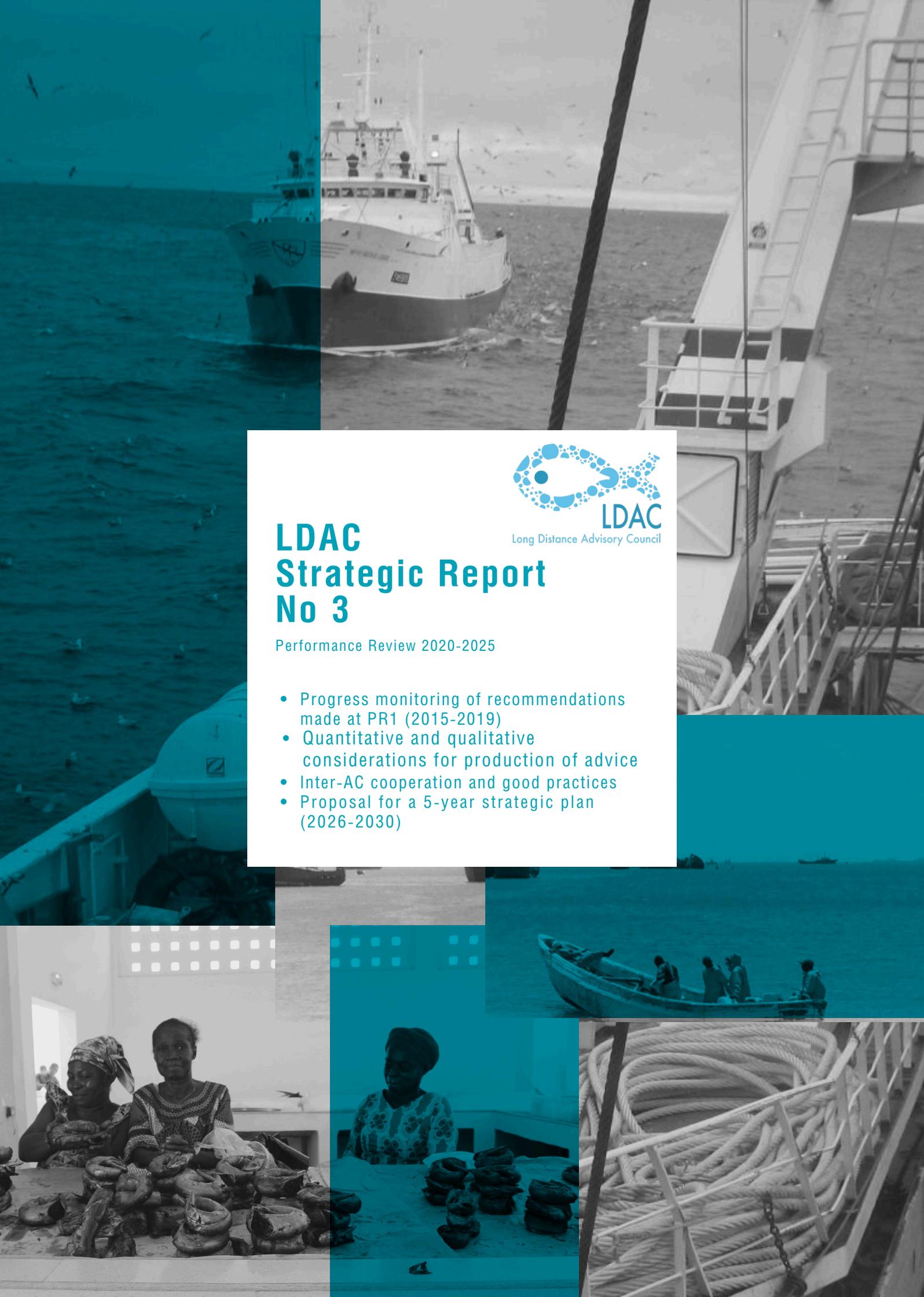




LDAC Strategic Report No 3

Performance Review 2020-2025

- Progress monitoring of recommendations made at PR1 (2015-2019)
- Quantitative and qualitative considerations for production of advice
- Inter-AC cooperation and good practices
- Proposal for a 5-year strategic plan (2026-2030)



Following the European Commission delegated act 2022/204, performance reviews of advisory councils should be conducted every 5 years. The LDAC was the first Advisory Council to carry out a performance review divided into two phases: one in 2018/2019 focusing on internal organisation and functioning[1], and one in 2019/2020 focusing on cooperation practices[2].

Five years later, the LDAC has engaged in a second performance review intending to answer the following goals as listed in the Tender[3]:

- Tracking recommendations and identifying those actions that have been completed
- External and objective assessment of the functioning of the internal bodies
- Production of advice and outcomes
- Identifying examples of good practices and recommendations on scope for improvement in the LDAC's functioning
- Proposing an evaluation matrix and a 5-year schematic roadmap.

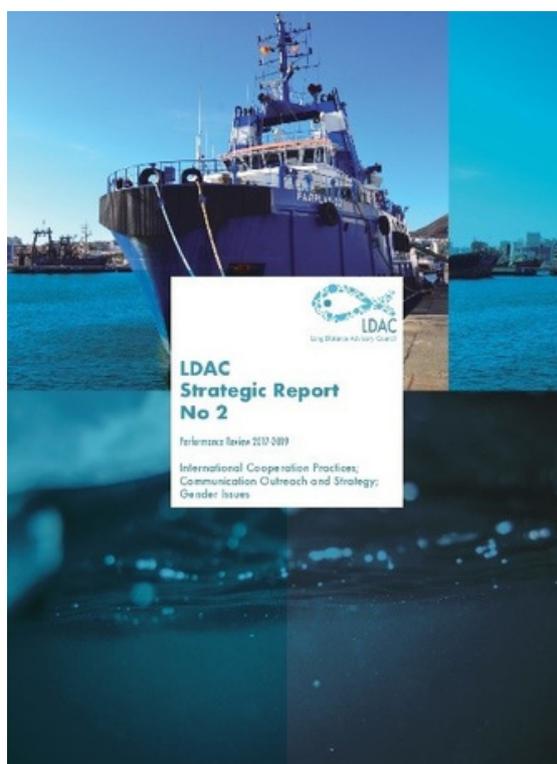
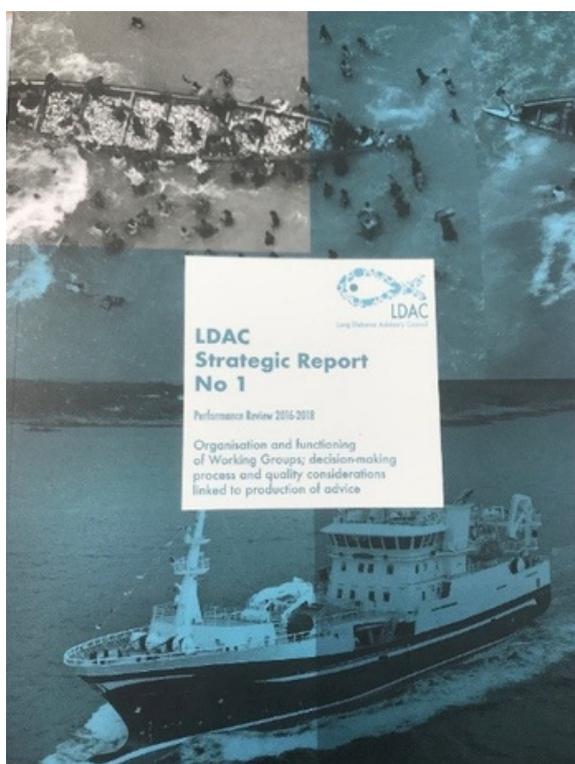


Photo credit: LDAC

[1] LDAC Performance Review – Phase I https://www.ldac.eu/images/LDAC_web-compressed_Performance_Review.pdf

[2] LDAC Performance Review – Phase II <https://www.ldac.eu/fr/publications/815-ldac-performance-review-2020>

[3] NB: The budget available to carry out this exercise is one third of the budget allocated to the first performance review.

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Key features of LDAC

The external dimension of the EU Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) refers to EU actions and agreements with non-EU countries and international organisations to promote sustainable fishing beyond its waters. It includes bilateral fisheries agreements, participation in regional fisheries management organisations (RFMOs), and efforts to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing globally. The goal is to ensure responsible fishing practices and sustainable resource management worldwide.

The Long Distance Fleet Advisory Council (LDAC) is an EU fisheries stakeholder body co-funded by the European Commission and recognised by the CFP Regulation (UE) No 1380/2013 as an organisation aiming at European Interest. It was established in 2004 by virtue of the Council Decision (EC) No 585/2004 and became operational in May 2007.

The LDAC's mission is to provide advice to the European Institutions (Commission, Council and Parliament) and EU Member States on matters related to Fisheries Agreements with Third Countries, relations with Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) in which the EU is a contracting party, or with international organisations in whose waters the EC fleet operates, as well as trade policy and international market for fish products and other cross-sectional matters that affect the EU distant water fleets.

The LDAC's main goal is to promote the conservation of marine biodiversity and the sustainable use of fishing resources as well as socio-economic aspects and simplification of rules.

Year after year, the LDAC has increased its capacity and workload within the context of a busy international fisheries agenda. The LDAC Secretariat works at full capacity and at a steady pace to ensure effective coordination among members and observers, and to meet strict deadlines for drafting documents and formulating advice. The LDAC can also count on competent chairpersons with clear legitimacy and a solid understanding of the issues at hand. It is undoubtedly not possible to continue to do so much with so little. The question of additional capacity and resources must therefore be clearly raised.



Photo credit: LDAC

Past recommendations and their achievement

The different recommendations formulated through the first two reports have been listed in accordance with the terms of reference for the current review aiming at assessing to what extent the first review has been useful to the LDAC's functioning. However, the recommendations formulated in the two phases of the first performance review were made by the consultant himself and are voluntary for consideration by the LDAC in terms of execution and follow up in line with their own priorities. Also, over the 2020-2025 period, different exceptional circumstances occurred that partly prevented the LDAC from running at full capacity (e.g. changes in work dynamics as a result of COVID-19, decrease of funds from EC derived from calculation of the new lump sum approach, and staff temporary leave), having an impact on the accomplishment of all the recommendations.

In view of the above, 7 recommendations were implemented against 8 that have not been fully implemented to date. (See table 1 below)

Table 1. Recommendations from the 1st performance review that have been fully or partly implemented.

the recommendation has been clearly implemented	the recommendation has been partially implemented	the recommendation has not been implemented
MEMBERSHIP		
Do LDAC new members forward basic information about their organisation (e.g. list and composition of membership, ownership, flow charts, ...)?	A clear procedure for new membership is followed; however, it is still not possible for a newcomer to get information on each member's organisation.	
Do LDAC members share their own information more regularly (reports, events, media coverage) with the LDAC secretariat?	The information is still mainly flowing from the secretariat to the members, though more members are now regularly sharing information on events they are organising.	
Did the LDAC members help to seek and establish sound partnership with Non-State Actors?	A new Memorandum of Understanding has been established with AfriFish-Net, the Pan-African fisheries non-state actor platform, which represents African civil society organisations, including artisanal fishing sector interests.	
FUNCTIONING		
Reducing the number of formal working groups and increasing the set-up of working groups	Since the dissolution of WG3 in March 2019, the LDAC has reduced its permanent working groups from 5 to 4, meeting twice a year (spring and autumn). Since the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been an increased number of focus groups (mainly online but also in person) throughout the year dealing with more specific issues.	
Gender and balancing stakeholders' views	The working groups' chairs partly offer a 1:1 balance between the fisheries sector and other interest groups, and male and female representatives. Objective efforts have been made though perfect balance has not been possible because of lack of candidates.	

RECOMMENDATIONS / ADVICE

Did the LDAC develop specific recommendations on the use of the sectoral support within SFPAs?	Some specific recommendations on sectoral support are issued within advice on SFPAs. A specific recommendation is under preparation.
Providing annual advice on major RFMOs (ICCAT, IOTC)	Whereas the LDAC had some difficulties to deliver a yearly advice in advance of the tuna RFMOs plenary meetings, it is now issuing yearly recommendations / advice for ICCAT, IOTC and WCPFC well in advance of the plenary meetings (at least 2 months before). Efforts are also being made to deliver early advice on NAFO and NEAFC.
Moving from general considerations to more specific recommendations	The quality of LDAC's recommendations / advice has improved with more detailed and specific recommendations.
Did the LDAC try to follow up on any specific piece of advice since 2020 in order to assess its impact?	The LDAC is now facilitating discussion on the basis of the EC replies on a more systematic manner during its working groups though this is a complex issue. A specific concern shown by the members is the absence of follow-up of advice for tuna RFMOs[1].

