



**Draft MINUTES**  
**LDAC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Venue: Hotel Puerta de América**  
**Address: Avenida de América 41, Chamartín, 28002 Madrid**

**Tuesday, 20 January 2026**  
**10:00h – 13:30h CET**

Chair: Iván López van der Veen  
Vice Chairs: Vanya Vulperhorst, Julio Morón and Marc Ghiglia  
Rapporteurs (Secretariat): Alexandre Rodríguez and Manuela Iglesias

**1. Welcome by the Chair, Iván López**

The Chair, Mr. Iván López, welcomes accredited members and observers, as well as other invited experts.

He then presents justified apologies received owing to absence by the following members:

- Emil Remisz, High Seas Fish PO
- Einar Bergur, Estonian Long Distance Fishing Association
- Juan Manuel Trujillo, who is replaced by delegation by Bruno Dachicourt on behalf of the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF).

The Chair informs that there is the necessary quorum (at least half plus one of a total of 23 members) for adoption of decisions by members present and represented. In addition, no express delegations have been received by any members.

The complete list of attendees is included in **ANNEX I**.

**2. Approval of the agenda**

The Chair informs that representatives of ACEMIX, ANASCO and ANEPAT have sent him a letter requesting that an item be included in this meeting's agenda regarding the lack of adequate [response](#) from DG MARE to the LDAC advice on "[Advancing Sustainability in EU-Linked Fishing Joint Ventures](#)"

The agenda is approved with the addition of the requested item.

**3. Approval of the minutes of the last Executive Committee meeting (Brussels, 16 October 2025)**

The minutes of the previous Executive Committee meeting held on 16 October 2025 in Brussels are approved without having received any comments or proposals for changes.

**4. Presentation of STECF Annual Economic Report (AER) 2025 (Evelina Sabatella)**

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#### 4.1. Main economic trends and drivers of EU Distant Water Fleet

- Analysis of regional chapters on RFMOs: NAFO, NEAFC, ICCAT, IOTC, CECAF

The Vice Chair of the STECF AER Expert Working Group, Ms. Evelina Sabatella, makes a presentation that is available on the following link:

[https://ldac.eu/images/4-Presentation STECF-AER 2026 Evelina Sabatella Ex.Com.pdf](https://ldac.eu/images/4-Presentation_STECF-AER_2026_Evelina_Sabatella_Ex.Com.pdf)

The STECF 2025 Annual Economic Report (AER) and the metadata behind it are available on the STECF website:

[https://stecf.ec.europa.eu/reports/economic-and-social-analyses\\_en](https://stecf.ec.europa.eu/reports/economic-and-social-analyses_en)

In addition, for the first time this year, an executive summary of the report has been published with key data and graphs that is available on the following link:

<https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/d62600a7-cc06-11f0-8da2-01aa75ed71a1>

#### 4.2. Feedback on collaboration from the LDAC: roadmap for 2026

After a round of comments and some discussion among the members, the following **ACTIONS** are unanimously agreed upon:

- **Regarding the STECF AER: members are invited to report any faults or inconsistencies detected in the parameters or economic performance of the distant water fleet to the LDAC General Secretary in the first half of the year so that he can convey them in his capacity as expert and include them in the qualitative analysis at the Working Group meetings to be held in April (AER1) and/or June (AER2) 2026.**
- **The Chair suggests that the LDAC invite experts to the STECF in order to analyse the content of the report twice a year to provide suggestions for improvement, if necessary.**
- **It is approved that the LDAC General Secretary, Mr. Alexandre Rodríguez, continue his work as an independent expert, coordinating members' contributions to the regional chapters of AER 2026 on the EU distant water fleet.**

### 5. Administrative and procedural matters

#### 5.1. Proposal by the Secretary for an upward review of LDAC membership fees (starting in June 2026)

Mr. Alexandre Rodríguez, General Secretary, explains the proposal to increase membership fees for LDAC member organisations based on the significant rise in budgetary expenditure incurred in the last 5 years. The proposal put forward by the Secretariat offers two scenarios or options (one includes a new fee for Working Groups and the other does not) for members to choose from. The detailed proposal is available on the following presentation:

[https://ldac.eu/images/5.1-Presentacion\\_Propuesta-Secretaria\\_Subida-Cuotas-LDAC.pdf](https://ldac.eu/images/5.1-Presentacion_Propuesta-Secretaria_Subida-Cuotas-LDAC.pdf)

After a round of comments and some discussion, the following **ACTIONS** are agreed upon:

- **To circulate the presentation for members' reflection and to include once again this**

item in the agenda of the ExCom to be held on 12 March in order to make a final decision on one of the options in the proposal presented.

