and inclusiveness of all relevant actors.

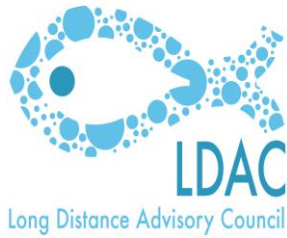
Regarding timing, it seems difficult to us to provide recommendations on most suitable options when at present there are still uncertainties on what is the most effective and practicable decarbonization strategy not only for fisheries and aquaculture but also other maritime sectors such as merchant shipping. At present, several technological developments (e.g. alternative energy-powered engines) are being tested. It is crucial for fisheries and aquaculture to find good technological solutions and opportunities suited to the needs of each specific fleets.

Regarding logistics, clarification should be given to the role of the Energy Transition Partnership Assistance Mechanism Secretariat. To ensure better representation, we aim to provide translation or interpretation services. The Support Group working group meetings will be facilitated by direct interpretation and/or software translation on the online channels. Translation of documents in some languages will also be facilitated.

Given the importance of this subject, we propose that DG MARE takes a more central role by holding the Secretariat and coordinating the different groups directly. This would require increasing DG MARE's capacity and exploring the possibility of allocating dedicated EU funding for this purpose. In this respect, it would be necessary to clarify the role and involvement of the Energy Transition Partnership Assistance Mechanism Secretariat team.

Additionally, we recommend utilizing the existing network of advisory councils, such as the LDAC, to gather relevant feedback and recommendations for the different concerned fleet segments. This would not only streamline the process but also ensure that the wealth of expertise available within these councils is fully harnessed.

We appreciate your attention to these concerns and look forward to continuing our collaboration to advance the energy transition within the fisheries and aquaculture sector.



Thank you in advance for considering our suggestions for discussion at the forthcoming Inter-AC coordination meeting with your services scheduled for 4 October 2024.

Yours faithfully,

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