

Translation of the note 3409836 of the 201/10/15 of the European Commission.

Brussels, the 15/10/2014  
MARE.A2/D(2014)

CC SUD  
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France

**Subject: Response to SWW AC opinion n° 86 on the abolition of the minimum size of short-necked clams at European level**

*Your ref: Letter from Jean-Marie Robert of 2 July 2014*

Dear Mr Bilbao,

Thank you for the SWW AC opinion requesting the abolition of the minimum size of short-necked clams at European level. In this respect, I would like to draw your attention to a recent recommendation made by the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee For Fisheries (hereinafter referred to as STECF)<sup>1</sup> in response to a similar question by the Commission.

More precisely, STECF was asked to look into the question of whether it might not be more appropriate to set minimum sizes of sedentary species of shellfish, such as the short-necked clam, at local rather than European level. STECF replied that it would be appropriate if differences in growth rates and size-at-first maturity were shown to exist for the same species in different regions. If this were to be the case, the minimum landing size could indeed be set differently, taking account of the specific growth of shellfish in each region. However, STECF warned that introducing different minimum sizes could make verification more difficult and result in market distortion.

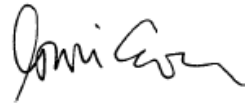
It does not seem appropriate to us to introduce such an amendment to the Omnibus regulation. The Omnibus proposal is limited to items that are necessary for the successful implementation of the requirement to land all fish, with any request for additional measures not linked to this obligation remaining outside its field of application. However, on the basis of the aforementioned STECF recommendation and taking account of the observations received in the framework of the recent public consultation on the elaboration of a new framework of technical measures, we are going to reflect on how best to look into the question.

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<sup>1</sup>[http://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/43805/812327/2014-07\\_STECF+PLEN+14-02\\_Final+Report\\_JRC91540.pdf](http://stecf.jrc.ec.europa.eu/documents/43805/812327/2014-07_STECF+PLEN+14-02_Final+Report_JRC91540.pdf)

I would like to thank you for this constructive contribution to the discussion. If you have any additional questions, please contact Mrs Evangelia Georgitsi, Advisory Council Coordinator (evangelia.georgitsi@ec.europa.eu; +32.2.295.04.43).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lowri Evans', with a stylized, cursive script.

Lowri EVANS

Copy: J. Verborgh, R. Ataide, E. Bianchi, D. Rihan, E. Georgitsi (DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries)