



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

BALTIC SEA, NORTH SEA AND LANDLOCKED MEMBER STATES

Brussels,
Director/CM

Mr [REDACTED]
Chairman,
Internationale Garnalen P.O.
Rousant U.A.
Nittersweg 8
NL-9885 TC Lauwerzijl
Email address: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr [REDACTED]

Thank you for your e-mail concerning the Dutch electrical pulse beam trawl fishing fleet. We note that you are concerned about there being a potentially high number of vessels that appear to be fishing with electric pulse trawls.

Member States are not obliged, under Article 31a(2)(b) of Council Regulation (EC) No 850/98, to report to the Commission on their implementation of the derogation for electrical pulse trawl fishing. It is their obligation to ensure compliance with European Union acts. Therefore, we would invite you to ask your national authorities to provide you with the information you seek on the number of vessels involved in the electrical pulse trawl fishery and the relevant national rules.

The Commission will follow this situation closely and will also request clarifications from the Dutch authorities on the implementation of Article 31a (2)(b).

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Carla Montesi
Director

Handwritten text, possibly a signature or name, located in the lower center of the page.



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS AND FISHERIES

BALTIC SEA, NORTH SEA AND LANDLOCKED MEMBER STATES
THE DIRECTOR

Brussels,
DG MARE E/CM

Mr [REDACTED]
Chairman
International Gamalen P.O. Rousant
U.A.
Nittersweg 8
NL 9885 TC Lauwerzijl

Subject: Declaration update on electrical beamtrawl fishing

Dear Mr [REDACTED]

Thank you for your Declaration of 17 October regarding your opposition to the use of electrical beamtrawl fishing, or pulse trawls.

In 2006, the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) was requested to give advice on the ecosystem effects of the use of pulse trawls on a commercial basis. It advised that there were many positive aspects of the pulse trawl, but that several issues relating to the potential for increased mortality on target and non-target species needed to be addressed before final conclusions could be drawn.

Following this advice, derogation to the general prohibition on electrical fishing was granted, whereby up to 5% of the fleet could use pulse trawls in a defined area of the southern North Sea, provided that certain pulse characteristics were complied with and that the concerns expressed by ICES would be addressed.

This derogation has been renewed annually since 2007 based on subsequent advice received from ICES and the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF) in 2009 and again in 2012 that has highlighted improvements to the system being developed, but have continued to express some concerns, particularly on control and monitoring aspects.

During recent negotiations on an amendment to the technical measures regulations (COM(2012) 298), the Netherlands proposed to expand the use of pulse trawls beyond the limits imposed by the derogation. This proposal, however, was not supported by the Council or the European Parliament and therefore the current derogation still applies regardless of whether pulse trawls are used inside or outside the 12 mile zone.

Yours sincerely,



Carla MONTESI

From: [REDACTED] (MARE)
Sent: mercredi 16 janvier 2019 10:33
To: MARE CAD
Cc: [REDACTED] (MARE)
Subject: FW: New video on pulse fisheries
Attachments: 190114 FD NGO opinie ENG.docx

Chers collègues,

Pour enregistrement et attribution, svp.

Merci et bonne journée.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



European Commission
DG MARE

[REDACTED]

B-1049 Brussels/Belgium

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] | [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 16, 2019 9:59 AM
To: AGUIAR MACHADO Joao (MARE) <joao.AGUIAR-MACHADO@ec.europa.eu>
Cc: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: New video on pulse fisheries

Good morning,

For your information I enclose the translation of an opinionating article by NL NGO's published on 14 January 2019 in the national newspaper "Financieele Dagblad". A paper copy was given to Mr. Machado Yesterday.

Met
vriendelijke
groet,

[REDACTED]
Directeur m [REDACTED]
VisNed e [REDACTED]

Van: [REDACTED]
Datum: maandag 14 januari 2019 om 23:56
Aan: "joao.aguiar-machado@ec.europa.eu" <joao.aguiar-machado@ec.europa.eu>
CC: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Onderwerp: New video on pulse fisheries

Dear Mr. Machado,

The Dutch Fishing Industry really appreciates the support it receives from Dutch politicians in relation to the further development of the sustainable pulse fishing technique. Recently we have informed these politicians about the latest developments. In that respect, last week we have sent the mini documentary 'Fishing for the Future' to the Dutch MEP's.

