Dear [Redacted],

I thank you for your email entitled “FISHERMEN REJECTION TO THE ACTION PLAN OF THE COMMISSIONER” in which you share your comments on the Fisheries and Oceans package, notably the Marine Action Plan.

Firstly, I wish to reassure you in confirming that the European Commission is not imposing a blanket ban on mobile bottom contacting gears in 2024 nor in 2030. The Commission is fully aware of the concerns of a blanket ban.

The Marine Action Plan, presented in February, sets a vision and invites Member States to engage in a dialogue on how we can reduce the damage caused by the gears with the greatest impacts on our sensitive marine habitats. We deliberately leave the process in the hands of the Member States. Part of that process involves feeding the local knowledge like yours and specificities of each fishery into the process of establishing marine protected areas, their conservation objectives and measures, as well as the necessary measures to achieve good environmental status of the seabed, in line with environmental legislation.

Our Action Plan is therefore an invitation to this important exchange. I have visited many coastal regions in different regions of the EU in recent years. I have seen that fishing is a real noble work and that fishermen work with a lot of passion and enthusiasm. But I have also seen the major challenges facing European fishermen today: high energy prices and dependence on fossil fuels, as well as the deterioration of marine ecosystems, which are intended to ensure the economic basis of fishermen.

I am aware of the protest actions you are referring to and I would like to encourage you to make your voice heard in the context of the Advisory Councils, which in your case is the South Western Waters Advisory Council: info@cc-sud.eu

It is very important for us to have a dialogue with you and those concerned, because we depend on your local assessment and we also count on the active cooperation of the Spanish authorities at regional and national level. The initiative lies with you in the regions and we would like to shape the fisheries of tomorrow with you in the EU.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted]
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