



EP(21)1 / EAPO21-03

Ms Charlina Vitcheva
Director-General
for Maritime Affairs
and Fisheries
European Commission
1049 Brussels

Brussels, 5 January 2021

Re.: UK waters, fishing authorisations granted but risk of discriminatory management measures

Dear Ms Vitcheva,

The European fishing sector would like to thank you and your team for all your efforts that resulted in the temporary fishing authorisations to operate in UK waters being granted in a timely manner. It allowed the New Year's Eve transition to take place smoothly for those vessels on the UK temporary list. As these fishing authorisations are temporary in nature until the 21st January and there are still a significant number of vessels that have not received authorisations it is imperative that the temporary nature of the authorisations and additional vessels seeking authorisation are resolved without delay.

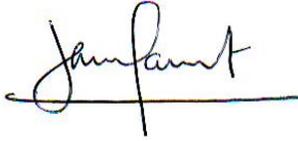
In addition to the problems with the authorisations to fish in UK waters, the main EU fishing associations impacted by Brexit (EUFA, Europêche and EAPO) would also like to point out that Brexit will lead to numerous additional challenges for the EU fishers. In this vein, our fishing-vessel owners are wondering when European vessels will get the necessary authorisation to fish in Norwegian waters and which timeframe is the Commission expecting. To the best of our knowledge, opposite to EU vessels, UK fishers are already allowed to fish in Norwegian waters which would be seen as a big win for Brexiteers.

Furthermore, as you are well aware, our fishermen see as a threat the potential introduction of management measures by the UK that may be either discriminatory, disproportionate or not based on science. For instance, the allusion to a ban of 'super trawlers', with no scientific basis, as mentioned by Prime Minister Boris Johnson already sends a signal that the UK government may follow that line. Equally worrying are the discriminatory measures that could be taken against specific gears, like pulse, or other technical gear measures (such as trawl-panels), that are still being studied in the EU.

Therefore, we call on the Commission to be particularly vigilant on this point and maintain to the largest extent a level playing field.

Finally, the European fishing sector wishes you and your team a very happy New Year. We are grateful of the cooperation with DG MARE in 2020 that was based on trust and mutual appreciation and wish that it continues so in 2021.

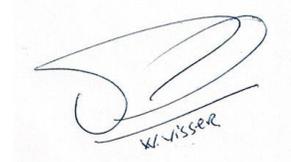
Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J Garat', with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Javier Garat,
President of Europêche

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G van Balsfoort', with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Gerard van Balsfoort,
President of EUFA

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P Visser', with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Pim Visser,
President of EAPO