COOPERATION PRACTICES

Did the LDAC set up small delegations to facilitate dialogue mechanisms with the EC services (different units of Dept B)?	The LDAC is facilitating informal dialogues with the EC services[5].
Did the LDAC set up a small delegation to visit the European Parliament and the Member States on a regular basis?	Except for a more regular relationship with the Spanish administration, no formal delegation has been set up. Besides Spain, who regularly attends LDAC meetings, only a few MS representatives (Poland, Latvia...) and MEPs have attended LDAC working group meetings in observer capacity without prior invitation. There is no longer "contact with MEPs" as there used to be.
Did the LDAC organise events at least every 2 years since 2020?	Yes, the LDAC has organised the following high-profile events addressed to a broader audience than its members: Seminar on The External Dimension of the European CFP Today and Tomorrow: Present Challenges and Future Opportunities (Videoconference, June 2021), link ; with focus on the impacts of Climate Change on Distant Fisheries (Stockholm in May 2023, link ; Seminar on the role of Fishing Companies with Investments and Operations in Third non-EU Countries (Berlin, May 2024), link , and the External Dimension of the CFP (Vigo, May 2025), link .
Did the LDAC organise a series of joint LDAC-COMHAFAT Seminars on Implementation of SFPAs in African Countries in 2020/2021?	No, but annual coordination meetings have taken place in 2023 and 2024 after the COVID-19 hiatus. It was agreed there that the memorandum of understanding in force since 2013 would probably need to be reviewed and operationalised in the near future, together with an update on their core shared work priorities.

[4] The specific issue of taking LDAC opinions into account was not addressed in this study. This would require further work. Furthermore, European Commission officials themselves do not have a clear answer to this question, as opinions are generally considered relevant and evidence-based, sometimes too general, but always giving a clear indication of the position of different stakeholders on a specific issue.

[5] However, the EC services would appreciate the possibility of having regular and short follow-up meetings rather than too many requests few weeks in advance of the LDAC working group meetings.

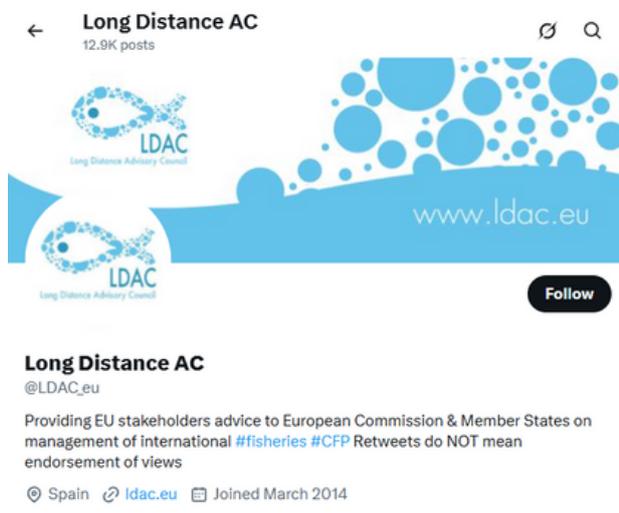
COMMUNICATION

Did the LDAC produce a user-friendly brochure to give an overview of the international legal framework and its own role?

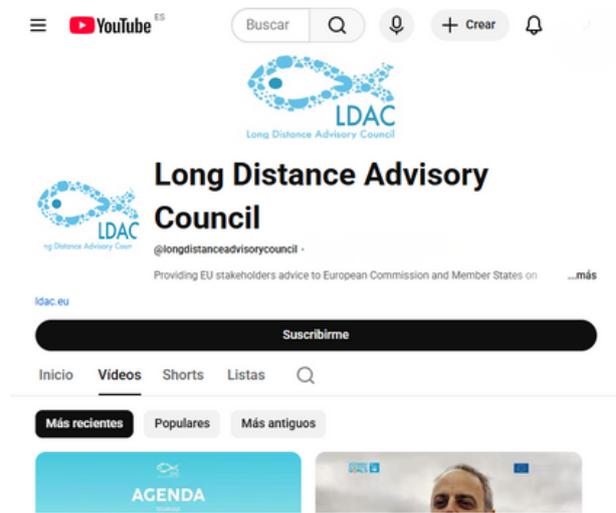
No, and it would probably help to disseminate the specific framework for international fisheries in which the EU distant water fleet operates (external dimension of the CFP), due mainly to capacity and budgetary constraints. However, it is worth noticing that the LDAC's secretariat is producing a bi-monthly *e-newsletter* – “Fishing Far” which started in January-February 2022 providing a clear overview on LDAC's activities and highlighting legal updates or events.

Was the draft communication plan eventually adopted?

No, the document has been submitted in different occasions and versions by the Secretariat, but internal discrepancies still exist among members on the relevance of public dissemination of the LDAC's work and recommendations to a broader audience other than the recipients of the advice (i.e. European Commission, MS and EP).



https://x.com/LDAC_eu



<https://www.youtube.com/@longdistanceadvisorycouncil>

Functioning of the internal bodies

Motivations to participate in LDAC meetings

Whereas the different organisations that are members of the LDAC have other possibilities to meet bilaterally/multilaterally with the European Commission services, they all value positively their participation via the LDAC for different reasons such as:

- Getting more insight on the European Commission services' reflections and strategies;
- Understanding better each other's position and where they stand ("red lines");
- Supporting their own advocacy strategy and bringing members' organisations legitimacy to put their technical arguments forward in a formalised dialogue.

The objective of influencing the EU decision-making process does not come at the highest rank from the interviews held (see Annex 3, list of interviews) and it may be linked with the long-lasting difficulty to properly assess the impact of the recommendations / advice on the legislative process.

Representation of the different interests

There is a general satisfaction from the members on the representation of the different interests within the LDAC and all major EU distant water fleet's interests appear to be represented. However, the representation of EU fishing investments in third countries (joint ventures) is probably not complete within the LDAC, whereas only Spanish joint ventures are being represented through four dedicated organisations: ACEMIX, ANEPAT, AGAC and ANASCO. Several fishing sector members raised questions about the interests represented by NGOs and consider that some do not only represent European interests.

Scope of the LDAC

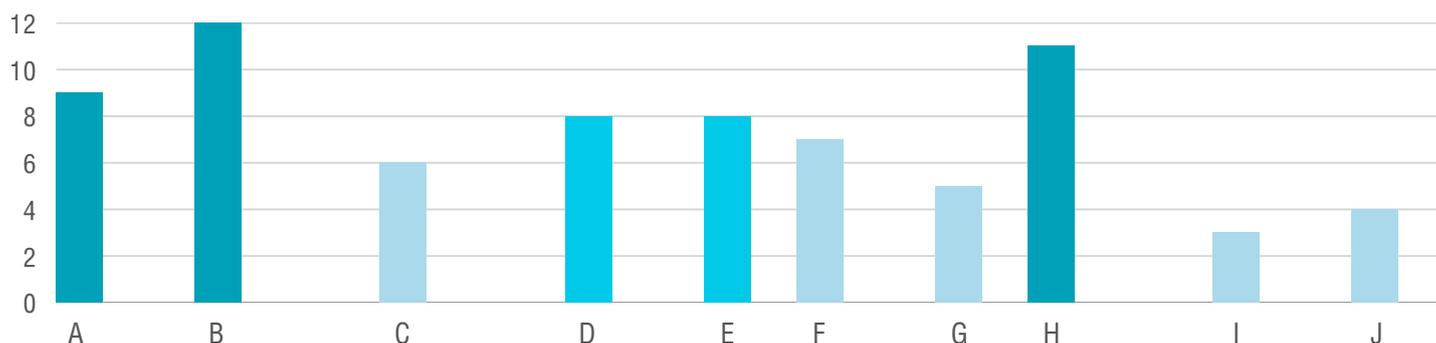
There is a rather wide acceptance of the scope of the **LDAC's activities and work priorities**. The issue of limiting the number of work priorities within the annual work programme was not fully endorsed by LDAC members, although some issues scored higher in the replies to the online survey disseminated to LDAC members and observers (see figure 1). In particular, the issue of coherence among EU policies – internal and external dimension of the Common Fisheries Policy; but also policy coherence impacting the EU external fleet – looks very relevant. Furthermore, the contribution to shaping EU's negotiation positions and mandate in RFMOs scored high (see also Annex 4, minutes from the initial focus group with chairs on work priorities).

In terms of advice and activities carried out by the LDAC, they are more oriented towards tuna RFMOs and global southern waters than the north Atlantic (NEAFC and NAFO). Members from northern countries are relatively less active in the LDAC than in the Pelagic AC whose scope covers six straddling and transboundary pelagic species not limited to EU waters (hence also including contribution to NEAFC).

Figure 1. Priorities listed by respondents to the online survey.

LDAC's members views on top priorities

(no. answers: 27)



A) Promoting coherence between the internal and external dimension of the CFP

B) Contributing to policy coherence among fisheries, environment, trade, labour, health, and sustainable development, to ensure EU policies impacts promote the sustainability of external fisheries

C) Implementation aspects of EU Fisheries Control System and fight against IUU fishing

D) Social (labour and human rights) dimension of the CFP

E) Better International Ocean Governance (e.g. UN related fora, SDGs, and multilateral negotiations)

F) Contributing the implementation, evaluation and renewal of SFPAs

G) Contributing to the visibility and importance of local artisanal fishing and coastal communities of Non-EU countries

H) Contributing to shaping the EU position and mandate in RFMOs

I) Representing the voice of EU stakeholders in other international fora (UNGA, FAO, CBD, CITES, ISA, ...)

J) Gathering information and knowledge

Besides, the LDAC has **increased its Inter-AC coordination with other EU Advisory Councils** to deal with issues of common interest as: consequences of Brexit (with North Sea, North Western Waters, Market and Pelagic Advisory Councils), ICCAT (in coordination with Mediterranean, South Western Waters, and Outermost Regions Advisory Councils), level playing field and control imports (in coordination with the Market Advisory Council) or deep-sea mining (with Pelagic, North Western Waters, South Western Waters and Outermost Regions). This evolution towards enhanced Inter-AC cooperation is supported by LDAC members. Though the remit of each AC is defined in the CFP basic regulation (1380/2013), the European Commission services do not refrain any AC from working on files of shared interest that are considered relevant for some of them. However, this sometimes might trigger some uncertainty in terms of “conflicts of competencies” among AC secretariats and Chairs.

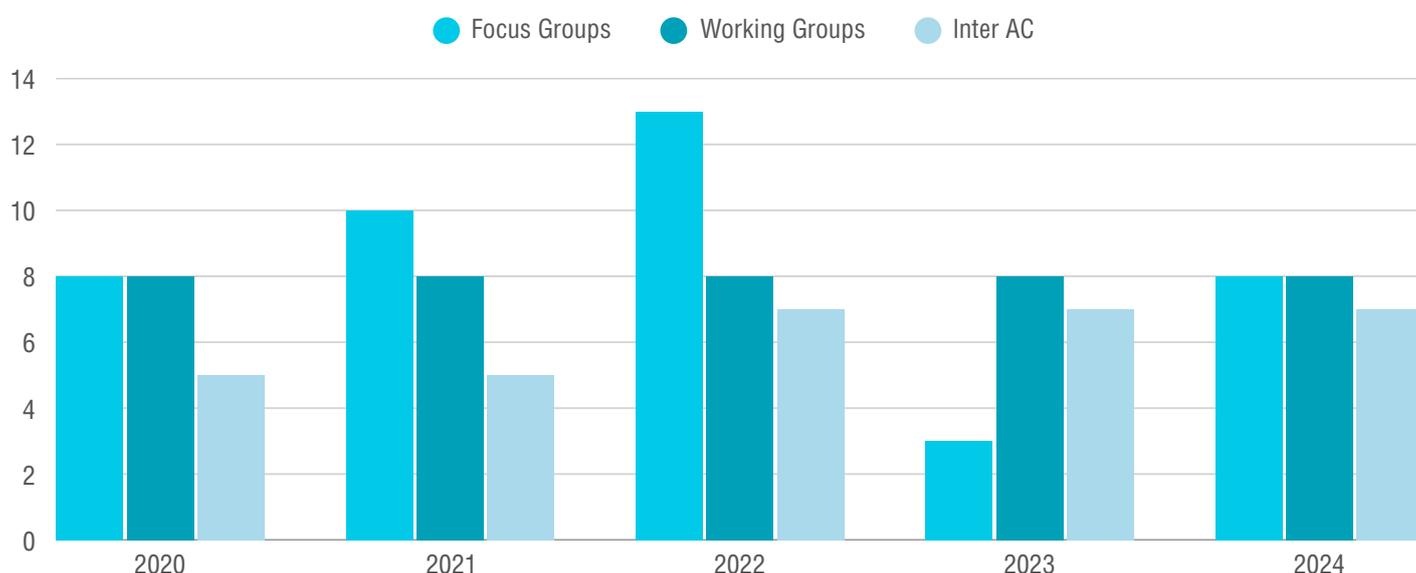
Last, the **current MoU between the LDAC and its regional African partners ATLAFCO-COMHAFAT (Governments) and AFRIFISH-Net (NSA from SSF)** have not been fully explored in this current review. However, some questions arose from the online survey on the need to operationalise MoUs. Whereas the MoU with ATLAFCO-COMHAFAT should be reviewed (see Table 3), the collaboration with AFRIFISH was formalised through regular meetings held in 2024 between LDAC and AFRIFISH Secretariats and Chairs and the coordination of certain strategic topics for the production of joint advice. As a result, two joint recommendations were adopted in 2024 that were submitted simultaneously to the European Commission (LDAC) and African Union (AFRIFISH-Net) on *fisheries arrangements* and the role of *women in fisheries in the context of SFPAs*.