- To send members a table comparing the fees of the 11 Advisory Councils and the contributions by Member States in the same email as the proposal.

- To consider the possibility of requesting some Member States to increase their contribution (monetary or in kind) to cover future specific needs.

#### 5.2. Proposals for streamlining formal and informal consultation procedures:

##### - Regulatory set-up of the LDAC Steering Committee

The Chair, Mr. Iván López, explains the text proposed to include a new article in the rules of procedure defining the composition, functions and decision-making procedure of the "Steering Committee". This draft is available on the following link: [https://ldac.eu/images/EN\\_Presentation\\_slide\\_Modif\\_estatutos\\_Ex.Com\\_20Jan2026.pdf](https://ldac.eu/images/EN_Presentation_slide_Modif_estatutos_Ex.Com_20Jan2026.pdf)

After discussion among the members, the following **ACTIONS** are agreed on:

- That the **General Secretary be part of this Committee as a full member (with voice but no vote).**

- At the request of Ms. Anne-France Mattlet, Europêche Tuna Group, it is agreed to change the word actions/decisions to proposals in the draft article.

- At the request of the Chair, Mr. Iván López, it is agreed to seek legal advice on the reference to including possible powers in labour matters (hiring, dismissals, etc.) within this committee and to report the results to the Executive Committee.

- To add an item in the agenda of the next Executive Committee to be held in March for the potential approval of the revised text in order for it to be formally ratified at the General Assembly in May.

##### - Update of the LDAC [code of conduct](#) (latest version: October 2024)

The Vice Chair, Ms. Vanya Vulperhorst, suggests updating the LDAC code of conduct with a view to introducing a new item on how to reflect minority or dissenting positions in pieces of advice.

The following **ACTION** is approved:

- To include a paragraph on how to incorporate minority or dissenting position(s) in LDAC advice (including a note on their length).

- To present the proposed text and any potential contributions from the members at the next Executive Committee meeting to be held in March for its approval prior to its ratification at the next General Assembly meeting planned for May.

##### - Inter-AC collaboration and preparation of joint advice (ICCAT)

Mr. Alexandre Rodríguez, General Secretary, explains the main measures agreed at the last Inter-AC coordination meeting on ICCAT which was held on 11 December 2025. He then summarises them:

- An agreement was reached for the first time for LDAC, CCRUP, MEDAC and SWWAC to prepare and publish a piece of advice on ICCAT based on cross-sectional matters.

- However, the Mediterranean and South Western Waters Advisory Councils complained about the time and complexity of the technical coordination required to approve the

advice, involving several rounds of consultation and feedback received mainly from LDAC and CCRUP.

- In addition, they were reluctant to include certain topics, such as the impacts of climate change or fishing capacity, arguing that they had already addressed them within the sphere of competence of their ACs.
- At the last coordination meeting between the Secretariats and Chairs/Vice Chairs of ACs involved, many wondered whether it was worth continuing with this exercise, as it requires a great deal of time and energy.
- The LDAC was the only one to expressly propose continuing this collaboration with a proactive proposal to break the deadlock.
- The first step will be to receive the LDAC proposal containing a joint calendar of the 4 Advisory Councils that will take into account the international calendar of ICCAT inter-session and plenary meetings. Once it is prepared, the idea is to have a joint inter-AC working group meeting, preferably face-to-face, in order to prepare a first draft advice inviting key members of all Advisory Councils involved.
- The group of Secretaries accepted the MEDAC proposal to organise the next face-to-face meeting in Brussels in spring, immediately after the Inter-AC meeting (if any).
- The SWWAC or the CCRUP will be in charge of coordinating these inter-AC working groups in 2026 (to be soon decided).