With this e-mail we send the [link](#), to this informative mini documentary to you as well.



Scientific basis

Together with leading NGO's in the Netherlands, we are of the opinion that scientific underpinning of advantages and disadvantages of pulse fisheries should be leading when forming an opinion as well as deciding on the future of pulse fisheries. When developing a management framework for the use of this innovative technique, scientific facts, both ecological and economical must be leading, but the human factor, including the emotional aspects involved, must be fully appreciated and must be recognized in the end result of the decision making process

Family businesses

The outcome of the debate on pulse fisheries will determine the future of the family owned SME's in the Dutch demersal sector. Family companies with a tradition of many generations, because of its nature always having a long term view on continuity. Transfer of a healthy business to the next generation of fishers is a key element of considerations. Same as harvesting sustainably from healthy stocks. Family owned SME's form the backbone of the Dutch demersal sector and are essential in the process of "innovation for sustainability". Working towards a steady reduction of unwanted catches, both fish and benthos, is an essential element in this.

The Dutch demersal sector operates at the forefront of industry-science partnerships to implement these elements in relation to article 15 of the CFP.

Using the pulse technique has put the Dutch demersal sector at the forefront of the reduction of carbon emissions. No other sector has managed to reach the "Paris targets" in such a short time. The 50% reduction of fuel consumption is of importance to reduce costs for owner and crew, as well as contributing to environmental targets.

A blockade on pulse fishery is not a solution

For the Dutch demersal sector, pulse fishery on Dover sole is not the end of a process, but a step on the path of long term development. If pulse fishery is no longer allowed further development of innovative fishing methods with even lesser bottom contact, even higher selectivity and even further reduced Carbon emissions will be stopped in its tracks. This road towards sustainable catches with the lowest possible ecological footprint must be travelled. A blockade is not considered to be helpful, on the contrary

We hope you find the documentary interesting and look forward to further discussions with you and your team on the subject of selectivity and innovation in fishery and Blue Growth in the future.

Yours sincerely,

 (Chairman of VisNed)



 (President of Nederlandse Vissersbond)



Let science be leading in decisionmaking about pulse fishery

Are you for or against pulse fishing? This question has repeatedly been asked since the European Parliament voted in favour of a total ban on the Dutch fishing method, earlier this year. It appears to be a simple yes-no question, but the answer is in fact more complex. Our support for pulse fishing depends on sound scientific research into the possible negative effects, and the results of that research are not expected until the end of 2019.

Is pulse fishing the solution for improved sustainability in the fishing sector, as claimed by Dutch fishermen? Or are French environmental groups right, and does fishing using electricity in fact cause irreparable damage to marine flora and fauna? We do not know the answer because it has not yet been thoroughly investigated. Nonetheless, Europe is threatening to call curtains for this innovative fishing technique. The debate has become obfuscated and politicised in a manner that has nothing to do with the technique itself.

The pulse fishing technique uses short bursts of electricity that make flatfish leap from the seabed, after which they can be caught in a dragnet. One of the advantages is that the seabed is disrupted far less than with other forms of bottom fishing. The traditional beam trawler, for example, drags heavy chains across the seabed, disrupting the ecosystem. Moreover, the fishing gear for pulse fishing is far lighter, reducing fuel consumption.

On the other hand, there are many questions about the risks of the electrical pulse. Can long-term exposure to electricity damage seabed life? And how do fish species that are sensitive to electricity respond? Sharks and rays, for example use electricity to hunt for food; will they suffer harm as a result?

Dreadful waste

This uncertainty combined with the gut feeling experienced by many people that mixing water and electricity is extremely dangerous has proved effective. In January 2018, the European Parliament voted in favour of a total ban on pulse fishing, to the utter dismay of Dutch fishermen, who are set to lose millions.