Running of meetings

The LDAC has 4 working groups since 2019 (down from 5 before) which meet twice a year. The number of its topic-based focus groups has however increased substantially as observed in the figure 2 below.

Figure 2. Number of LDAC meetings over the years since 2020 (2025 is on-going and thus not included in this graph, source: LDAC secretariat)

LDAC Working groups and Focus groups over the years



Working group meetings

Each working group requires initial coordination between the secretariat and the co-chairs of the working group (i.e. chair and vice-chair) on equal footing. Agendas of the meeting are then forwarded to the European Commission with request for attendance or updates on specific topics. An annotated agenda is developed in advance of the meeting for the secretariat and the chairs to improve facilitation during meetings.

For all working groups, the facilitation is very professional with the possibility for every single member to intervene in the debate in a positive and polite working atmosphere. Most of the attendees do participate and ask for the floor indicating a good level of participation. However, during working groups, especially when an expert or MARE official has been invited to provide a specific update (SFPA, IUU, report from RFMOs' plenaries, state of play, etc.) the members usually raise their

concerns without building on others' contribution, something that does not help to build a common position or proposal.

It appears that the more technical work is now being developed through focus group meetings as "engine rooms" for developing advice; while working groups tend to rather be more focused on offering opportunities for policy updates from the European Commission and dissemination of research projects, studies and initiatives to the members with reduced room for dialogue or feedback due to agenda overload.

It is also noticeable that the LDAC has put significant attention to balance its different bodies by electing chairs coming from the two main constituencies of its membership (fishing sector vs other interest groups) and conscious efforts towards ensuring gender balance.

Focus group meetings

Focus group meetings are designed to prepare a draft advice on a specific topic to be later submitted to the relevant working group for discussion and/or endorsement. The discussions at Focus Group level are much more technical with only interested members involved who are usually active participants and build on others' opinions in a constructive way.

The terms of reference for the focus groups are drawn up in advance by the secretariat in coordination with the co-chairs and approved by the members of the discussion groups. The context and scope of the work are clearly defined. However, it would be useful to define SMART objectives (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound). Also, the issue of language is a concern as the discussions often take place only in English limiting participation from some members. However, recently the LDAC secretariat has been providing interpretation services when necessary.

It is noticeable that some LDAC specific contributions have been developed through a high number of focus group meetings as for the LDAC advice on level playing field which relies on 7 dedicated focus groups through the course of over one year. Besides, 4 were dedicated to the social clause. This specific effort led to a wide overview on the current state of the art[6]. The idea behind this is to produce less recommendations in number (quantity) but more impactful in terms of quality, aimed for long term influence vis-à-vis policy makers as they contain greater evidence and technical arguments compiled long term.



LDAC General Assembly (Berlin, May 2024)

Photo credit: LDAC

Executive Committee meetings

Executive committee meetings are mainly dedicated to the operational management of the LDAC (relations with other organisations, representation and mandate at external meetings, planning of future LDAC meetings, development of work priorities and monitoring of annual work programme, inter AC coordination) and approving draft recommendations and advice. The meetings are usually conducted in a fairly fast pace with good and balanced participation from all members focusing on managing LDAC activities and representation.

General Assembly meeting

The general assembly is dedicated to approving the yearly activities, administrative and financial matters including annual budgets and reporting, and adopting the work programme for the next year. The role of the secretariat is predominant and the work programme does not trigger much debate within members whereas it is carefully commented by the EC services with several remarks and even suggestions for amendments prior to its final approval.



LDAC Executive Committee meeting (Madrid, November 2023)

Photo credit: LDAC

Chairs' coordination and performance

A Chairs' coordination meeting is organised twice a year in hybrid format (both in person and online) usually at the LDAC headquarters in Madrid or in Brussels approximately one month before each round of working group meetings to facilitate drafting of agendas, monitoring of pending actions for completion, coordination and alignment of the various initiatives and tasks. It has proven to be very useful and ensures good coordination and cohesion between chairs and secretariat team allowing for better preparation of meetings. Furthermore, twice a month the Secretariat team holds online meetings with the Chair and Vice Chairs of the LDAC Executive Committee to ensure smooth operation and running of the LDAC office.

As for the performance of the chairs and the secretariat, they all receive very high scores through the on-line survey. They all together undoubtedly constitute a strength for the LDAC's work.

Production of recommendations / advice and policy outcomes

Over the period 2020 – 2024, the LDAC has produced 10 recommendations / pieces of advice and 5 letters per year on average.

Table 2. Production of LDAC advice over the period 2020-2024

	PIECES OF ADVICE	LETTERS
2020	17	1
2021	7	3
2022	8	7
2023	7	4
2024	13	9
Average	10	5



LDAC-CFFA Seminar on the role of fishing companies with investments and operations in third non-EU countries: Africa case studies (Berlin, May 2024)

Photo credit: LDAC



COMHAFAT-LDAC annual coordination meeting (Madrid, September 2024)

Photo credit: LDAC



In comparison to the previous analysed period, different positive changes are remarkable:

- **Although there have been fluctuations among years, the number of recommendations/pieces of advice delivered each year has increased significantly (10 pieces of advice and 5 letters on average in the recent period against 7 recommendations / pieces of advice and one letter on average over the period 2015-2019);**
- **From 2022 onwards, substantiated pieces of advice have been developed for the three main tuna RFMOs of interest for the EU distant water fleet (ICCAT, IOTC, WCPFC) well in advance of their plenary meetings;**
- **The European Commission now replies in a systematic manner (with still some exceptions[7], see figure 3 below) through more extended explanations. However, it is still not possible to track the uptake of each single recommendation;**
- **The quality of advice has improved, providing additional arguments and evidence[8] to support the proposed recommendations, although data collection still lacks consistency**

Considering replies to the online survey or semi-structured interviews held with LDAC members, there is a general recognition of the quality of pieces of advice being delivered by the LDAC as balancing adequately the expression of interest, offering innovative solutions, bringing complementary information and showing differences in positions or views where justified. Regarding the impact of this advice on the decision-making process, feedback from LDAC members remains positive but generally less enthusiastic. There is a long-standing request from LDAC members for the European Commission to better explain its rationale to consider or reject recommendations proposed by the LDAC.

[7] Regarding last year (2024-2025), all pieces of advice produced during this study have been considered (eg until August 2025) and it is reasonable to consider that the European Commission will eventually reply after the publication of this work.

[8] "Evidence" denotes in general anything presented in support of a claim, but in the context of this tool, it refers to data, information, and knowledge from multiple sources, including quantitative data such as statistics and measurements, qualitative data such as opinions, stakeholder input, conclusions of evaluations, as well as scientific and expert advice.

Reliable evidence is based on the appropriate method to collect, interpret, process and transform data and information. The process is also based on transparent accounting of biases and uncertainties. » (source : EU Better Regulation Toolbox, July 2023)

Few specific pieces of advice have been pointed by the interviewees as having had **specific direct impact on the decision-making process** – two examples mentioned were the yearly advice on **NAFO** and the one on the **Chinese fleet** (which contributed to an investigation conducted by the European Parliament).

It is also noted that the impact should be seen from a longer-term perspective, quoting the example of the shark fins naturally attached policy promoted by the EU which was initially an issue of dispute between the fishing sector and the NGOs and that has reached broad consensus with a joint claim by the LDAC to the European Commission to promote this policy internationally at RFMO level and other fora[9].

It is also noticeable the LDAC capacity to carry out different advice drafting processes in parallel, respecting clear deadlines and consultation procedures in accordance with its own rules of procedure. We observed a very high level of participation from the members of the focus groups, representing both components of the LDAC, who made very specific contributions to the text, bringing reflection and evidence from different perspectives (EU overall policy, realities of third countries' regulation, competition from non-EU fleets, etc.).

Overall, the last LDAC piece of advice we have been able to read provided an excellent description of challenges and helped to break the silo approach where different policies are seen in isolation with one another. They are even more specific and detailed in the case of advice to RFMOs where arguments and recommendations are based on the analysis of scientific advice.



Fishing vessels on high seas.

[9] It is noticeable to see the effort made by the LDAC in terms of transparency about how sharks are being processed on land, see the video produced, [link](#)

Identifying examples of good practices and recommendations on scope for improvement in the LDAC's functioning

Good practices identified in the Long Distance Advisory Council

Specific attention and conscious efforts have been dedicated to **balancing the responsibilities** (fishing sector vs civil society, male vs female) with the designation of co-chairs for the working groups.

Additional flexibility has been built in advice making thanks to the setting of various focus groups with **clear mandate on a specific topic, providing room for technical discussion among interested members at a more relaxed pace and in a more relaxed atmosphere.**

Coordination meetings between chairs and the secretariat are taking place twice a year, one month in advance of the working group meetings ensuring better coherence and consistency in working group agendas and overall effectiveness of the LDAC.

Different approach to “omnibus” advice focused on strategic topics, without being exhaustive we can quote the one on level-playing field, the one on the social clause, or the one on the Chinese external fleet which have been developed through increased effort and obvious evidence-based data collection from members and **constitute a solid reference on the issues being dealt with.**

The input of LDAC in the work of the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) is offering a clearer quantitative analysis on economic indicators for the EU distant water fleet based on EU DCF data collected. This also allows to bring qualitative analysis on trends and outlook of economic indicators for EU distant water fleets based on expert judgment with the Secretary acting as coordinator collecting contributions from its members. This informal mechanism clearly helps to bring further intelligence in the system and provide a clear picture of the profitability and economic performance of the EU distant water fleets assisting MARE to include socio-economic analysis in its formulation of management proposals in relevant RFMOs (e.g. NAFO, NEAFC, ICCAT, IOTC, CECAF).

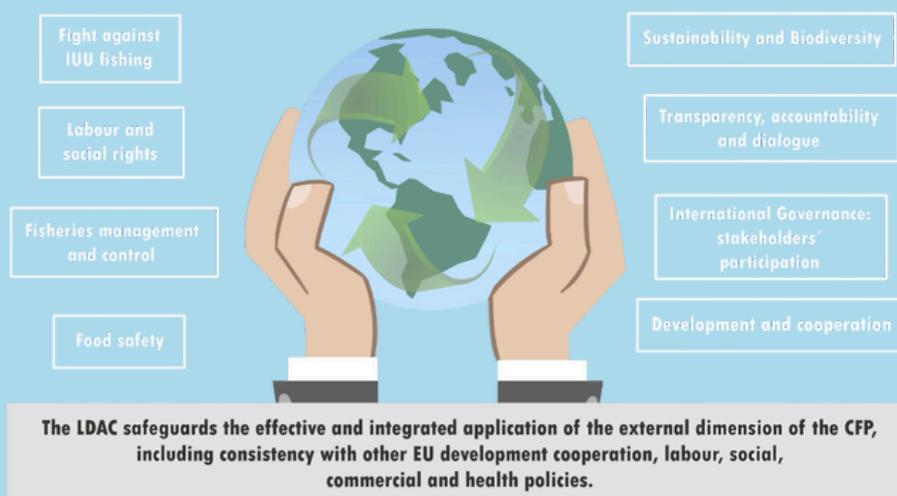


Photo credit: LDAC

Good practices identified in other Advisory Councils

In the **Mediterranean Advisory Council**, nine experts have been proposed by members in line with Work Plan priorities bringing technical and scientific input in the process[10], by regular updates on stock status, supporting knowledge sharing and integration of science into advice. MEDAC's pieces of advice are also including evidence from the field serving as a reality-check for the European Commission such as anecdotal experiences (e.g. tuna's carcasses fished in the Balearic Islands), experiential insights (e.g. the use of driftnets by the Tunisian fleet, increased dolphin encounters) or scientific data.

In designing its opinions, MEDAC also endeavours to provide short, targeted pieces of advice (of 3-4 pages) with a systematic summary of scientific evidence, thus making it easier for the EC services to take them into account.

It is also noticeable that within **PELAC's** membership, some members from the main pelagic fishing nations (Netherlands, Denmark, Ireland) are **scientists** by training and do actively participate in the ICES working groups enhancing the capacity of the Council to discuss in detail the scientific basis for stocks' management (i.e. biological reference limits, harvest control rules, long term management plans, MSE...).

The **MAC's** work on producing its own report on guidelines and good practices on production and marketing plans[11] is also regarded as positive, which is used as a reference document by the MAC itself.

Eventually, we take good note of the past **participation of the LDAC in the EU funded scientific project FarFish** which enabled the LDAC to get the support of a part-time dedicated scientist working in the Secretariat as liaison officer and raising the profile of the organisation vis-à-vis international partners of the consortia, including African scientific institutes and governments through collaborative work and in field trips (e.g. Morocco, Mauritania, Cape Verde, Seychelles).



Inter-AC coordination

Because of cross-cutting topics being in the remit of different ACs (e.g. conservation and management measures for ICCAT species, consequences of Brexit, stakeholder engagement in decision-making), we observe an increased workload in terms of ACs coordinating their advice. The Inter-AC is also the format used by the European Commission to bring together Europe's 11 ACs to improve coordination and facilitate the dissemination of information. However, this forum lacks legal basis and creates the risk of a two-speed process, with the chairs and vice-chairs of the ACs having more direct access to information and contacts than the members of the ACs.