Besides, Mr. Rodríguez informs that the Market Advisory Council (MAC) sent a letter to the EC regarding the sphere of competence of Advisory Councils. There is a subsequent exchange of opinions among common members of both ACs, concluding that the LDAC will get in touch with the MAC to offer to collaborate and prepare joint pieces of advice with them on matters of common interest, as has already been done successfully many times.

The Secretary will address his counterpart at MAC and will continue to report on any developments in this regard at future meetings.

After a round of comments, the following **ACTIONS** are agreed upon:

- **Inter-AC collaboration on ICCAT: the LDAC will continue working on the preparation of its own specific advice without this precluding collaboration with other ACs on matters of common interest. The possibility of including the various pieces of advice of the other ACs as annexes will also be considered.**
- **LDAC-MAC relationship: the LDAC Secretary will contact his counterpart at MAC to offer collaboration and dialogue with a specific proposal to have a joint coordination meeting among the general secretaries and chairs and vice chairs of the General Assembly, Executive Committee and/or relevant Working Groups.**

### **5.3. Protocol to handle requests for partnership from European project consortia.**

Mr. Alexandre Rodríguez, General Secretary, explains that the LDAC regularly receives partnership proposals to be part of project consortia, with or without monetary contribution depending on the role (partner, external adviser, stakeholder participating in specific seminars, etc.). Based on the experience acquired after replying to the<sub>4</sub>

requests received in the past, the Secretariat believes that it would be convenient to have a protocol in writing and approved by all members indicating the steps to be followed and the requirements to be demanded by the LDAC, as well as the deadlines for accepting proposals to participate in European projects. This would provide security and certainty, and would enhance the effective handling of such requests.

After brief discussion among the members, the following **ACTION** is agreed on:

- **The Secretariat will prepare a simple protocol draft and this item will be added for approval in future Executive Committee meetings.**

#### **5.4. Decision from members on items above.**

The members' decisions are recorded as actions for each specific item.

### **6. Request for adoption of:**

#### **6.1- LDAC draft letter on IMO Cape Town Agreement on maritime safety**

Ms. Manuela Iglesias, LDAC, summarises the content of the letter and its recommendations and informs that the draft was approved on 14 January by Working Group 5 members, and that it has been circulated among the Executive Committee members.

The final draft is available on the following link:

[https://ldac.eu/images/ES\\_LDAC\\_OMI\\_Acuerdo\\_Ciudad\\_Cabo\\_20enero2026.pdf](https://ldac.eu/images/ES_LDAC_OMI_Acuerdo_Ciudad_Cabo_20enero2026.pdf)

The following **ACTION** is agreed on:

- **The letter is approved and so is sending it to the EC.**

#### **6.2- Update of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between LDAC and ATLAFCO-COMHAFAT**

Ms. Béatrice Gorez, CFFA, summarises the items to be updated within the MoU, indicating that the new draft version is available on the following link:

[https://ldac.eu/images/CLEAN-FINAL-DRAFT\\_MoU\\_COMHAFAT-LDAC\\_13January2026.pdf](https://ldac.eu/images/CLEAN-FINAL-DRAFT_MoU_COMHAFAT-LDAC_13January2026.pdf)

After some discussion, the following **ACTION** is agreed on:

- **To analyse and determine the potential specific activities/matters where the LDAC could work with ATLAFCO-COMHAFAT.**
- **To assess, where appropriate, the discussion and possible adoption of an updated MoU in the course of 2026.**

### **7. Proposal of collaboration with Eco-Afrik Foundation**

Dr. Ana Ramos, coordinator of Eco-Afrik Foundation, makes a [presentation](#) on the [specific proposal](#) for scientific advice to the LDAC regarding biodiversity conservation and vulnerable marine habitats.

