



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 10/03/2010
C/2010/1312

Dear Mr Forsberg,

The Commission would like to thank the Riksdag for its contribution to the reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) {COM(2009)163} by submission of an opinion.

The Commission notes that the Committee on Environment and Agriculture of the Riksdag shares the analysis of the situation as presented in the Green Paper, of the ensuing need for a comprehensive reform and of the key elements to be considered in a reform. The opinion includes valuable contributions to further develop the options for a future CFP which will help European fisheries to become sustainable and viable.

We find it noteworthy that the Committee identifies two key elements namely that we must have knowledge about the ecosystems, which fisheries depend on, and that we must act in accordance with this knowledge.

The Framework Program for research is a key contributor to further development of the knowledge we need, and the Commission has taken an initiative to strengthen research into marine matters by developing a strategy for marine and maritime research, which is one of the initiatives within the Integrated Maritime Policy. This strategy emphasizes the need to develop our understanding of inter alia human impacts on marine ecosystems, an ecosystem to resource management and how climate change impacts oceans, all issues which should be at the basis of a future CFP.

The Committee mentions clearer and prioritized objectives and a regionalization of decision making as means to support decision making with a long term sustainability perspective. The Commission has put forward similar ideas as possible solutions in its Green Paper. The proposal from the Committee to base the future CFP on an objective to have fisheries which are sustainable in the long term and which ensure consumers healthy food by optimal utilization of the aquatic ecosystem and without risks to biodiversity or ecosystem resilience points in the right direction. There has been widespread support to the idea of regionalization and the Commission is presently investigating the legal options within the Treaty of Lisbon.

Mr Anders Forsberg
Secretary-General of the Riksdag

The Committee calls for a disappearance of subsidies including the exemption for fuel tax in a future CFP. It is clear that subsidies will need to be properly addressed in the future, and, as evidenced by the positions which the EU has consistently taken in ongoing WTO negotiations, the Commission concurs with the need to remove especially those subsidies which have proven environmentally harmful and to ensure that, whatever subsidies, if any, remain, they must be clearly targeted to the objectives of the policy.

The Committee notes that the external dimension of the policy, and especially fishing agreements with developing countries, must be in accordance with other EU policies and especially with development policy. The Commission notes that if fisheries agreements with developing countries are to be part of a future CFP, such agreements must support local development and be in full accordance with the objectives of development policy.

We acknowledge your support to the reform and look forward to further cooperation with the Swedish Parliament in the reform process.

I look forward to developing our policy dialogue further in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President of the European Commission