Also coordinating joint AC pieces of advice requires additional effort from the ACs' secretariats referring to their own procedures of internal approval which can slow down considerably the process and create tensions and frustration when one AC is willing to amend a draft advice requiring all ACs to reopen or recirculate the document to their own constituencies (be it working groups, executive committees or even GA).

It would make sense **to develop simple and clear guidelines for Inter-AC coordination** and cautiously consider the need for AC coordination while it should be limited in terms of time and dedication.



Secretariats of the Advisory Councils with Commissioner Kadis, Director-General Vitcheva, and the DG MARE team (Brussels, April 2025)

Photo credit: MEDAC

Cooperation with non-EU partners' organisations (COMHAFAT and AFRIFISH-Net)

The long-lasting partnership with **ATLAFCO-COMHAFAT** since 2013 provides a valuable network for LDAC members to better understand positions and expectations from West African countries. However, the memorandum of understanding would benefit from **focusing on more concrete results or activities**, and the new 2025–2027 strategic action plan adopted by COMHAFAT could serve as a basis for identifying these activities.

More recently, the MoU with **AfriFish-Net** was signed on May 2023 and triggered new interactions with African non-state actors in the form of regular coordination meetings between the Secretariats and Chairs, attendance and participation from AFRIFISH Chair and Secretary at LDAC-led meetings (e.g. Seminar on External Dimension of CFP) and events (HALIEUTIS in 2023); and produced **joint recommendations that were submitted both to the European Commission (LDAC) and African Union (AFRIFISH-Net)** (see part on the Scope of the LDAC). It may be relevant to explore the possibility of additional activities offering a **platform for dialogue between the EU fleet and EU owned joint ventures and the African artisanal sector to improve socio-economic benefits** of fishing activities and provide decent working conditions for workers in these countries.

AFRIFISH-net



*LDAC coordination meetings with COMHAFAT and AFRIFISH-Net
Photo credits: LDAC*

Recommendations for improving the LDAC's functioning

Whereas the LDAC has set efficient operational practices and increased its advisory process efficiency through increasing its focus groups and discussions are taking place in a friendly working atmosphere, **little scope for improvement can be proposed for the future of the LDAC's functioning:**

- **Organising an open dialogue on the representational issue of members' organisations within the LDAC.** In the interest of transparency and democratic functioning, it would be important to understand what interests LDAC member organisations or individuals represent[12].
- Developing **new terms of reference** for all Inter-AC workshops led by the LDAC as well as inserting **specific deliverables or objectives to the existing Terms of reference** for each of the LDAC focus groups linked to the SMART[13] approach.
- Experimenting with **alternative meeting formats** from time to time (or for the internal workshop referred to below) to facilitate new dynamics in relation to extract evidence-based knowledge[14]. Such approach could be experimented within a future focus group with the support of a trained facilitator.
- Establishing **regular informal meetings and follow-up with the European Commission services (ideally through the MARE-ACs coordination unit)** throughout the year to lighten the workload for both LDAC and EC before the working group meetings.
- Organising a specific **internal workshop** every two and a half years to reflect on the **work** achieved, discuss work priorities and adapt the **work programme** accordingly (see at the end the proposed 5-year roadmap);
- **Limiting the number of work priorities reflected in the Annual Work Programme to optimise resources and efforts and be more strategic and impactful**[15].

[12] An alternative option would be that all members are registered in the transparency register, which can be consulted by anyone.

[13] The **SMART approach** is a method for setting clear, effective objectives. It ensures goals are: **S**pecific, clearly defined and focused; **M**easurable, with criteria to track progress and success; **A**chievable, realistic given resources and constraints; **R**elevant, aligned with broader priorities and strategies; **T**ime-bound, set within a defined timeframe.

[14] Look at multiple tools proposed in *The MSP Guide, How to design and facilitate multi-stakeholder partnerships*, <https://mspguide.org/the-msp-guide/> or the NSAC's workshops using active methods

[15] The current workload of the LDAC's secretariat appears to be a concrete factor contributing to hindering the development of more specific work and limiting the secretariat's availability to contribute its expertise to the process.



Despite obvious positive evolution in the LDAC efforts to deliver sound-based advice, some improvements may be proposed for the sake of continuous improvement:

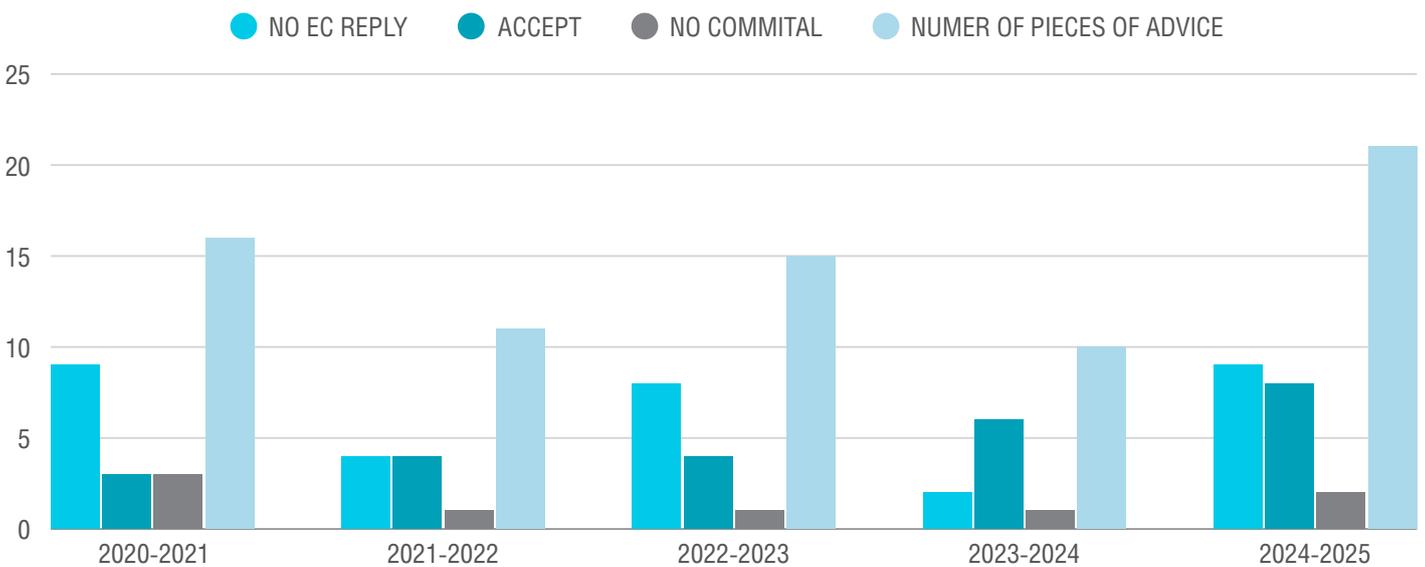
- **Gathering more field evidence** of the problems that arise: the LDAC mainly focuses on international ocean governance issues trying to shape high level policy files and does not provide enough reality-checks of what problems fishing operations do encounter (art 44 2.b of the CFP basic regulation), valuing the possibility of organising a more **formal framework for gathering information**;
- **Enhancing scientific data collection** as listed in art 44 2.C of the CFP basic regulation: the LDAC can only have a very limited impact on this work as it does not rely on dedicated scientific expertise as neither the Secretariat nor its members have dedicated scientific coordinators working on data collection for the LDAC and/or representing it at data compilation workshops or similar fora in scientific organisations relevant for its work (e.g. ICES, Scientific Committees of SFPAs, Scientific Councils for RFMOs...).
- **Expanding work on the socio-economic impact of fishing activities**: the LDAC already contributes actively since 2018 to the **economic analysis of performance of the EU distant water fleets[16]** by the annual participation of its Executive Secretary in capacity as coordinator of the distant water fleet regional chapters at the STECF Annual Economic Report. Further work could be developed using this report for providing dedicated advice on specific fisheries and fleets over time.
- **Reducing the length of advice or exploring other alternatives** as dedicated editing and dissemination work for long and structural advice as the one on level-playing field and produce short, targeted advice from it, or break it down in different sections to make it more manageable.
- **Adopting a common template for advice, focus on SMART** (specific, measurable, achievable, reachable, time-bound) advice and maintain follow-up dialogue with the European Commission services to better understand how and why the LDAC recommendations are being implemented or not.

Many recommendations continue to reiterate the same concerns and demands when it comes to strengthening science, adding sustainability standards to EU import policies and enhancing policy coherence. **A step forward would probably be for the LDAC to explore the issues in greater depth (gathering knowledge and data through a more comprehensive approach) and to propose solutions (e.g. to address gaps in policy coherence). This is the rationale behind the proposal for multi-annual strategic planning** (see last section) in order to make more substantial contributions to issues identified as being of major concern and which can only be resolved in the medium term.

The list of recommendations (tasks and purpose) can be found in Annex 1.

Figure 3. EC replies to LDAC advice over the last 5-year period (2020-2025). Source: LDAC webpage. EC replies have been categorised according to proxies following MedAC performance review (no reply, accept, no committal)[17]

LDAC pieces of advice and EC replies over the period 2020-2025



From the figure above we can notice there is a growing acceptance by the EC of the recommendations / advice produced by the LDAC. However, acceptance shall be understood as replies where the EC acknowledges the recommendations sent by the LDAC and provides dedicated answers but this is a subjective approach by the evaluator and does not prejudge the impact of the advice on the regulatory process as a whole.

The European Commission is well aware of the request from all ACs to get clear replies and clarity on what recommendations are taken on board and those which are rejected. The current situation is actually limiting a proper evaluation of the ACs functioning within the common fisheries policy whereas it is commonly accepted that ACs are becoming increasingly important in the EU decision-making process.

Whereas written procedures may bring additional burden, a bare minimum would be that the ACs get the opportunity to have an in-depth discussion for each single piece of advice issued. In the case of the LDAC, it would also most probably impose to limit the number of issues being dealt with in the working group agendas and more generally to limit the number of work priorities in order to save sufficient time for meaningful dialogue.

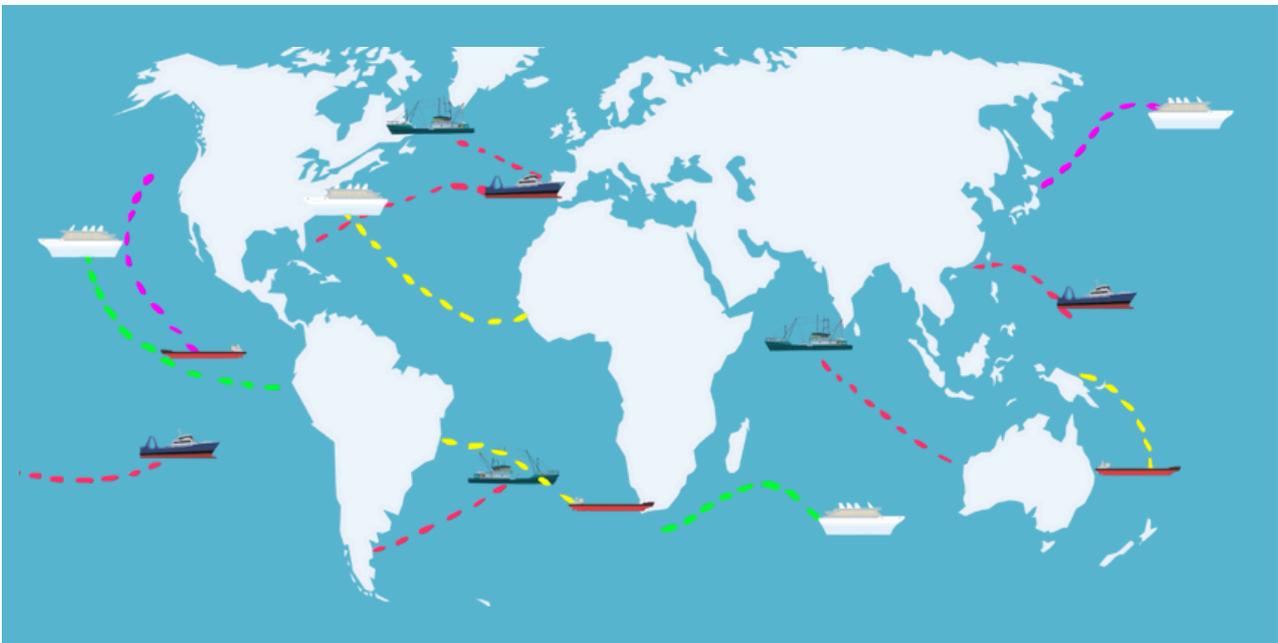
To overcome this long-lasting situation, **it may be relevant to limit the ACs pieces of advice to a few pages with a limited number of recommendations and ensure that for each single recommendation the EC services do specify whether they will take the proposal on board or no and how[18].**

[17] All replies from the EC to LDAC pieces of advice issued during the period under review (2020-25) were taken into account. « Accepted » means that some of the recommendations made in the LDAC advice have been specifically addressed and explanations have been provided as to why they have been accepted or rejected. “No committal” means that the EC does not specifically respond to the recommendations made in the advice and remains vague.

[18] Concerning LDAC pieces of advice for RFMOs in particular, recommendations should be tied to the agenda of the RFMOs meetings and/or responding to requests from the European Commission.