After some discussion among the members, the following **ACTION** is agreed on:

- **The Secretariat will send the Eco-Afrik proposal via email prior to the next Executive Committee meeting on 12 March, where a decision will be made in this regard. Budgetary implications of this proposal will be reported under the LDAC expenditure item.**

## **8. Report by the Secretariat on the work carried out in 2025**

### **8.1. Publication of the Performance Review (2020-2025)**

Members are informed that the final report of the LDAC performance review (2020-2025) has already been published, and is available on the following link: [https://ldac.eu/images/LDAC\\_PERFORMANCE\\_REVIEW\\_2020-2025\\_FINAL.pdf](https://ldac.eu/images/LDAC_PERFORMANCE_REVIEW_2020-2025_FINAL.pdf)

### **8.2. Mid-term review of Annual Work Programme (1 June-31 December)**

Due to time constraints, members are informed that information regarding this item is available on the following link:

[https://ldac.eu/images/Presentation\\_slide\\_monitoring\\_Programme\\_Ex.Com\\_20Jan2026.pdf](https://ldac.eu/images/Presentation_slide_monitoring_Programme_Ex.Com_20Jan2026.pdf)

### **8.3. Update on the high-level conference on SFPAs**

The General Secretary, Mr. Alexandre Rodríguez, informs that the dates for the Conference have been confirmed. It will be held on 8 and 9 April in Brussels.

On the first day, 8 April, there will be a full-day conference in a room provided by the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) in Brussels.

On 9 April, the conclusions will be presented at the European Parliament.

The following **ACTIONS** are agreed on:

- **The LDAC Secretariat will continue to work with the event proponent, Mr. Aldereguía, and members of the organising committee to plan this event and finalise the donors or sponsors who will cover the costs.**
- **Both the agenda and the concept note will be finalised and sent together with a save the date as soon as possible.**
- **The Executive Committee members will be timely informed on any novelties regarding this event.**

## **9. Any other business:**

**Request by ACEMIX, ANASCO and ANEPAT to address the lack of adequate [response](#) from DG MARE to the LDAC advice on “[Advancing Sustainability in EU-Linked Fishing Joint Ventures](#)”**

Mr. Edelmiro Ulloa, ACEMIX, explains the dissatisfaction with the response received from the EC to the last LDAC advice on joint ventures.

Members agree on the following **ACTION**:

- **To send an urgent letter to the EC requesting clear answers regarding the advice that was sent.**

## **10. Date and venue for the next Executive Committee meeting (Brussels, 12/03/2026) 6**



The next Executive Committee meeting will be held on 12 March 2026 in Brussels, at the Martin's Brussels EU Hotel in Schuman.

The Chair ends the meeting thanking the members for their attendance and participation, the interpreting team and sound technicians for their work and the Secretariat for the organisation and smooth running of the meeting, as well as for the preparation of documents prior to the meeting.

**The meeting is closed.**

**ANNEX I: List of attendees**  
**Executive Committee**  
**Long Distance Advisory Council (LDAC)**  
**Madrid, 20 January 2026**

Participating Members

1. Iván López. AGARBA/CEPESCA
2. Vanya Vulperhorst. OCEANA
3. Marc Ghiglia. UAPF/CNPMEM
4. Julio Morón. OPAGAC/AGAC
5. Aivaras Labanauskas. Lithuanian Long Distance Fisheries Association
6. Despina Symons. EBCD
7. Edelmiro Ulloa. Opnapa / OPP3/ Acemix / Agarba
8. Xavier Leduc. UAPF
9. Bruno Dachicourt. ETF
10. Javier Garat. CEPESCA
11. Amanda Heitmann. DPPO
12. Iñigo Azqueta. ANFACO/AIPCE-CEP
13. Francisco Mari. BFW

Chairs and Vice Chairs of Working Groups

14. Anne-France Mattlet. EUROPÊCHE
15. Ignacio Fresco. OCEANA
16. Julien Daudu. EJF
17. Béatrice Gorez. CFFA-CAPE
18. Daniel Voces. EUROPÊCHE
19. Tim Heddema. Pelagic Freezer trawler Association
20. Ángela Cortina. OPNAPA

Observers

21. Yago Rosado. OCEANA
22. José Ramón Fontán. ANEPAT
23. Ana Ramos. Eco-Afrik Foundation
24. David Troncoso. Green Parrot Aqua Solutions, SL
25. Amaia Silanes. Secretariat General for Fisheries (SGP), Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAPA) (Spain).
26. Evelina Sabatella. STECF (Zoom)

LDAC Secretariat

27. Alexandre Rodríguez. LDAC
28. Manuela Iglesias. LDAC
29. Marta de Lucas. LDAC