



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
**DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES**  
**THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL**

Brussels,  
/ca D(2012)

Dear Mr Cabral,

Thank you for your letter of 21 October 2011 which provides a valuable input to the future of the Fisheries Partnership Agreement (FPA) with Mauritania. The negotiations of the new Protocol are still ongoing and there is therefore currently no definitive outcome.

During the 5<sup>th</sup> round of negotiations (December 2011), EU and Mauritania delegations broadly agreed on the fishing possibilities to be included in the next Protocol, with the exception of pelagics. Any final agreement should take into account the actual status of small pelagic stocks, the MSY strategy and the current share by the EU of pelagic fishing rights and it is therefore essential to have guarantees that fishing effort of other non EU fleets would be reduced, in line with a sustainable approach.

During the last Joint Scientific Committee session, European Commission discussed with Mauritania the global effort of all pelagic fleet involved in Mauritanian waters. The JSC report reflects these elements.

In view of your point on surplus and "local catches", in our understanding and according to Article 70 of UNCLOS, these catches include Mauritanian catches and catches of coastal states whose geographical situation makes them dependent upon the exploitation of the Mauritanian resources, such as Senegal.

Finally, the European Commission is aware that while allocating fishing rights, Mauritania should take into consideration the need to minimize economic dislocation in states whose nationals have habitually fished in Mauritania or which have made substantial efforts in research and identification of stocks. Nevertheless, we are convinced that EU remains a privileged partner for Mauritania and that Mauritanian surplus will be preferentially granted to the EU fleet.

Finding agreement will require finding a very fine balance between:

- The scientific advice concerning the stocks situation in order to ensure sustainability;
- The available surplus given by Mauritania in order to ensure respect of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea;

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- The global fishing effort by all fleets operating in Mauritania in order to ensure an appropriate share of the fishing rights for the EU;
- The interests of the EU to ensure the economic viability of the FPA in relation to its costs. This last point remains as you know subject to substantial further discussion.

We will continue our efforts to progress in the negotiations along these lines.

Yours sincerely,



Lowri EVANS

Copy: Mr. Carlos Aldereguía (Executive secretary)