A specific concern arises for the LDAC advice in advance of tuna RFMOs' plenaries where the LDAC has succeeded in recent years to deliver advice in advance of the meetings. An issue raised by LDAC members is that it has not been possible to discuss their pieces of advice with the Commission services nor to receive formal and detailed replies at Working Group or Focus Group level after submitting the advice and a few weeks in advance of the actual annual meetings. The European Commission services consider that there are more interests than the LDAC only and organise its consultation through stakeholder technical preparatory meetings where every single organisation could present its opinion undermining the interest of upstream consensus.

Whereas the LDAC showed a certain degree of frustration with the inability to exchange views on their adopted pieces of advice with the Commission prior to the annual Meeting, the European Commission services also consider that the LDAC should rather feed the process in terms of contributing with their expertise and insights at the stakeholder general meetings rather than trying to scrutinise the exact step of the process towards the European Commission negotiating mandate. However, the Commission does provide debriefing to the LDAC once the annual meeting has been completed. In view of this, **some clarity needs to be brought by both parties (EC and LDAC) in the process and expectations should be managed in accordance with the mandate of an Advisory Council as established in the CFP basic regulation.**



The fleets represented within the LDAC operate in non-European international waters, which are not part of the European Economic Area (EEA).

Photo credit: LDAC

Contribution of the LDAC to the Common Fisheries Policy (relevance)

Objectives of the CFP

As the Advisory Council responsible for dealing with non-EU waters, the LDAC should pursue the objectives laid down in the CFP basic regulation and in particular Article 28. A quick estimate based on the production of LDAC opinions for the period 2020-2025 identifies the CFP objectives to which the LDAC has contributed.

Table 3. Objectives listed in the art 28 of the basic regulation and alignment of the LDAC advice accordingly

The LDAC is issuing regular advice related to these objectives	References to this objective have been noticed in LDAC's advice without specific contribution	no specific advice issued by the LDAC
		(a) to actively support and contribute to the development of scientific knowledge and advice;
		(b) to improve policy coherence of Union initiatives, with particular regard to environmental, trade and development activities and to strengthen consistency of actions taken in the context of development cooperation and scientific, technical and economic cooperation;
		(c) to contribute to sustainable fishing activities that are economically viable and promote employment within the Union;
		(d) to ensure that Union fishing activities outside Union waters are based on the same principles and standards as those applicable under Union law in the area of the CFP, while promoting a level-playing field for Union operators vis-à-vis third-country operators;
		(e) to promote and support, in all international spheres, actions necessary to eradicate IUU fishing;
		(f) to promote the establishment and the strengthening of compliance committees of RFMOs, regular independent performance reviews and appropriate remedial actions, including effective and dissuasive penalties, which are to be applied in a transparent and non-discriminatory manner.

Overall, **the pieces of advice delivered by the LDAC are contributing to the objectives of the CFP**. However, we notice that the objectives listed in the LDAC statutes are not exactly aligned with the ones of the basic regulation and **we suggest alignment between the statutes and the objectives of the external dimension of the common fisheries policy**. This is something that could be done after the current evaluation of the Common Fisheries Policy.



Fish on the beach in Senegal.
Photo credit: CFFA-CAPE



Hadja SlimHadja Slimatou Bangoura is a fisherwoman who specialises in smoking fish at Témimétaye (Conakry).
Photo credit: Mamadou Aliou Diallo/ CAOPA

Needs for stakeholder contribution/participation

According to the CFP basic regulation, the LDAC has been established to provide a balanced representation of stakeholders and contribute to the objectives of the CFP. In accordance with tasks devoted to Advisory Councils (art 44 of CFP[19] basic regulation) and considering both the specificity of the LDAC whose contribution applies to non-EU waters and the interviews held with the Commission services, **specific needs of the European Commission** can be identified to define the contribution expected from the LDAC activity:

- **To upstream consultation of stakeholders: the LDAC needs to channel the stakeholders' contribution to EC consultations dealing with the external dimension of the CFP;**
- **To submit recommendations relating to the management of non-EU fisheries and the implementation of EU policies dealing with the external dimension of the CFP;**
- **To inform the European Commission and EU Member States on realities and challenges of fishing activities in non-EU waters;**
- **To support the EU position in international fora.**

Furthermore, interviews with LDAC members and the online survey reveal that LDAC members from the fishing sector **would also like the European Commission to place greater emphasis on the competitiveness of the EU distant-water fleet** in a very difficult and changing global context.

The objectives of the CFP external dimension define the operational framework within which the LDAC operates. However, the achievement of these objectives is primarily the responsibility of the Member States and, **for the purposes of evaluating the LDAC activities, defining needs would allow for closer examination of the LDAC's actual impact.** The list we propose is indicative and should be discussed with the LDAC and the European Commission services.

[19] 2. Advisory Councils may:

(a) submit recommendations and suggestions on matters relating to the management of fisheries and the socio-economic and conservation aspects of fisheries and aquaculture to the Commission and to the Member States concerned, and, in particular, recommendations on how to simplify rules on fisheries management;

(b) inform the Commission and Member States of problems relating to the management and the socio-economic and conservation aspects of fisheries and, where appropriate, of aquaculture in their geographical area or field of competence and propose solutions to overcome those problems;

(c) contribute, in close cooperation with scientists, to the collection, supply and analysis of data

Type of activities implemented by the LDAC (effectiveness)

Although it is not officially approved by the LDAC, analysis of its functioning reveals that its operations are based on four main types of activities:

- **Type of activity 1:** representing the fishing sector and other interested groups with a genuine interest in the external dimension of the CFP;
- **Type of activity 2:** producing recommendations in relation to the different objectives listed in the basic regulation.
- **Type of activity 3:** increasing general recognition and knowledge of the external dimension of the CFP and its effective implementation by all parts;
- **Type of activity 4:** promoting dialogue and partnerships with third countries' non-state actors or inter-governmental organisations.

These means could be quantified by output and outcome indicators as suggested in the table 4 below to assess the impact of the LDAC.

Table 4: proposed matrix to monitor the use of the different types of activities mobilised by the LDAC (MA: mean of action)

Means of action

TA 1: Representing the fishing sector and other interested groups with a genuine interest in the external policy of the CFP	TA 2: Producing advice and facilitating dialogue in relation to the different objectives listed in the basic regulation.	TA 3: Increasing general recognition and knowledge of the external dimension of the CFP (and its effective implementation by all parts)	TA 4: Promoting dialogue and partnerships with third countries' non-state actors or inter-governmental organisations
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Output indicators: measuring means dedicated to the achievement of the objectives

Number of members and evolution	Number of pieces of advice Time of meetings dedicated to dialogue with the EC on advice delivered by the LDAC	Number of events organised Number of participants to the events	Number of partnerships Number of participants to the joint meetings
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Outcome indicators: assessing the contribution of the output indicators to the actual effect of the LDAC

% of the EU external fishing fleet being represented through LDAC members completeness of network arrangements	Number of recommendations for each priority defined in the work programme	Quotes and references to the LDAC from closely associated partners survey of the LDAC social media accounts (e.g. X, YouTube...)	Completeness of network arrangements
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We suggest that the LDAC review this matrix to ensure its self-monitoring. This could also facilitate the planning exercise (see the last section on strategic planning) and help identify in advance, for each priority in its work programme, how to mobilise these different resources and make the most of possible synergies between them.

Resources mobilised by the LDAC (efficiency)

Regarding the absorption rate of its annual budget, there is evidence that the LDAC is using all the budget provided through the EC contribution, Member States' contributions (and notably Spain), and members' fees as shown in the table 5 below.

Table 5. Absorption rate by the LDAC of its annual budget, and number of meetings organised.

	BUDGET	EXPENDITURE	ABSORPTION RATE
2020/2021	330 584,00	360 471,03	109%
2021/2022	473 094,00	401 345,17	85%
2022/2023	462 849,64	470 129,73	102%
2023/2024	467 321,88	506 448,00	108%
2024/2025	479 233,02	545 233,00	114%

It is a good signal that the LDAC is functioning at full capacity and, in view of recent years rise in expenditure levels, **it would arguably benefit from additional funding** from different sources in the coming years in view of rising operational costs linked to inflation, salaries, cost of goods and services.



LDAC General Assembly (Vigo, May 2025)

Photo credit: LDAC

Coherence of LDAC activities in relation to the EU Ocean Pact

The EU Ocean Pact published on the 5th June 2025[20] constitutes the new EU strategic framework proposing a “unified and coordinated plan” in which the EU external action is summarised with specific references to international fisheries and market.

We note that LDAC activities are already fairly aligned with the flagship actions listed in the European Ocean Pact, and the LDAC constantly advocates for “international governance standards”, supporting “the rules-based multilateral order” in a rapidly changing global context.

We suggest that **the LDAC could more actively contribute to the EU-Africa partnership through contributing to the EU policies coherence, leveraging socio-economic development through the EU fleet and joint ventures’ activities in West African countries, building on its partnerships with ATLAFCO-COMHAFAT and AfriFish-Net[21].**



Fishing vessel in icy waters

[20] https://oceans-and-fisheries.ec.europa.eu/european-ocean-pact_en

[21] LDAC sent a formal request to the European Commission to be included in the Africa-Europe Ocean Strategic Group on the 9th of December 2024 but did not receive any reply up to now. https://ldac.eu/images/EN_LDAC_letter_on_EU-Africa_Partnership_Roadmap_9Dec2024.pdf

Five-year strategic plan

Over the 2020-2025 period the LDAC has increased its work priorities from 6 to 10. **This sharp increase in workload with stable capacity either at the secretariat's level or at the membership's level due to limited financial and human resources can probably not be supported on the longer term except at the expense of the quality of the work.**

It is also noticeable that certain recommendations relating to policy coherence, sustainability standards for EU import policies and agreements, and a level playing field are repeated almost constantly in various opinions. The LDAC could probably add further value by exploring these issues in greater depth. This work would be based on gathering knowledge and data through a more comprehensive approach and thanks to LDAC members' networks, analysing different policies and identifying gaps in coherence through interviews with the various relevant DGs and national administrations that have active bilateral relations or provide development aid.

This work cannot be completed in a single year, as the LDAC must retain the flexibility necessary to adapt to new needs, demands or opportunities, but also because policy changes take time. That is why it is important to establish a multi-annual plan with specific, concrete steps in order to evaluate results, monitor progress and, ultimately, optimise the use of public funds. **We propose four priorities in Table 6, but this obviously requires internal debate and the support of LDAC members. It would also require additional resources to fund the necessary expertise.**

“The ocean is always there, but the water flowing through is never the same”

LDAC Executive Secretary



Port of Mindelo (Cape Verde) and Fishermen's Cooperative in Locodjo-Abidjan, Ivory Coast.

Photo credit: LDAC

Table 6. Proposed core priorities for the LDAC over the forthcoming 5-year period

Ensuring coherence of the external action of the EU to ensure sustainable fishing in distant waters

Through additional technical input within the secretariat, the LDAC would benefit from launching a specific activity on identifying the different policies impacting fisheries where the EU distant water fleet operates, interviewing the different competent DGs at European Commission levels, the national administrations with external action (agreement, aid development) and suggesting ways to better align the different efforts and activities. Such approach could be developed at sea basin level (following the seascape approach suggested by the European Commission in the Ocean Pact[22]), starting with West Africa where the EU and EU fishing operators have a historic collaboration.

Proposed milestones:

- Identifying inconsistencies between the activities of different DGs
- Collecting field data on the consequences (actual/plausible) of these inconsistencies
- Proposing corrective measures to strengthen policy coherence (through the application of different policies)

Ensuring yearly contribution of the EU stakeholders in preparation of Annual and Intersessional Meetings of relevant RFMOs (NAFO, NEAFC, ICCAT, IOTC, WCPFC) and proposing recommendations to implement the ecosystem-based approach (roadmaps, objectives, by-catches, multi species assessment, VMS, impact of bottom-trawling)

The LDAC will maintain its commitment to provide yearly advice to the main RFMOs where the EU fleet operates. Within this framework, and in addition to feedback to scientific advice on conservation and management measures for single stocks of commercial interest, some more specific objectives may be targeted as implementation of harvest strategies, reducing incidental catches of ETP species, developing an ecosystem approach to fisheries, identifying compliance gaps across the different fleets operating in the RFMOs...

Proposed milestones:

- Contributing to the definition of harvest strategies for major commercial stocks by participating in relevant scientific and technical fora of RFMOs
- Developing/contributing to the definition of minimum standards for bycatch mitigation measures
- Developing/contributing to the definition of roadmaps for the implementation of the ecosystem-based approach
- Developing a framework for including scientific expertise on fisheries in BBNJ operational framework

Promoting a level playing field for Union operators vis-à-vis third country operators;

Following up on current advice on sustainability and competitiveness within RFMOs xxx and building on its 2020 omnibus advice on the level playing field, and through additional technical input within the secretariat, the LDAC would benefit from documenting the specific gaps found between EU and third countries' operators.

Proposed milestones:

- Listing requirements for guaranteeing sustainable fishing activities;
- Documenting main gaps between EU and third countries' operators in international fisheries
- Identifying key stocks sensitive to import rules and checking with the relevant DGs their compliance with EU standards
- Promoting participatory surveillance and "citizens/stakeholders science" to report on field sightings (at sea or on land) that can provide regular reality-checks to data and information sources from DG MARE and Member States

Contributing to the recognition, transparency and sustainability of joint ventures established in third countries.

