



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

International Ocean Governance and Sustainable Fisheries
The Director

Brussels
MARE.B.2/FH

Dr Vladimir Belyaev
Chair of the North Pacific Fisheries
Commission (NPFC)
c/o NPFC Secretariat
2F Hakuyo-Hall, Tokyo University
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4-5-7 Konan, Minato-ku,
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JAPAN

Subject: European Union request to accede to the North Pacific Fisheries Convention

Dear Dr Belyaev,

At its fifth annual meeting in Tokyo, Japan from 16 to 18 July 2019, the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC) was unable, for the second time, to reach consensus on the European Union's (EU) application to accede to the Convention on the Conservation and Management of High Seas Fisheries Resources in the North Pacific Ocean, due to the opposition of the Russian Federation. At the same time, however, the Commission acknowledged that the EU had provided all of the information that the Commission had requested at its previous meeting in 2018. It also noted that the EU's application was consistent with Article 24 of the Convention, which expressly opens accession to regional economic integration organisations, such as the EU, wishing to conduct fishing activities for fisheries resources in the Convention Area.

The Commission invited the EU to submit an application prior to its next meeting together with the information requested by the Russian Federation and other Members, allowing time for consideration by the NPFC's Scientific Committee, Technical and Compliance Committee, and any other appropriate subsidiary bodies.

Further to that invitation, the present letter conveys the EU's continued wish to accede to the Convention, for consideration by the Commission at its sixth annual meeting in Sapporo, Japan from 19 to 22 June 2020. In support of our application, please find enclosed an updated fisheries operation plan and impact assessment setting out our interest in fishing in the Convention Area.

The updated fisheries operation plan addresses the concerns expressed by some Members about the potential impact of the EU's membership on the pelagic stocks managed by the NPFC and on existing fishing activities in the Convention area. In particular, and as requested by Japan, the plan provides concrete information about the EU's fishing

intentions including the number of vessels, tonnage of the fishing vessels, type of fishing method, detailed fishing area, target species and destination of catches.

In accordance with the feedback of the Russian Federation in its letter dated 18 October 2019, our application and fisheries operation plan are submitted in time for consideration by the Technical Working Group on Chub mackerel Stock Assessment at its third meeting in Yokohama, Japan from 2 to 6 March 2020, as well as by the Scientific and the Technical and Compliance Committees at their meetings in 2020.

As is evident from our 2018 and 2019 applications to accede, the EU has a historic track record of fishing in the Convention area and a real interest in acceding to the Convention because it wishes to harvest the stocks under the purview of the NPFC. The present application therefore gives effect to our duty of cooperation as per Article 8 of the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA).

As a Member of the NPFC, the EU would contribute to the long-term sustainable management of the stocks under the purview of the NPFC. The EU is committed to cooperate fully in the implementation of the conservation and management measures adopted by the NPFC and to ensure that fishing vessels flying the flag of its Member States and fishing in the Convention Area and, to the greatest extent possible, their nationals, comply with the provisions of the Convention and NPFC conservation and management measures. The EU is also committed to accept, upon accession, high seas boarding and inspections in accordance with the NPFC's procedures and to provide the required financial contribution to the NPFC budget.

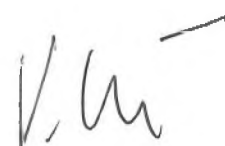
The EU attaches great importance to the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and therefore takes prompt and effective action against any vessels flying the flag of its Member States or EU nationals engaging in IUU fishing activities. It has an excellent record of compliance in Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs). As a member of NPFC, the EU would contribute its extensive experience in cooperation within RFMOs around the world. In addition, it would bring to the NPFC its expertise in fisheries science and management, in particular as regards the development of a Chub mackerel stock assessment.

In view of the above, I hope that the Commission will be able to reach consensus on our request for accession when the Commission meets in June 2020. In this respect, allow me to recall that Article 8(3) of the UNFSA provides that the terms of participation in a RFMO shall not preclude States with a real interest in the fisheries concerned from membership or participation, nor shall they be applied in a manner that discriminates against any such State.

Should the Commission accept our request, I would be grateful if its invitation to accede to the Convention could provide for the possibility of the EU becoming a Contracting Party on a provisional basis, pending completion of its internal ratification procedures.

I thank you for your consideration of this letter and remain,

Yours sincerely,



Veronika VEITS

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Enclosure: Fisheries operation plan and impact assessment