

PRESS RELEASE (ENGLISH)

LDAC Calls for Coherent and Practical Implementation of the BBNJ Agreement in Coordination with Regional Fisheries Bodies

Date published: Madrid, 29 May 2026

The EU Long Distance Fleet Advisory Council (LDAC) has adopted a new advice urging the European Union to ensure that implementation of the UN Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement is carried out in close coordination with existing fisheries governance bodies, particularly Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) and Regional Fisheries Advisory Bodies (RFABs).

With the BBNJ Agreement that entered into force in January 2026, the LDAC stresses the importance of a structured, science-based and cooperative approach that avoids duplication, respects existing legal mandates, and strengthens international ocean governance.

The advice highlights that fisheries governance bodies already possess decades of experience in scientific assessment, compliance, monitoring and ecosystem-based management in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ). The LDAC therefore calls on the EU to ensure that this expertise is fully integrated into future BBNJ processes, including deliberations on the development of Area-Based Management Tools (ABMTs), Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs), and composition and mandate of the Scientific and Technical Body (STB).

Amongst its key recommendations, the LDAC asks the European Commission as lead negotiator to:

- Uphold the principle of “non-undermining” of RFMO mandates;
- Promote structured cooperation between BBNJ institutions and fisheries bodies;
- Avoid duplication of existing EIA procedures;
- Safeguard fisheries data governance and confidentiality (“clearing-house mechanism”);
- Include fisheries experts and stakeholders in EU BBNJ delegations;
- Ensure that biodiversity measures consider social and economic impacts, including food security and sustainable fisheries.

The LDAC also emphasises that fisheries should not be viewed as separate from biodiversity objectives, but rather as a central component at the heart of sustainable ocean governance.

According to the LDAC, the EU is uniquely positioned to bridge biodiversity conservation and responsible fisheries management in international waters through practical cooperation, legal coherence, and multistakeholder engagement.

The full advice can be found here:

https://www.ldac.eu/images/EN_LDAC_ADVICE_BBNJ_AND_RFMOs_19May2026.pdf

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