Fishing businesses established as joint ventures in third countries and owned by EU capital would represent the same level of catches or more than the current EU distant water fleet. It is therefore an opportunity to contribute to more sustainable fisheries in third countries and the international ocean diplomacy of the European Union.

Proposed milestones:

- **Listing joint ventures owned by EU nationals registered in third countries (when available or possible)**
- **Collecting/analysing socio-economic data on their contribution to sustainable fisheries (including volume of production, turnover, number of employees, average salaries, investment in infrastructures, training or education, etc.)**
- **Documenting specific cases of level playing field between the EU fleet and fleet from joint ventures with examples by countries**

Methodology

Considering the limited budget available and the completion of the initial performance review, the methodology was developed along the following steps:

- Checking what has been taken into account from the initial performance review
- Assessing the functioning of the LDAC in the recent period (2020-2025) through attendance to meetings, semi-structured interviews, an online survey, analysing LDAC pieces of advice delivered over the period;
- Identifying work priorities and proposing a roadmap for the next 5-year period with the participation of a dedicated LDAC focus group.

Checking the initial performance reviews

A list was established from the reports produced and circulated to the LDAC secretariat for feedback.

Functioning of the LDAC

Guidance for the semi-structured interviews has been developed (Annex 3) in accordance with the terms of reference and circulated to the LDAC secretariat for feedback. 14 LDAC members, 5 EC officials, 3 officials from national administrations, and 5 AC secretariats have been interviewed in the course of this report.

Attendance to the LDAC meetings both in person and online has allowed to check how the meetings are organised, chaired, the level of participation and the general atmosphere.

The online survey has been developed in accordance with the terms of reference and circulated to the LDAC secretariat for feedback. 27 respondents contributed to the online survey: 9 from the fishing sector, 10 from NGOs, 5 from administrations and 3 from other categories.

LDAC pieces of advice over 2020-2025 have been listed by the LDAC secretariat and a systematic review of the advice and replies from the European Commission allows to get an overview of the structure and contents of advice and classify the replies according to the methodology used in the MEDAC performance review (i.e. no reply, accept, no committal).

Work priorities and strategic planning

An initial focus group has been organised gathering LDAC chairs and vice-chairs asking them to list main work priorities. The same question has been asked in the interviews and through the online survey. Eventually, EU documentation (CFP basic regulation, EU better regulation guidelines, and the EU Ocean Pact mainly) led to proposing core priorities, specific objectives and indicators for the future of the LDAC work.

Personal bias^[23]

Benoît Guerin is an independent fisheries expert with expertise in participatory processes and fisheries management and about 20 years of experience in advocacy, project management and advisory roles. He has been engaged with the South Western Waters Advisory Council as executive secretary for 7 years (2007-2013) and has carried out the performance reviews of the LDAC, the MAC and the SWWAC. His familiarity with the ACs and the EU advisory and policy system provides valuable context. Acknowledging the influence of his own position on the interpretation and analysis, the reviewer intends to remain reflective and neutral throughout the process. Triangulation of interviews contributes to mitigating potential biases. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy the risk of error or misinterpretation cannot be eliminated.

Conclusion

Through the second performance review of the **LDAC**, **noticeable progress has been noted: an effort to balance responsibilities (sector/NGO, gender) within the working groups, increased debate on technical matters through focus groups, production of early advice for the three main tuna RFMOs of interest for the EU fleet.** The LDAC benefits from a highly effective and committed secretariat, competent and dedicated chairs, allowing to carry out and develop parallel advice in due time. All the activities are being produced in a friendly atmosphere, and all members have shared very positive feelings about their participation in the council.

The issue of the advice uptake remains however a long-standing concern that would need urgent remedial. A dedicated inter-AC effort could help to propose common and standardised rules framing more clearly the interaction between the European Commission and the various Advisory Councils.

Taking a broader view of the work produced by the LDAC, excessive attention is probably being paid to the formulation of written advice, also because the European Commission is conditioning its financial support to the delivery of a certain number of recommendations in the form of written advice as detailed in the Annual Work Programme. It is important to remember that, within the current institutional and legal framework, ACs pieces of advice cannot be binding and will therefore never carry the weight that its members expect them to have. However, the very essence of the AC is to provide a platform for the participation of multiple stakeholders and to facilitate dialogue. In this regard, it might be also useful and influential to focus on facilitating dialogue and debate rather than putting all efforts on drafting documents. In particular, the LDAC has demonstrated its capacity to innovate in developing new means of action as organising seminars or building partnerships with non-EU actors.

In a global context where we see the questioning of a multilateral rule-based order based on democratic functioning and human well-being, **the LDAC could become an objective ally of the EU ocean diplomacy.** Strategic planning and specific milestones for the next 5-year period would probably help the LDAC to play a more active role in this context.

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Annex 1. List of recommendations to improve the performance of the LDAC

Task	Purpose
MEMBERSHIP	
LDAC members share their own information (events, reports) on a regular basis	To contribute to building trust and sense of ownership within the LDAC
Open dialogue on the representational issue of member organisations	To clarify interests the LDAC member organisations or individuals are representing
FUNCTIONING	
Developing terms of reference for all Inter-AC workshops	As inter-AC activities (focus groups, pieces of advice) are increasing and the platform is increasingly being used by the European Commission for consultation purposes, and because each AC is operating following its own procedures, developing terms of reference beforehand would clarify and smooth the coordination process.
Expanding LDAC focus groups' terms of reference to include specific deliverables or objectives linked to the SMART[24] approach.	Terms of reference are developed for each focus group but defining specific objectives (what do we want to achieve?) would help to focus efforts
Experimenting with alternative meeting formats from time to time	To facilitate new dynamics in order to extract evidence-based knowledge and propose innovative solutions
Drafting a multiannual workplan to focus on few priorities requiring long-term work	To set priorities where changes cannot occur in a single year and set milestones to monitor work progress
Organising a specific internal workshop every two and a half years to reflect on the work achieved, debate on work priorities and adapt the work programme accordingly	To update and adapt the multiannual plan to new context and reflect on the brakes and accelerators
PREPARATORY WORK	
Gathering more field evidence of the problems that arise through a formal framework	To identify type of reality-checks (sightings of illegal operations, concrete obstacles to fishing operations, new competitors, ...) that could be collected on a regular basis by LDAC members and provide the corresponding information to managers to allow more agile decision-making process
Enhancing scientific data collection as listed in art 44 2.C of the CFP basic regulation	To contribute to data collection and representing the LDAC at data compilation workshops or similar fora in scientific organisations relevant for its work (e.g. ICES, Scientific Committees of SFPAs, Scientific Councils for RFMOs...)
Expanding work on socio-economic impact of fishing activities:	Since 2018, the LDAC already contributes actively to the economic analysis of performance of the EU distant water fleets [25] by the annual participation of its Executive Secretary in capacity as coordinator of the distant water fleet regional chapters at the STECF Annual Economic Report. Further work could be developed using this report for providing dedicated advice on specific fisheries and fleets over time.

[24] The **SMART approach** is a method for setting clear, effective objectives. It ensures goals are: **S**pecific, clearly defined and focused; **M**easurable, with criteria to track progress and success; **A**chievable, realistic given resources and constraints; **R**elevant, aligned with broader priorities and strategies; **T**ime-bound, set within a defined timeframe.

[25] The current proposal for an EU multi-fund framework identifies support for « global Europe » meaning supporting activities outside the EU where the LDAC may find additional funding support

RECOMMENDATIONS / ADVICE

Developing specific recommendations on the use of the sectoral support within SFPAs

To leverage the existing memorandum of understanding with COMHAFAT and AfriFish-Net to develop robust proposals on the use of sectoral support (linked to the first priority suggested for the multiannual work programme).

Ensuring minimum follow-up on the uptake of advice sent

To monitor the noticeable changes or evolutions in the decision-making process and check alignment with LDAC pieces of advice

Reducing the length of pieces of advice or exploring other alternatives as breaking them down in different sections to make them more manageable

Some LDAC pieces of advice tend to be very long which may reduce the attention paid to them

Adopting a common **template for advice**, focus on **SMART** (specific, measurable, achievable, reachable, time-bound)

To increase the understanding of uptake of recommendations proposed by the LDAC a common template (probably shared with all ACs) would help to build follow-up dialogue and build confidence in the consulting procedure

COOPERATION PRACTICES

Establishing regular informal meetings and follow-up with the European Commission services

To facilitate smooth and agile communication and lighten the workload for both LDAC and EC before the working group meetings.

Establishing a LDAC delegation to visit the European Parliament and the Member States on a regular basis

To strengthen ties with managers to facilitate communication and exchange of information

Operationalising the MoU between the LDAC and ATLAFCO-COMHAFAT

Besides the network in terms of information and communication, concrete activities and outputs should be identified

Annex 2. Terms of reference for the LDAC Performance review

LDAC CONCEPT NOTE: MAIN ISSUES TO CONSIDER FOR A LDAC PERFORMANCE REVIEW N.B.
The following topics are not intended to be covered in its entirety, but only to look at as guidance in order to cross check existing recommendations made on the previous performance review exercise.

*Author: LDAC Secretariat
Date: 26 November 2024*

1. Organisation of the LDAC Working Groups and Focus Group

- Are the topics indicated in the Annual Work Programmes adequately covered by the existing working groups and focus groups?
- Are meetings organised efficiently to encourage maximum participation of members?
- Are LDAC members contributing actively and providing evidence-based input (both orally at the meetings and in writing through consultation) to shape the content of advice and letters?
- Is the Commission attendance sufficient and appropriate? If not, what are the reasons for it and how could this be improved?

2. Decision making process in the Working groups/ExCom/GA

- Are deliberations open to all members? And Observers?
- Is sufficient time provided for discussion, revision and completion of drafts? Is the format the right one (e.g. topic-based Focus Group, written input)?
- Are minority or diverging opinions duly reflected in the advice where requested?
- Do you think the fast-track procedure is adequately and reasonably used? Is it fair and transparent?
- What is your view of the working environment? Do you think members of the LDAC behave in a respectful and professional manner towards each other, the Secretariat and external visitors (e.g. representatives from the Commission, member states or scientists)?
- Do you think that changes are needed in the statutes and/or rules of procedure to better reflect the needs of stakeholder composition/gender balance/representation in governing bodies?
- What changes would you suggest in the way these bodies function to improve their efficiency?

3. Production of advice

- Do you consider the adopted pieces of advice / recommendations and letters to be adequately representing the interests and diversity of views expressed by members (e.g. consensus and diverging views)?
- Do you consider that the adopted pieces of advice / letters are underpinned by factual evidence, policy and/or science?
- Do you think the Commission adequately addresses the specific questions and recommendations included in the LDAC pieces of advice or letters in their official replies?
- Do you think the LDAC follows up adequately pending actions arising from these letters/pieces of advice?

4. Feedback from European Commission

- How would you rate the fulfilment of duties and responsibilities by the following positions?
 - LDAC Chairs (GA/ExCom and Working Groups)
 - Vice Chairs (GA/ExCom and Working Groups)
 - Secretariat
- How would you evaluate their performance in terms of leadership and impartiality?
 - LDAC Chair and Vice Chairs
 - Secretariat
- How actively does the leadership work to ensure a respectful and professional working environment by, for example, reacting against inappropriate behaviour if such occurs?
- How is the functioning of the LDAC Secretariat in terms of fulfilling their duties and delivering regarding:
 - the objectives assigned under the work programme
 - optimising budgetary resources for its completion
 - sharing in a timely manner information of documents received and upcoming meetings
 - compliance with protocol and rules

6. Transparency

- Do you think documents published on the website are sufficient?
- Are they easily accessible for the public?
- Do you think there is clear understanding and information on the membership composition?
- Would you suggest other actions/initiatives to be taken such as publication on international registers of organisations, external audits or general performance review reports?

7. Cooperation and working practices with regional and international entities

- Do you think it is positive that the LDAC is actively promoting the external dimension element of control in the Advisory Board of EFCA?
- Do you think the LDAC is duly present at relevant RFMOs, such as NAFO and ICCAT?
- How do you perceive cooperation between LDAC and ATLAFCO-COMHAFAT?
- How do you perceive cooperation between LDAC and AFRIFISH-Net?
- How balanced is the representation of the LDAC in external meetings in terms of participants?
- How balanced is the presentation of LDAC opinions by its representatives in external meetings in terms of content?
- How often do respective Member States consult the LDAC?
- How Member States provide information to the LDAC prior to the aforementioned consultations?
- How well does the LDAC cooperate with other ACs (Inter AC initiatives)?

8. Production of advice

- How adequately are women represented in the LDAC Chair and Vice Chair positions? And in the Secretariat?
- Do you have ideas or suggestions for improving gender balance?

9. Communications and PR

- What is the institutional reputation of the LDAC vis-à-vis social and corporate media? How is it perceived by grassroots?
- How is the LDAC using social media and the website? Do you have any suggestions for improvement?
- Are you subscribed to the LDAC newsletter “Fishing Far”? Yes/No and why
- Are you satisfied with the content of the newsletter? Do you think it contains interesting information? What is your favourite section? Do you have any suggestions for improvement?
- What is the presence of the LDAC in external fora (e.g. institutional presentations)?