Nonetheless, this European decision was not a complete surprise. Fishing with electricity is itself forbidden and the Dutch fishermen have been making use of a temporary exemption, intended for experimental studies. The exemption was intended for five percent of the cutter fleet, subject to the proviso that the fishermen would take part in a study into the effects of the method.

Intensive Dutch lobbying resulted in an exemption for one in three vessels, and the Dutch cutter fleet switched en masse to pulse fishing. The fishermen and the government took the risk that it would turn out all right in the end, with the additional research; after all the European Commission allowed it all to go ahead, and asked no questions. In the meantime, the fishermen were earning good money from pulse fishing, an operation that was in fact partially subsidised by Dutch and European government grants.

And as for the research, it amounted to practically nothing. A large-scale research project was eventually organised in collaboration with Wageningen Marine Research once French fishermen started expressing their criticism, and other EU countries began to ask difficult questions. However, the results of this project are not expected until the end of 2019 and we now find ourselves in a Kafkaesque European process. There is a possibility that some of the permits will be upheld, but it is abundantly clear that heavy blows are set to fall, and there is even a risk that the technique will be banned completely, so that even further research will no longer be possible.

That would be a dreadful waste. Specifically in the oceans where the interests of nature and fishing are sometimes so diametrically opposed, decisions should surely be taken on the basis of the best available scientific evidence. In the same way that government is required to follow science in setting the annual catch quotas for fish, so can science also provide conclusive answers on the merits of pulse fishing. If we are to achieve the vitally necessary improvements in sustainability in the fishing sector, then we must invest in innovation and the related research.

At the very least, politicians should await the results of the large-scale research project that will be concluded by next spring, before taking an irreversible decision on pulse fishing. We would be setting a particularly poor precedent if a potentially sustainable technique were to be written off on the basis of gut feelings.

From: [REDACTED] (MARE)
Sent: 05 March 2018 09:53
To: MARE CAD
Cc: [REDACTED] (MARE)
Subject: FW: Mr. Machado forgot my letter
Attachments: Joao Aguiar Machado.rtf

Dear colleagues,

Please could you register the enclosed letter? It has been given to JAM during a meeting with Dutch fisherman on 1 March.

Thank you in advance,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]


European Commission
DG MARE

[REDACTED]
B-1049 Brussels/Belgium
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, March 02, 2018 9:33 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Mr. Machado forgot my letter

Dag [REDACTED],
[REDACTED] schreef me onderstaande email met verzoek dit plus de bijlage door te sturen/geven aan Joao Machado.

[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]
T [REDACTED]
E [REDACTED]
skype: [REDACTED]
www.pelagicfish.eu

Van: [redacted] <[redacted]>
Verzonden: Friday, March 2, 2018 08:08
Aan: [redacted]; [redacted]
Onderwerp: Fwd: Mr. Machado forgot my letter

Dear mr Machado,

Yesterday I gave you my personal story on a paper.
But one of my colleague's brought it back to me when we went home.
You had left it on the tabel.
I hope you will read it.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]

Verzonden vanaf mijn Samsung Galaxy-smartphone.



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We hope you find the documentary interesting and look forward to further discussions with you and your team on the subject of selectivity and innovation in fishery and Blue Growth in the future.

From: [REDACTED] (MARE)
Sent: mardi 15 janvier 2019 10:22
To: MARE CAD
Cc: [REDACTED] (MARE)
Subject: FW: New video on pulse fisheries

Chers collègues,

Pour enregistrement et attribution, svp.

Merci.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



European Commission
DG MARE

[REDACTED]

B-1049 Brussels/Belgium

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] | [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 14, 2019 11:56 PM
To: AGUIAR MACHADO Joao (MARE) <Joao.AGUIAR-MACHADO@ec.europa.eu>
Cc: [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: New video on pulse fisheries

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Yours sincerely,

██████████ (Chairman of VisNed)



██████████ (President of Nederlandse Vissersbond)



Nederlandse
Vissersbond