Annex 3. Interview guidance

FACTSHEET

Category (sector, processor, union, eNGO, devNGO)

Start date of participation in the LDAC

Time devoted to the LDAC (is it enough?)

Any return on investment for your organisation?

Your participation in the LDAC

- Main incentive to participate (To your opinion and considering your own organisation's interests, what is the main purpose of the LDAC?)
- Common identity and sense of belonging
- What would change for you if the LDAC disappears?

Scope of the LDAC

- Do you consider the LDAC should limit the number of topics included in its work programme?
- To what extent do you consider the working group's agendas are covering members' interests and work priorities?
- Do you feel comfortable with the 4 main work priorities that have emerged from the focus group? Coherence of policies (MARE+TRADE+INTPA), RFMOs, SFPAs, International Ocean Governance, Level playing field, Social dimension (labour conditions, forced labour)
- Are you happy with the increased collaborative work with other ACs in the EU (Brexit, seminars with DG MARE on control regulation, CFP evaluation, ICCAT,...) or would you prefer that the LDAC remains more focused on its own specific issues ?

Running of working groups

- Do you consider there is a good representation of interest (geographical representation, within the supply chain...)
- Any issues of concern about the organisation of the meetings? Role of the secretariat? Availability of documents, etc.

- Would you consider that members' contribution usually or rarely relies on evidence-based input?
- Are members rather building on others' contribution or adding their own issues/concern?
- Have you ever disseminated confidential information during a LDAC meeting? Are there some issues of relevance for the LDAC you prefer not to deal with in meetings?
- Have there been any specific issues you remember where you have compromised from your organisation genuine interest for the sake of consensus? (quote example)
- Would you consider the participation of most or only a minority of members to be satisfactory? What about observers? Member States? The European Commission?

Dialogue within LDAC bodies and drafting process

- Is there enough time to prepare documents and opinions?
- Any issue about transparency?
- What is your view on the working environment? Do members behave in a respectful and professional manner?
- Would you consider the various opinions to be duly reflected in the LDAC documents?
- What added value does the LDAC's opinion provide compared to individual opinions? Do you see any evidence showing that the EC gives to LDAC's opinion additional weight compared to individual opinions?



Relation with EC, Member States

- Could you point to some specific opinion that concretely influenced the decision-making process?
- How would you consider the working relationship with both the EC and the Member States?

Cooperation and external dimension

- Any specific feedback on the partnership LDAC has established with ATLAFCO-COMHAFAT / AGRIFISH-Net?
- Are you satisfied with EU contribution in different international fora (RFMOs, UN)? Is it consistent? What would you change, if possible?

Could you point to any significant improvement in the running of the LDAC along the years?

Annex 4. List of interviewees

LDAC MEMBERS

<i>Iván López</i>	LDAC Chair, AGARBA
<i>Vanya Vulperhorst</i>	LDAC First Vice-chair, OCEANA
<i>Marc Ghiglia</i>	LDAC Third Vice-chair, UAPF
<i>Anne-France Mattlet</i>	WG 1 chair, Europeche
<i>Ignacio Fresco Vanzini</i>	WG1 vice-chair, OCEANA
<i>Emil Remisz</i>	WG 2 chair, High Seas Fish Producers Organisation
<i>Tim Heddema</i>	WG 2 vice-chair, Pelagic Freezer Association
<i>Béatrice Goretz</i>	WG 4 chair, Coalition for Fair Fisheries Agreements
<i>Ángela Cortina</i>	WG 4 vice-chair, OPNAPA
<i>Julien Daudu</i>	WG 5 chair, Environment Justice Foundation
<i>Daniel Voces</i>	WG 5 vice-chair, Europêche
<i>Juan Manuel Trujillo</i>	European Transport Federation
<i>Raúl García</i>	World Wide Fund for Nature
<i>José Ramón Fontán</i>	ANEPAT (former WG4 chair)
<i>Iris Ziegler</i>	Seas at Risk - German Foundation for Marine Conservation

EC OFFICIALS

<i>Julia Rubeck</i>	MARE D.3
<i>Stijn Billiet</i>	MARE B.2
<i>Desiree Kjolsen</i>	MARE B.4
<i>Charlotte Gobin</i>	MARE B.3
<i>Marc Richir</i>	MARE B.1



AC SECRETARIATS/ CHAIRS

<i>Rosa Caggiano</i>	MEDAC Executive Secretary
<i>Paul Thomas</i>	PELAC Executive Secretary
<i>Pedro Reis</i>	MAC Executive Secretary
<i>Daniela Costa</i>	CCRUP Executive Secretary
<i>Sergio López</i>	CCS / SWWAC

REPRESENTATIVES OF ADMINISTRATIONS

<i>Ismael Yagüe</i>	Spanish administration
<i>Anaid Panossian</i>	French administration
<i>Jolanta Mosor</i>	Polish administration

Annex 5. Initial focus group

LDAC Performance Review 2

Focus Group on multi annual work priorities for 2025-2029

Date: Monday 24th February 2025 (Author: Benoît Guerin)

PARTICIPANTS

Alexandre Rodríguez

Anne-France Mattlet

Julien Daudu

Manuela Iglesias

Béatrice Goretz

Raúl García

Ángela Cortina

Emil Remisz

Vanya Vulperhorst

Ismael Yagüe

Iván López

Benoît Guerin

METHODOLOGY

To explore possible work priorities for the next 5 years, it was proposed to participants to first have some time to reflect on and formulate up to 3 proposals, then submit these ideas via Mentimeter.

Each of the proposals was then read out and it was proposed to clarify any ideas if not clear to some.

Participants were then invited to vote (3 votes possible, only one per item).

It was then proposed to select a proposal and reflect upon specific objectives and indicators to achieve those objectives that could derive from the initial brainstorming exercise.

RESULTS

25 proposals have been made. 13 received a zero score and 2 received the highest votes of 4: coherence of policies, and more capacity to external dimension.

Time was given to comment on the first top ranked ideas.

Several participants argued that the suggested proposals should be grouped together on common themes/blocks, as there were many links and overlapping between the various proposals submitted, and this way it would be easier to rank/ compare and narrow down in number to 4-5 blocks.

After carrying out the grouping of similar proposals, the following work priorities appeared to rank high in participants' views:

- **Coherence of policies (MARE+TRADE+INTPA): 8 votes in total**
- **Implementing External Dimension of the CFP: RFMOs, SFPAs, International Ocean Governance: 8 votes in total**
- **Level playing field between EU and non-EU fishing fleets: 8 votes in total**
- **Social dimension (safety at sea, human rights,labour conditions, forced labour): 9 votes in total**

A presentation was also made on objectives and indicators with a view to working on more specific and measurable objectives (SMART approach). However, participants decided it was too early in the process to develop indicators due to the lack of clearly defined objectives and the technical complexity of it. It was agreed that at first, a wider consultation should be carried out on proposed work priorities (e.g. through online questionnaires, individual in person interviews, feedback from institutional presentations at LDAC meetings, etc.)

NOTE OF CAUTION

Such methodology is based on methodology developed by the Wageningen Institute on prioritising and ranking[26]. Using mentimeter.com, the idea was to propose the collection of ideas and suggestions to be made anonymously to limit the possible uneven communication effect that could occur in groups and give equal opportunities to all participants.

Neither the voting nor the proposals could be considered as definitive at this stage but could offer some guidance for further reflection in the framework of the performance review and the development of a multi annual work plan.

MENTIMETER.COM RESULTS

Coherence of policies (MARE + TRADE + INTPA + etc.)	4
Getting the EU to dedicate more capacity and budget to the external dimension and finally create policy coherence among trade, development and fisheries	4
Future of the External Dimension, with focus on SFPA an Social Dimension	3
Fighting illegal fishing and forced labour	3
Level playing field and social and labour conditions	3
Food sovereignty	2
Level Playing Field	2
Fisheries within Ocean Pact, including Blue Tech	2
Pushing the EU to put in place a law that requires higher environmental and social standards for imported seafood	2
For the EU to level the playing field for external fishers and to tackle flags of convenience	1
International Ocean Governance and MPAs/OECM role of RFMOs	1
Improve the work with the EU COM to boost the change in mind and put fishers in the centre of the CFP	1
Delivering against Agenda 2030	1
Exchange of good practices among members and with other fleets.	0
International Ocean governance	0
How to go beyond RFMO limits?	0
IUU fishing	0
Communication with the citizens: sustainability of the EU fleet, European Production Model...	0
RFMO for the SW Atlantic	0
The role of international fisheries in food security	0
Fight against IUU fishing (holistic, including control, labour, imports)	0
EU role on level playing field and international ocean governance	0



MENTIMETER.COM RESULTS

Food security - fisheries as an important pillar	0
EU common fisheries policy support	0
Cross-border management	0
Trade as tool of change	0
Market aspects to influence in the final consumer: quality brands, nutritional fish properties...	0
SFPAs	0

Annex 6. LDAC Performance Review #2 (Online Survey)

Representation of interests

What interests are you representing?

- Fishing sector – if so, indicate which subcategory:
 - Extractive / Catching industry
 - Processors
 - Traders / importers
 - Trade unions
- Civil society (including NGOs)
- Public administration (local, national, regional, European)
- Non-EU interests (e.g. third countries)
- Other, please specify

As Advisory Council to the European Commission, the LDAC shall formulate evidence-based advice reflecting stakeholders views from the European Union (EU) on topics related to fisheries in non-EU waters, i.e. the external dimension of the Common Fisheries Policy.

Would you consider that the LDAC is adequately representing the different following interests? (SCORE 1 to 5)

- Fishing industry (60%)
- Civil society (40%)

Comment:

Areas of work – priorities identified and resources

The following objectives are listed in the 2024-2025 LDAC annual work programme:

- Promoting coherence between the internal and external dimension of the CFP
- Contributing to policy coherence among fisheries, environment, trade, labour, health, and sustainable development, to ensure EU policies impacts promote the sustainability of external fisheries
- Implementation aspects of EU Fisheries Control System and fight against IUU fishing
- Social (labour and human rights) dimension of the CFP

- Better International Ocean Governance (e.g. UN related fora, SDGs, and multilateral negotiations)
- Contributing to the implementation, evaluation and renewal of SFPAs
- Contributing to the visibility and importance of local artisanal fishing and coastal communities of Non-EU countries
- Contributing to shaping the EU position and mandate in RFMOs

Would you consider relevant to propose less objectives? (YES/NO)

Comment:

Do you think the LDAC should work harder on some of the specific objectives listed here? (If so, which one)

Would you like to see further initiatives taken beyond the scope of present work (YES/NO) If so, mention which ones and which funding might be available (e.g. private sponsorship, public funds from EMFAF, EU research projects, etc.):

Do you think the LDAC has adequate and sufficient resources (financial and human) to fulfil the work committed to on its annual work programme (YES/NO/NSP)?

Cooperation practices

The LDAC is regularly carrying out or contributing to initiatives including several other EU Advisory Councils as for RFMOs such as ICCAT, Brexit, or horizontal aspects linked to EU overarching policies (Energy transition, EMFF, Control Regulation...)

Do you find these collaborations are useful / relevant for its work? (SCORE 1-5)

- To what extent do you consider these collaborations to be in line with the LDAC work priorities?
- To what extent do you consider these MoU to directly feed the recommendations produced by the LDAC?

The LDAC has established two Memoranda of Understanding with non-EU bodies, namely ATLAFCO-COMHAFAT and AFRIFISH-Net

ATLAFCO/COMHAFAT: The Ministerial Conference on fisheries cooperation among African States bordering the Atlantic Ocean (ATLAFCO), is an intergovernmental organisation founded in 1989 gathering 22 countries from Morocco to Namibia.

AFRIFISH-Net: is the Pan-African Platform of Non-State Actors in Fisheries and Aquaculture. It was created in 2022 and their aim is to promote sustainable fisheries management in a participatory manner, taking into account the aspirations and the rights of the small-scale fishing communities.

The LDAC has established two Memoranda of Understanding with non-EU bodies, namely ATLAFCO-COMHAFAT and AFRIFISH-Net. Do you find these partnerships are useful / relevant for its work? (SCORE 1-5)

- To what extent do you consider these MoU to be in line with the LDAC work priorities?
- To what extent do you consider these MoU to directly feed the recommendations produced by the LDAC?

- To what extent do you consider these MoU to contribute to the improvement of dialogue and cooperation between the EU and national administrations (COMHAFAT) and non-state actors (AFRIFISH-Net) in third countries?

Comment:

Recommendations sent to the European Commission and Member States

The LDAC puts considerable efforts to gather its members, organise joint work and produce timely and consensual advice. (SCORE)

- To what extent do you consider these pieces of advice to reflect a balanced expression of interests and views represented in the LDAC?
- To what extent do you consider these pieces of advice to offer innovative solutions to problematic issues identified by the LDAC members?
- To what extent do you consider these pieces of advice to bring new and/or complementary information compared to that publicly available by other bodies (e.g. not-for-profit organisations, research and scientific institutes, consultants, lobbies)?

Whereas the direct impact of the ACs' advice to the EU decision-making process cannot be objectively measured or formally evaluated, what is your own opinion on the impact and added value of the LDAC's advice on the DG MARE published legislative initiatives, positions and proposals? (SCORE)

Point to any specific work/piece of advice that you would like to mention as a good or bad example of take-up from the Commission and/or Member States:



Chairs and secretariat Performance evaluation

Do you think the Chairs/Secretariat team perform a good work and fulfil their duties in an effective manner?

- 0.Strongly disagree
- 1.Disagree
- 2.Somewhat disagree
- 3.Somewhat agree
- 4.Agree
- 5.Strongly Agree

For chairs

Independence: Acts independently of the interests of any stakeholder group

Ensures the group deals with the right matters and follows the pending actions agreed and covers all agenda items

Draws out and encompasses contributions from all members

Ensures clarity of decision-making and explains way forward

For the secretariat

Acts independently of the interests of any stakeholder group

Brings relevant experience with their knowledge and expertise

Ensures tracking of pending actions

Is available and provides timely feedback and input outside/in-between meetings

Contacts other members outside meetings, where necessary, to improve understanding of each other's positions and manage expectations acting as "honest broker" of interests

Annex 7. List of LDAC pieces of advice 2020–2025

		YEAR APPROVAL	ANSWER FROM EC	NO EC REPLY	ACCEPT	NON COMMITAL
YEAR 2020-2021						
Joint Advice on the implementation of the Single Use Plastics Directive and operational aspects of the Fishing for Litter Scheme	R-09-20/Excom	15/07/2020	15/09/2020		1	
LDAC Opinion on Tuna Loins for ATQs	R-10-20/WG1	16/07/2020		1		
LDAC ADVICE IN PREPARATION FOR NAFO 42nd ANNUAL MEETING, 21.25 September 2020	R-11-20/WG2	15/09/2020		1		
LDAC reply consultation International Ocean Governance	R-12-20/WG5	15/10/2020		1		
LDAC Recommendations for MAKING SFPAs EVALUATIONS MORE EFFICIENT	R-13-20/WG4	16/11/2020		1		
LDAC OPINION IN PREPARATION OF IOTC ANNUAL MEETING (November 2019)	R-14-20/WG1	30/10/2020		1		
LDAC advice management recommendations to inform the EU position on Conservation of North Atlantic Stock of Shortfin Mako (<i>Isurus Oxyrinchus</i>)	R-15-20/WG1	19/11/2020	07/12/2020			1
LDAC, Europeche and ETF joint letter on the FAO's guidance on social responsibility in the fish 3value chains	R-16-20/WG5	05/11/2020		1		
LDAC contribution to DG MARE letter on improving functioning of ACs	R-17-20/Excom	10/12/2020		1		
Multi-AC advice on the "Maritime sector - a green post-COVID future" Roadmap	R-18-20/Excom	09/12/2020	22/12/2020			1
LDAC POSITION PROPOSAL OF PHASING OUT OF GILLNETS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN Preparation of IOTC Special Session 4 (SS4, 8-12 March 2021)	R-01-21/WG1	05/03/2021		1		
EP-ETF-LDAC joint letter requesting the transpositions of key international legal instruments on Safety and Labour Standards in the Fishing Sector	R-02-21/WG5	05/05/2021	25/05/2021		1	
LDAC Advice on Level Playing Field	R-03-21/WG5	25/05/2021	16/07/2021		1	1
LDAC OPINION: Promoting regional sustainable fisheries management for shared resources in West Africa	R-04-21/WG4	20/05/2021	21/06/2021			
Joint ACs letter on EU fishing stakeholders participation in new governance and management structures as a result of the Brexit process	R-05-21/Excom	30/04/2021		1		
Letter on Arctic Cod in Svalbard	R-06-21/WG2					
TOTAL				9	3	3

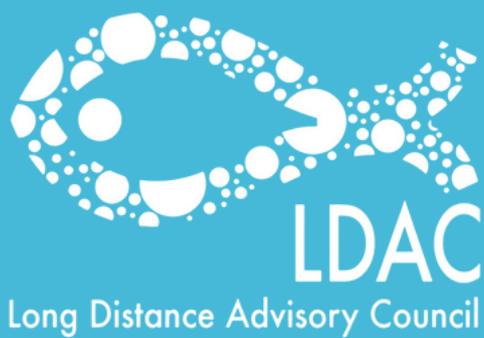
		YEAR APPROVAL	ANSWER FROM EC	NO EC REPLY	ACCEPT	NON COMMITAL
YEAR 2021-2022						
JOINT MAC-LDAC ADVICE Fostering the European Union's leadership in reducing the detrimental impact of flags of convenience in the fishing sector	R-07-21/WG2	07/10/202	30/11/2021			1
LDAC ADVICE FOR NAFO 43rd ANNUAL MEETING	R-08-21/WG2	13/09/2021		1		
LDAC contribution to the European Commission public consultation on improving the functioning of the Advisory Councils	R-09-21/Excom	08/09/2021		1		
JOINT AC POSITION ON DEEPSEA MINING IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS	R-10-21/WG5	16/11/2021	01/12/2021		1	
LDAC recommendation on the Post-Brexit (re)positioning of the European Union towards the Northeast Atlantic fisheries negotiations	R-11-21/WG2	16/02/2022		NA	NA	NA
LDAC letter Support to DG MARE work and clarification on possible EC budget reductions	R-01-22/Excom	16/02/2022	16/03/2022		1	
LDAC response to the EU on line questionnaire on the 2022 report on the functioning of CFP	R-02-22/Excom	04/03/2022	16/03/2022	NA	NA	NA
Joint AC letter to the European Commission, on behalf of LDAC, MAC, NSAC, NWWAC, and PELAC, regarding stakeholder engagement in the Specialist Fisheries Committee resulting from the TCA between the UK and the EU	R-04-22/Excom	14/03/2022		1		
Social clause	R-03-22/Excom	04/04/2022	03/05/2022		1	
LDAC Letter: Request for designation of European fishers as essential workers	R-05-22/WG4-WG5	mai-22	05/08/2022		1	
TOTAL				4	4	1

		YEAR APPROVAL	ANSWER FROM EC	NO EC REPLY	ACCEPT	NON COMMITAL
YEAR 2022-2023 (Year 16)						
Joint LDAC-MAC Advice on China-IUU	R-06-22/WG5	13/12/2022	16/02/2024	1		
Joint-AC letter on bringing fisheries matters through to Specialized Committee for Fisheries (SCF) via existing advisory bodies	R-10-22/Excom	20/07/2022	20/07/2022	1		
LDAC Advice on NAFO annual meeting 2022	R-07-22/WG2	09/09/2022		1		
LDAC Advice on ICCAT 2022	R-08-22/WG1	07/11/2022		1		
LDAC Letter to Ms. Lena Anderson: DG MARE clarification on ECA participation in the LDAC Working Group 5 meeting	R-09-22/Excom	11/10/2022	replied by email	NA	NA	NA
LDAC advice for WCPFC 2022	R-11-22/WG1	24/11/2022		1		
LDAC advice in view of the next EU-Mauritania SFPA Joint Committee, including recommendations on the small pelagic management plan proposal for Mauritania, and demersal fisheries where EU operators are involved	R-12-22/WG4	25/11/2022	22/12/2022		1	
LDAC Letter to Africa-Europe Foundation	R-13-22/Excom	07/12/2022		NA	NA	NA
Letter on: DG MARE clarification on participation in LDAC's meetings	R-14-22/Excom	28/12/2022	24/01/2023		1	
LDAC Advice: Preparation of Resumed IGC5 on UN BBNJ Treaty (20 Feb-3 March 2023)	R-01-23/WG5	16/01/2023		1		
LDAC Letter on ECA special report on the EU IUU policy	R-02-23/WG5	08/05/2023		1		
Letter to DG INTPA on: FishGov II and the support to non-state actors' platforms	R-03-23/WG4	26/04/2023	31/05/2023		1	
Letter to DG MARE: Support of the Social Partners Resolution on the fight against forced labour in the sea-fisheries sector	R-04-23/WG5	29/05/2023		1		
LDAC Advice ahead of IOTC 27th Session (Mauritius, 8-12 May 2023)	R-05-23/WG1	17/04/2023	28/04/2023			1
Joint-AC MAC-LDAC advice on "The need for harmonised import controls between Member States in order to prevent the products of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing from entering the European Union market	R-06-23/WG5	21/04/2023	27/06/2023		1	
TOTAL				8	4	1

		YEAR APPROVAL	ANSWER FROM EC	NO EC REPLY	ACCEPT	NON COMMITAL
YEAR 2023-2024 (Year 17)						
LDAC Advice on: Working with Morocco to improve fisheries governance and resilient fishing communities	R-06-22/WG5	17/11/2023	07/02/2024		1	
LDAC Advice on NAFL annual meeting 2023	R-10-22/Excom	08/09/2023	22/12/2023		1	
LDAC Advice on ICCAT annual meeting 2023	R-07-22/WG2	08/11/2023	16/11/2023		1	
LDAC ADVICE Recommendations for the 20th Regular Session of the Commission of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commision (WCPF20)	R-08-22/WG1	30/11/2023	06/12/2023			1
Letter The key role of fisheries observers and the imperative to ensure their protection	R-09-22/Excom	22/12/2023	05/03/2024	1		
LDAC update of the advice on “Addressing role of women in fisheries - example of EU SFPAs”, in light of the Memorandum of Understanding between LDAC and AFRIFISH	R-11-22/WG1	15/01/2024 *23/01/24 by AFRIFISH		1		
Joint ACs letter on stakeholder input re consultations	R-12-22/WG4	05/12/2024			1	
LDAC Advice on sustainability of fisheries and aquaculture in EU-Norway trade relations	R-13-22/Excom	10/04/2024	27/09/2024		1	
LDAC Advice on IOTC annual meeting 2024	R-14-22/Excom	30/04/2024			1	
LDAC-AFRIFISH joint letter on regional basis for negotiation of fisheries arrangements	R-01-23/WG5	22/05/2024		NA	NA	NA
TOTAL				2	6	1

		YEAR APPROVAL	ANSWER FROM EC	NO EC REPLY	ACCEPT	NON COMMITAL
Year 2024-2025 (Year 18)						
LDAC Advice on NAFO 2024	1-Ej.18 (2024-2025) WG5	13/09/2024	09/10/2024	1		
LDAC advice on NEAFC 2024	2-Ej.18 (2024-2025) WG5	20/09/2024	26/12/2024		1	
LDAC ADVICE ON ICCAT 2024	3-Ej.18 (2024-2025) WG5	13/09/2024	07/11/2024		1	
LDAC ADVICE ON IOTC 2025 (EN)		14/02/2025	02/04/2025		1	
Joint LDAC-MAC-AAC request for clarification on role and involvement of Advisory Councils in Energy Transition Partnership (EPT) Support Group		30/09/2024	31/10/2024		1	
LDAC ADVICE ON WCPFC21	4-Ej.18 (2024-2025) WG5	08/11/2024	28/11/2024		1	
Dictamen conjunto LDAC-PeIAC-NWWAC-PELAC-SWWAC sobre la minería de aguas profundas y su impacto en las pesquerías, incluidos los planes de Npruega en el Ártico Ref. R-05-Ej.18 (2024-2025)	5-Ej.18 (2024-2025) WG5	04/11/2024		1		
Joint NSAC´LDAC-PeIAC-NWWAC-BSAC Advice on stakeholder engagement in ICES advice request formulation		30/10/2024	14/11/2024		1	
Questions on code of conduct for EU delegates in RFMO meetings		05/11/2024	07/11/2024		1	
Congratulatory letter from the Advisory Councils on the parliamentary approval of the Commissioner for Fisheries and Oceans		21/11/2024		NA	NA	NA
LDAC letter requesting clarification on work of the Africa.Europe Ocean Strategic Group	6-Ej.18 (2024-2025) WG5	06/12/2024				
LDAC letter to DG MARE-INTPA - request for meeting on GLOBAL GATEWAY programme and linkeages with EU fishing investments in third countries	7-Ej.18 (2024-2025) WG5	09/12/2024		1		
PROPUESTA de carta sobre la: "Necesidad de condiciones equitativas con «cláusulas espejo» para las importaciones de China a la UE	8-Ej.18 (2024-2025) WG5			1		
Joint -ACs advice on stakeholder engagement in Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) processes		07/02/2025	18/03/2025			1
LDAC letter Implementation of the new EU Fisheries Control Systems Regulation (EU) 2023/2842		10/04/2025		1		

	YEAR APPROVAL	ANSWER FROM EC	NO EC REPLY	ACCEPT	NON COMMITAL
Year 2024-2025 (Year 18)					
LDAC POSITION PAPER IN REPLY TO EU PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON CFP EVALUATION	13/05/2025	1			
LDAC Advice on Improving Transparency of Fishing Jpint Ventures in Thrid Countries	23/05/2025	1			
Joint LDAC-MAC advice Urgent need for effective implementations of EU import control rules across Member States	27/06/2025		1		
Lettre Multi-CC sur l'avenir du cadre financier pluriannuel (CFP)	15/04/2025			1	
Exploring alternatives for the continuation of pole-and-line tuna fisheries with live bait in the light of the expiry of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the EU and Senegal	18/06/2025	1			
LDAC ADVICE ON REGIONAL EFFORTS IN WEST AFRICA TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF SMALL PELAGICS STOCKS	13/05/2025	1			
TOTAL			10	8	2



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